THE WEDDING

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.

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Rita Burney

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THE WEDDING

By

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AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Communication Arts
of Michigan State University of Agriculture and
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the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Speech

1962

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ABSTRACT

This thesis includes an original play and some thoughts about drama. These notions about drama were developed both while I wrote the six complete and individual drafts of this play and also while I read and studied more than one hundred plays by the masters.

It is my notion that the best plays are plays which relieve and ease, if only temporarily, the unnamed anxieties and strivings man is burdened by, each epoch having its own peculiar anxieties and yearnings. A playwright can do this only if his play truly reflects the anxieties and strivings of his age. In such a play the anxiety is not overcome, nor is the striving consummated, they are only made concrete; they are translated into something seeable, nameable, something which one is going to come to grips with at last. As Chekov says, the playwright has no answers; he can only describe what exists. But what a relief it is to be able, for once, to see it all clearly, to be able to come to some definite and specific conclusions. The author of such a play can have written thusly only if he wrote without a self-conscious desire to affect an audience.

These ideas are discussed in more detail, along with discussions of how an author does this sort of "translation writing" and of what it is exactly that he is translating. There are also comparisons made between this sort of play and plays that are written with the self-conscious purpose of affecting an audience.

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In writing this thesis I attempted, as well as I was able, to write the translation sort of play. I compare the different drafts of the play and conclude that my final draft is an improvement over the earlier drafts, but that it is still only a short way along the road to the ideal.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This is an original play. It was conceived in September, 1956. This play is the last of six revisions, each of which was an individual and complete draft. The results of this creative experience have been the play, and an attitude toward the creative process which I would like to explain.

One's personality, or nature, or conceptual apparatus, capable of only certain characteristic perceptions and responses, reduces all potential experience to one kind of experience, the kind that it is his particular capacity at each particular time of his life to perceive and respond to. So that a person at any time, is open only to certain experiences, and all other experiences are distorted to fit his then outlook. The fact that one is this particular way and that, as a consequence, one is always having a similar type of experience aids in causing a person to have a strong and pervasive inner (or subconscious) sense of the nature of the world, and the world includes the person himself and his relationships in the world. This sense is a person's vision. And through his life as he and/or the world around him changes, it also changes. This vision is what a created work of art (I am speaking only of plays) is based or built upon, or, rather is made out of, or again, has as its heart. The vision is at the heart of a man's heart, so to speak, and, as such, is that which the imagination has as

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its raw material, the imagination being the tool of the subconscious. (It forms subconscious raw material into dreams without the control of the conscious mind, which would attempt to make sense out of it.)

When we reach the end of a created work we have a single, whole picture of what the author feels the world is and what kinds of relationships there are in that world. A created play is not essentially (in its essence) chronological, that is, a developing or linearly progressing thing. A created play is, in its essence, achronological, or static, for the subconscious is outside time and space. A man's inner sense of what he is and what the world is, is carried from place to place, from one time to another. Moreover, an individual does not have a sense that he is in a state of sliding, shifting flux. At every moment he has a sense of himself as an identifiable and particular entity with certain stable and well-known characteristics. He, indeed, does change, but it happens in an imperceptible way such that one day a man says, "I'm a different person than I used to be." By that he means that formerly he had a stable self that could be identified, and that today he has a stable self that can be identified. It is just that these two selves are different from one another. At each moment along the way, as he was changing, he, oddly enough, had a sense of himself as a stable and identifiable entity. Probably there was no time at which he did not know who he was and felt himself to be a changing thing with no stable identity. One day one just wakes up and sees that, somehow, a change has occurred. Psychotics who are deficient in realistic self-identification do not create works that are artistic and meaningful.

Works which are spun out of a man with a stable sense of himself can be said to be built upon a single vision. This vision informs the

work with unity and integrity so that the end redounds upon the beginning, and each event is related to the one vision spread through-out the work, thus giving events an organic relationship with each other. People who have a weak sense of themselves or whose vision is of a world lacking stability or order, or so on, create works with an unclear vision or visions that have attendent weakness of stable or orderly relatedness of person with person and event with event. Thus we might account for the theater of the absurd in a day when people feel "lost," and out of relationship and so on.

One might ask what can be so important about one man's personal vision, one man's objectification of his sense of himself in a world seen through his private glasses. Isn't a produced work--a work made consciously and purposefully according to rules and intellectual decisions--, one might go on, superior, then, to a created work? First, according to my belief, a man's subconscious attitude is, perhaps unavoidably, the attitude of his times, of his fellows, and so is not personal in any ultimate way, but is, by and large, an attitude common to all his contemporaries. But, one could reply, how do we, in that case, explain individual differences between works in the same epoch? I answer this way: members of an epoch share a characteristic sense of what man is, what the world is, what relationships are possible and "do, in fact, exist." There are still differences between, for example, different points of view--the pauper and the prince will show different sides of the same coin--, different dispositions, different degrees of genius and skill. Notice the difference between Shakespeare and his contemporaries, all of whom give us an impression of Renaissance freedom of mind and emotion and action. H. Wolfflin, in his Principles of Art

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History, especially the Preface and Introduction, has a thorough discussion of the inter-relationships between the artist's perception and his style and the mode of his times.

Second, what do we mean when we speak of what is important? In general, when discussing the importance of a work of art, we assume that the work must be important for the spectator. This assumption leads us to certain notions about the nature of a work of art, for example, it ought to teach, or it ought to delight, etc.[1] What other reason, one might ask, is there for writing a play, if not to have some effect upon an audience? But the created work, the work written out of a vision, seems to be, as I have suggested, a mere expression of an attitude and seems to have had no spectator-directed purpose. But I believe that the created play has an effect on an audience that only it, because of what it is, can produce, and that this is a most profound effect, although this effect is only by the way and was not purposefully arranged for. Thus a created play has importance, but not purposefully so. Following from this is the conclusion that telling a writer what his play ought to do is anti-creative advice. One should tell a writer what his play ought to be. Those who want to analyze created plays might find it helpful to take into account the fact that the author did not have an audience-directed purpose.

But, to digress for a moment, how is one to tell the difference between the completely created and the completely produced, and plays that are a little of both, and in the last case, where it is created and where produced? For one thing, produced plays have one thing in common,

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[1]Horace. Epistle to a Friend--a common attitude toward art during the Renaissance and after.

at bottom their people are lifeless and the events are contrived. Created plays give an appearance of rulebook plotlessness--Chekov, Shakespeare, Webster--, or of rulebook sensationalism--Euripides, Webster, Shakespeare--, or of real, alive, human beings--Marlowe, Chekov, Shakespeare. But how can one be sure? Does the play yield to analysis in such a way that at a deep bottom we find there is some attitude having to do with the world and one's place in the world and that, then, every word, every appearance and exit of a character, every relationship, every event embodies or is part of the embodiment of this attitude? Then that play is created. At the bottom of Chekov's plays, we find the attitude, growing from the particular in his first play to the general in his next to the last play, that man <u>needs</u>, longs for, contact with others--a man with another person in his first play; the individual with the world in his last--but that this contact, because the other is corrupt, is irrevocably destructive to the individual. In his last play he seems to have been destroyed himself. And his projected plan for his next play, never written, is one smacking of escape: the play is laid entirely on a ship bound for the Arctic. After one has seen what his vision is, accusations of plotlessness leveled at Chekov appear utterly ridiculous. His plays are organically unified so that not one word or action is unrelated or unnecessary. His is a more ultimate sort of plot.

What is this effect, then, that I spoke of as peculiar to the created work? Aristotle speaks of catharsis. My notion, a response to Aristotle's suggestive ideas, is that people living their lives in the midst of striving they are not clear about, about whose outcome they may feel anxious, or people living their lives feeling other nameless anxieties of one sort or another, cannot take all of their life

into clear view, cannot clearly grasp their problem. The lessons of the past remain unemphasized, vague; the present is a welter of experience, the parts difficult to see each in its proper place and relationship; and the future is a mystery. But in the theater all is given definiteness, clarity, a beginning and then an end following from the beginning. It is their anxiety and/or striving they see on stage, put there, in objective form, by an author who shares this anxiety and striving with them. He doesn't give them answers, he just makes it definite and clear for once. He turns nameless anxiety into concrete fear. He turns the uncertain gropings and yearnings of himself and his audience into a simple struggle to attain a prescribed goal.

For the time the audience is watching this play their burdens of anxiety are eased. There is something seeable, nameable, something which one is going to come to grips with, concretely, specifically, and finally wrest a victory or defeat out of...once and for all...at last. The moment at which the striving achieves failure or success, the moment at which the anxiety is laid to rest or seen to be justified is the moment after which release from tension, or catharsis, occurs. There has been tension because the audience has "identified", that is, what is happening on stage is an objectification of the deepest, most real happenings in the audience's own lives. They <u>care</u> because it <u>is</u> about them.

Produced plays may entertain in the sense that they provide idle amusement or escapist diversion. But the created play eases our burdens and are, therefore, ultimately engrossing and entertaining. We leave a created play truly refreshed, relieved, at ease, even if only temporarily.

The man who creates such a play writes it in his time, out of the attitude of that time. Such a man writes from his heart what his epoch has caused to be in his heart. And also, when a man is noble enough, his vision rises above the attitude of his own times and becomes a vision which, in its wider generality, can contain the troubles and woes in the lives of his brothers in other ages, age after age.

If the author's imagination's translation of this vision into people-in-relationship-in-a-play is an accurate translation, and if it is not embellished so much that it becomes twisted, devious and indirect, then his play will, by the way, have this profound and profoundly important effect on his audience. He did not have it in his mind to cause this response. But because he wrote the way he did, his play can and does cause this response. We must cherish such works and show gratitude to their authors, who may not think of us, but who, as it happens, give gifts to us.

Mr. Brokenshire

John Brokenshir

Phyllis Brokens

Mildred James

Malcolm James

Mrs. Grouse

Martin

Jack

Carl

Anne

Felicia

Today. Conne

CHAPTER II

TEXT OF THE WEDDING

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Mr. Brokenshire	An elderly man
John Brokenshire	Mr. Brokenshire's middle-aged son
Phyllis Brokenshire	John's wife
Mildred James	John's sister
Malcolm James	Mildred's husband
Mrs. Grouse	The cleaning woman
Martin	The best man
Jack	The groom
Carl	A neighbor
Anne	The bride; Phyllis' and John's daughter
Felicia	Mildred's and Malcolm's daughter

PLACE

Today. Connecticut. The Brokenshire's living-room.

SCENE

The Brokenshire's living room with terrace to the right through French doors in down right wall. Up center is large archway into hall. To the left, in the hall, are stairs leading to the second floor. Above the stairs is a door leading to the study. To the right off the hall is the kitchen. Hall leads off left, above stairs, to front door.

A window in the left wall of the living room. On each side of the archway, in the living room, is a lowboy. Down center is a couch. Down right, below the French doors, is an easy chair. Down left is another easy chair. Above the couch, and right, above the French doors, is a bridge table with four chairs around it.

On the terrace is a round table with several chairs. The terrace goes off right to the driveway.

This room is lightly furnished and there is no naturalistic substantiality about it. The mode of the play is impressionistic rather than realistic.

Act I

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THE WEDDING

Act I

Two days before the wedding. Early evening in June. Anne enters from hall right. Jack and Martin come behind her. Carl next. Felicia follows. They come down towards the living-room. They move among each other.

CARL

QUIETLY. Anne, you get some sleep now. You have dark rings under your eyes.

ANNE

I know. I know.

CARL

Are we going to see each other later?

MARTIN

Why don't you come back around nine, Carl?

CARL

Are you going to be up then?

MARTIN

I'm only going to lie down for a half hour. I have some more work to do.

CARL

Are you going to go to sleep, Anne?

ANNE

I will. I will. Shh.

JACK

Don't tell him to shush.

ANNE

I didn't say anything.

JACK

Be quiet, will you. SHORT PAUSE.

MARTIN

We shouldn't do so much. We ought to stop going so hard during the day.

FELICIA

All that hot sun.

PHYLLIS

OFF RIGHT. Are you children going to bed, please!

ANNE

Yes, mother!

PHYLLIS

Well, go then! I have to get this house cleaned up!

ANNE

Yes, mother! GOES QUICKLY UP THE STAIRS. EXIT.

PHYLLIS

I'll set up the scrabble set so you can do something quiet this evening when you wake up!

CARL

Well...I guess I'll see you later, then.

MARTIN

See you later, Carl. EXIT UP CENTER HALL INTO STUDY. SHUTS THE DOOR.

JACK

STARTS SLOWLY UPSTAIRS. I guess I'll go lie down for awhile.

CARL

See you later, Jack.

JACK

See you later. EXIT UPSTAIRS.

CARL

Are you coming Felicia?

FELICIA

I guess so. THEY START OFF, RIGHT.

CARL

CALLS. So long. SILENCE.

PHYLLIS

ENTERS FROM RIGHT WITH BRIDGE TABLE. You go on now, children. Get some rest. CONTINUES DOWN INTO LIVING-ROOM. Come back later and have a nice game of scrabble with us.

CARL

I guess we'll see you later then, Mrs. Brokenshire.

You go on now,
WINDOW, ABOVE

Good-by, Aunt

Get a good res

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PHYLLIS AND T

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Just turn th
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PHYLLIS

You go on now, Carl. Get some rest. SETS UP TABLE, BY DOWN RIGHT WINDOW, ABOVE FRENCH DOORS.

FELICIA

Good-by, Aunt Phyllis. SHE AND CARL EXEUNT RIGHT HALL.

PHYLLIS

Get a good rest, Felicia...!

MRS. GROUSE COMES IN RIGHT CARRYING BRIDGE CHAIRS. BRINGS THEM TO PHYLLIS AND THEY SET THEM UP AROUND THE TABLE.

PHYLLIS

SETTING UP BRIDGE CHAIRS AROUND THE BRIDGE TABLE. Look in the lowboy, Mrs. Grouse...Is the game there?

MRS. GROUSE

LOOKING AT THE BOX IN THE BOTTOM OF THE LOWBOY. Scrabble?

PHYLLIS

I've got to get the lazy susan. FINDS IT IN THE RIGHT LOWBOY. COMES BACK TO THE TABLE. If this heat doesn't stop...PUTS REVOLVING TRAY ON THE TABLE. That caterer's coming too early...I've got to tell him to come later or else all the food is going to spoil...Mrs. Grouse, can you help me here please.

MRS. GROUSE

BRINGS BOX TO THE TABLE. I don't know anything about this kind of games, Mrs. Brokenshire.

PHYLLIS

Just turn these little tiles over...I don't know why I wanted to make the reception myself. It's going to be too hot for people to go outside...I'm not going to have enough room...

MRS. GROUSE

They're expecting a cooler weather in a couple of days.

PHYLLIS

Oh yes? Where did you hear that?

MRS. GROUSE

On the television.

PHYLLIS

Well, it'd better be cooler weather in two days or I don't know...I'll get someone to drive you home.

MRS. GROUSE

If you could.

PHYLLIS
I'll get one of the boys. GOES TO STUDY DOOR. KNOCKS. Martin...Martin.

MARTIN
Yes.

PHYLLIS
Are you up?

MARTIN
Yes.

PHYLLIS
Could you come out for a minute please. I want you to do something for me.

MARTIN
I'll be right there.

MRS. GROUSE
I'll come in day after tomorrow.

PHYLLIS
Yes, I'm counting on you. I want the house spotless.

MRS. GROUSE
I could come in tomorrow.

PHYLLIS
Oh no. With these wild Indians. Martin!

MARTIN
Yes. Here I am. MARTIN COMES FROM STUDY AND ENTERS THE LIVING ROOM.

PHYLLIS
It's a good thing you're sleeping in the study. I don't have to wake everybody up when I want you.

MARTIN
What time is it?

PHYLLIS
It's after eight. Martin, would you drive Mrs. Grouse home for me? I've got so much to do this evening yet. I want to get started. You could be a great help to me if you'd do that.

MARTIN
Yes. I wouldn't mind. Is she going right now?

PHYLLIS
Are you sure I didn't wake you?

MARTIN

That's all right. You didn't wake me.

PHYLLIS

The car's in the driveway. Let me get up the key. EXIT RIGHT THROUGH HALL.

MARTIN

Do you live far?

MRS. GROUSE

Just down the road...I got a bad back.

MARTIN

Oh?

MRS. GROUSE

It's all right when I'm doing house work, bending, moving around, don't you know. It's just when it gets locked in one position.

MARTIN

Oh, I see.

MRS. GROUSE

If I walk home a half mile I can't move when I get there. I got to lie down in the bed and have hot compresses. My daughter does them for me.

MARTIN

Can't the doctor help you?

MRS. GROUSE

I don't go to the doctor. I ain't got no money to throw away on them doctors, don't you know. They bleed you white. And they never do you no good anyhow. You're worse off when they get through with you. I could tell you things about doctors...

PHYLLIS

REENTERING. You'll come in Sunday morning, then, Mrs. Grouse. THEY WALK TO THE FRENCH DOORS. Thank you, Martin.

MARTIN

That's all right. HE AND MRS. GROUSE EXEUNT THROUGH FRENCH DOORS. GO RIGHT OFF TERRACE.

MRS. GROUSE

Good night, Mrs. Brokenshire. I'll come back Sunday morning early, then.

PHYLLIS

Good night. Good night. Hurry back, Martin. They'll want to play as soon as they get up.

MARTIN

FROM OFF RIGHT. All right!

PHYLLIS

Shh! shh! CAR DOORS SLAM AND CAR DRIVES AWAY.

ANNE

COMING DOWN THE STAIRS. Mother...?

PHYLLIS

GOING ACROSS LIVING ROOM TO HER. Anne, why aren't you sleeping?

ANNE

I can't...WALKS INTO LIVING ROOM AND OVER TO THE FRENCH DOORS. PHYLLIS FOLLOWS HER. ANNE STANDS LOOKING OUT AT THE TERRACE. Why is it so hot? Why can't it be cooler? GOES OUT ONTO THE TERRACE.

PHYLLIS

STANDS IN THE DOORWAY. It'll be cooler. I wish you'd go back upstairs and rest some more. You weren't in bed for more than half an hour. You had a very active day today.

ANNE

I wish it were Sunday already.

PHYLLIS

It's just two more days.

ANNE

I can't believe I'm going to get married.

PHYLLIS

What's the matter?

ANNE

Nothing...Nothing's the matter.

PHYLLIS

Then why are you crying?

ANNE

I'm not crying...I'm not crying...

PHYLLIS

You're over-excited. It's natural for a bride to feel nervous before her wedding.

ANNE

No...

PHYLLIS

I wish you'd lie down for awhile longer, Anne. You look very tired and pale.

ANNE

It isn't that...!

PHYLLIS

I don't like to see you looking like this, Anne. I wish you'd please rest for awhile before the others get up.

ANNE

Oh, mother, please don't...

PHYLLIS

Well, look what you did today. You swam and played tennis and went walking...

ANNE

It isn't that...It isn't that!

PHYLLIS

Then what is it? It's got to be something! I can't stand it when you act like this! When you get so nervous. Why do you always have to get nervous like this?

ANNE

I'm not going to get married. I know it. Something terrible is going to happen.

PHYLLIS

No it isn't! Nothing terrible is going to happen. You're going to get married and you're going to have a lovely wedding. And you and Jack are going to be very happy. And that's all that's going to happen... I don't know why you talk like this...Sit down here. I'm going to get you some hot tea if you're not going to go back to bed. Just forget about those silly ideas and think about what a happy life you're going to have. Everything's going to be all right. There's nothing that's going to happen to you. Believe me. We love you. We wouldn't let anything happen to our little girl...Now you sit here and I'll be right back. EXIT THROUGH LIVING ROOM AND HALL TO RIGHT. ANNE SITS ON TERRACE. JACK COMES SLOWLY DOWNSTAIRS AND WALKS OVER TO THE FRENCH DOOR.

JACK

Oh...I was wondering where you were.

ANNE

AFTER A MOMENT. Why don't you come outside?

JACK

All right. STEPS OUT ONTO TERRACE.

ANNE

Did you have a good sleep?

ANNE

It isn't that...!

PHYLLIS

I don't like to see you looking like this, Anne. I wish you'd please rest for awhile before the others get up.

ANNE

Oh, mother, please don't...

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JACK

All right. STEPS OUT ONTO TERRACE.

ANNE

Did you have a good sleep?

JACK
I didn't sleep at all. SHORT PAUSE. I want to tell you something.

ANNE
I know what it is.

JACK
I don't think you do.

ANNE
Yes I do. You don't want to marry me.

JACK
That's not it.

ANNE
I know you don't love me anymore.

JACK
I do. Who said I didn't love you.

ANNE
But it's something terrible, isn't it.

JACK
...I don't know. Maybe it is. SITS.

ANNE
LOW. I don't want to hear it.

JACK
AFTER A MOMENT. But I have to tell you. I should have told you before.

ANNE
What does it have to do with? Is it about another girl?

JACK
No. It isn't anything like that...Do you have a headache?

ANNE
No.

JACK
I've got one. It's been killing me.

ANNE
You were out in the sun a lot today. Maybe you hurt your eyes.

JACK
It isn't my eyes. It's the whole back of my head. LOWERS HIS HEAD AND PUTS HIS FACE IN HIS HANDS. It feels like it's going to come open.

ANNE
Do you want me to get you some aspirin?

JACK
No. STANDS. I think I'll go back to bed for awhile. TURNS TO GO.

ANNE
Aren't you going to tell me?

JACK
I'll tell you later. Can't I just lie down for awhile?

ANNE
Of course you can. I didn't say you couldn't.

JACK
I'll see you later. GOES INTO LIVING ROOM.

ANNE
Don't bother. I don't ever want to see you again anyway!

JACK
GOING THROUGH LIVING ROOM...Don't worry about it...It isn't important...

ANNE
What! I didn't hear what you said!

JACK
GOING UP THE STAIRS. Never mind...Never mind...EXIT UPSTAIRS.

ANNE
AFTER A MOMENT GETS UP AND RUNS OFF TERRACE RIGHT. CALLS OUT.
Georgianna! Georgianna!

MALCOLM
ENTERS FROM TERRACE RIGHT WITH MILDRED AND MR. BROKENSHIRE. Where are you going, Annie?

MILDRED
She's going over to see her friend Georgianna Lee who lives next door.

MALCOLM
I see. SMOKES HIS PIPE INCESSANTLY THOUGH GENTLY.

MILDRED
WALKS UP AND FACES UPSTAGE. Winds and breezes, dreams of night;
Alight! Alight! My arms and face do you invite!

MALCOLM
Oh, now, now, come on, Mildred...

MILDRED

Come, night winds, and stroke my breast! Leave me not alone, unknown, by grief and agony oppressed! Oh not alone! Unknown! By grief, by agony oppressed!

MALCOLM

Oh, now, now. What kind of thing is that to say.

MILDRED

I'm speaking to the night.

MALCOLM

Now, Mildred.

MILDRED

To the beautiful, black, beautiful, secret, hidden night...The night out there...

MALCOLM

AFTER A MOMENT. Oh now, Mildred.

MILDRED

Look, Malcolm...A shooting star...

MALCOLM

Oh? I didn't see one.

MILDRED

Come here.

MALCOLM

GOES TO HER. Hmmm.

MILDRED

PUTS HER ARM THROUGH HIS. THEY FACE UPSTAGE. I made a wish. I wished that our dear, sweet, darling daughter Felicia would have a long, rich, happy, healthy, wonderful, beautiful, marvelous life. I wished that she would have good health and love and wealth and a long, happy, happy life and everything--everything--that she wants!

MALCOLM

She will...she will. She's a good girl...SHORT PAUSE.

MILDRED

I ought to go in and help my sister-in-law. But I can't move.

MALCOLM

Mrs. Grouse is helping her.

MR. BROKENSHIRE

Phyllis probably sent her home already. She never likes to spend extra money when she can do the work herself. That's a good, old-fashioned trait you don't see much of in women today. They always like to have somebody else doing for them...And what else have they got to do anyway? They just want to be lazy, that's all. They think it's smart.

MILDRED

GOING SLOWLY TOWARDS THE FRENCH DOORS. We're all working together for this wedding. It's as if all our children were getting married, and we were getting married again too. We're all getting married in this one beautiful wedding of two wonderful children who love each other so much and who are perfectly right for each other...Everybody's so happy.

PHYLLIS

COMING INTO THE LIVING ROOM WITH TEA CUP. MILDRED ENTERS FROM THE TERRACE. Did you have a nice walk?

MILDRED

Oh it was lovely. You should have come with us.

PHYLLIS

I don't have enough time for the things I have to do...Is Anne out there?

MILDRED

She went over to Georgianna's.

PHYLLIS

She went to Georgianna's? GOES TO FRENCH DOORS.

MILDRED

She was running over there when we came back.

PHYLLIS

Don't sit out there, Father Brokenshire, you'll catch a cold. COMES BACK THROUGH LIVING ROOM. I can't believe she's just get up and go over to Georgianna's.

MILDRED

Well, she did. She was running over there when we came back from our walk.

PHYLLIS

ENTERING THE HALL. I think I'll call here...That was a strange thing for her to do...

MILDRED

FOLLOWING HER. Can I help you with something, Phyllis?

PHYLLIS

EXIT RIGHT THROUGH HALL. There's nothing to do, Mildred, thank you... I'm just going to call Anne...

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PHYLLIS

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MILDRED
Following her out. Oh, I'm sure there's something I can do...SHORT PAUSE.

MALCOLM
You think it's going to be good weather for the wedding, Father Brokenshire?

MR. BROKENSHIRE
There'll be some kind of weather. It might be good.

MALCOLM
Oh, I know that. It's got to be some kind of weather. I hope it's going to be good though.

MR. BROKENSHIRE
It might be good weather. It won't snow anyway.

MALCOLM
Well, it might not snow, but it might rain. I was thinking more in that line.

MR. BROKENSHIRE
Rain never hurt anybody, Malcolm. People can get married when it's raining just as well as when the sun's out. Lots of people do it and it doesn't hurt them so far as I can see. Of course these young people today, everything makes them sick. There's always something wrong with them. I don't know what's the matter with them. They got better foods to eat. They got good, warm clothes. They got heated houses. Their whole life is easier. I don't know. Maybe that's their trouble... Lazy bunch. Look at me...Hard work never hurt anybody. If they did a little hard word they'd be all right. Toughen them up. That's what they need. Look at me. Look at them. When I was their age...SHORT PAUSE.

MALCOLM
I guess the farmers would be glad to get the rain. It's been dry in New England this spring.

MR. BROKENSHIRE
YAWNS. It's time to go to bed, Malcolm.

MALCOLM
LOOKS AT HIS POCKET WATCH. It's eight-thirty.

MR. BROKENSHIRE
STANDING. You ought to go to bed now yourself, Malcolm. It'd be good for you.

MALCOLM
I think I'll just stay up a little while longer, Father Brokenshire. The children are getting up soon. And Felicia's coming over.

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MR. BROKENSHIRE

A man your age needs his rest. I always took care of myself and that's why I feel good today. You'd do well to do the same thing. GOES THROUGH LIVING ROOM AND EXIT UPSTAIRS.

MALCOLM

SITS AND SMOKES. Hmm. Hmm. CAR DRIVES UP AND STOPS. DOOR SLAMS.

MARTIN

ENTER TERRACE RIGHT. Hello, Mr. James.

MALCOLM

Who's that?

MARTIN

COMING TO HIM. It's me.

MALCOLM

Who is that?

MARTIN

Martin.

MALCOLM

Martin. Oh yes. I thought it was you. Why don't you sit down for awhile?

MARTIN

All right. SITS.

MALCOLM

SMOKES. Hmm. Hmm...Do you enjoy the night air...?

MARTIN

INTERRUPTING. STANDING. Excuse me, I think I'll go in and see whether I can help Mrs. Brokenshire.

MALCOLM

Oh, of course. Of course. I'll see you later then. I'll just stay out here a little longer and finish my pipe.

MARTIN

That sounds like a good idea. GOES INTO LIVING ROOM. ANNE RUNS ACROSS TERRACE AND INTO THE LIVING ROOM.

MALCOLM

Where were you, Annie? Your mother was looking for you...

MARTIN

TURNS TO ANNE. SHE STOPS IN FRONT OF HIM. MALCOLM SITS SMOKING. UNABLE TO HEAR. What's the matter?

ANNE

Georgianna wasn't home.

MARTIN

So?

ANNE

I wanted to talk to her.

MARTIN

You can talk to her later.

ANNE

I need to talk to her now!

MARTIN

Talk to me, then. The best man is supposed to be helpful.

ANNE

SUDDENLY EMBRACES HIM. Help me! Help me!

MARTIN

Help you about what?

ANNE

WEEPING. I don't know! I don't know! Just help me! Help me!

MARTIN

I'll help you.

ANNE

Soon! Oh help me soon! THEY STAND TOGETHER, MARTIN SOOTHING HER.

PHYLLIS

ENTER FROM KITCHEN. MILDRED FOLLOWS HER. Anne!

ANNE

PULLS AWAY AND RUNS UPSTAIRS. Leave me alone! Just leave me alone! EXIT UPSTAIRS.

PHYLLIS

Martin, what was she saying to you about helping her? What's the matter with her?

MARTIN

I don't remember what she said. It wasn't anything important.

PHYLLIS

Well, what's the matter with her? Why is she acting so strangely? I never saw her like this before. Did she tell you anything about what was bothering her?

MARTIN

There's nothing the matter with her. She's perfectly all right.

PHYLLIS

GOING UPSTAIRS. I'm glad to hear you say that...I'd better go see... She's acting so strangely...EXIT UPSTAIRS.

MILDRED

TAKES MARTIN'S ARM AND WALKS TO COUCH WITH HIM. THEY SIT. You have to understand, dear, girls get very nervous just before their wedding. They have all sorts of worries and fears. And they get very nervous. It's all a part of taking that final important step. You have to understand her...She's an unusually sensitive girl and she responds more strongly to things than other people do. But she'll be fine just as soon as the wedding day comes...Then she'll know that she's doing the right thing. And she'll be a perfect bride, and then a perfect wife, and when the time comes, a perfect mother.

MARTIN

I'm sure she will.

MILDRED

Of course she will. You can believe me. I know. I know how she feels. I was exactly the same way myself. I went through exactly the same thing...And look at me now. Everything turned out well for me. I have my lovely husband and my lovely home and my lovely, dearest darling Felicia, my daughter! SHORT PAUSE. And I'm so happy!

MALCOLM

COMING TO THE FRENCH DOORS. If Anne and Martin are here, maybe we can play a little game before the others come down.

MILDRED

Anne went upstairs.

MALCOLM

Oh? Well, how about a three-handed game? There's nothing doing just sitting around. I feel like having a little fun.

MILDRED

I don't feel like playing just now, dearest. Call Felicia to come over. She'll play with you.

MALCOLM

WALKS THROUGH LIVING ROOM TO ARCHWAY. I'll call Felicia, then. EXIT RIGHT THROUGH HALL.

MILDRED

HOLDING MARTIN'S HAND. I don't feel like playing now...I just feel like sitting here...for a million years...and never moving again...

PHYLLIS

COMES DOWNSTAIRS AND ENTERS LIVING ROOM. FUSSES WITH ARTICLES ON THE RIGHT LOWBOY. She's in bed now. I know that's all that was wrong with her. She hasn't been getting enough sleep. I've told her and told her...but she doesn't listen. She's getting married so she thinks she's grown up now and knows better than anybody else. But she'll see... you've got to have sleep no matter how old you are...Out in the sun all day, running from one thing to the other. Swimming, tennis, more swimming, all that sun. No wonder she's...it's no wonder she's all nerves. I told her so. I knew this would happen. All nerves. Just all nerves...She'll have to get more rest, that's all there is to it... And the proper foods...and more milk. She thinks because she's grown up she doesn't have to drink any more milk...

MARTIN

STANDING. Excuse me.

MILDRED

HOLDING HIS HAND. Where are you going?

MARTIN

To the study. I have to look through some work I have.

MILDRED

You shouldn't work so hard. You should have a little fun while you're young.

MARTIN

I don't work so hard.

MILDRED

But you should have some fun. What kind of fun do you have? You always seem so serious. You always seem to be working...Do you ever have time to enjoy the good things in life?

MARTIN

I have fun. Don't worry about me.

MILDRED

But what about the good things? I don't mean just fun. I mean to enjoy...to get enjoyment out of the good things. Poetry and music and art. Do you ever get enjoyment out of the good things of life?

MARTIN

I enjoy them. But I don't have much time now.

MILDRED

Don't go. Talk to me for a minute! I want to talk about these things with you. Nobody wants to talk about these things anymore. Why do you think that is? Why aren't people interested in them anymore?

MARTIN

I don't know why. This is a scientific age. We have to keep up with the rest of the world.

MILDRED

But you can't leave the good things behind...Life is senseless without them!

MARTIN

I don't know about that. We'll have to leave it up to you to take care of those things. Somebody has to worry about the new things too.

MILDRED

But I've always thought...if only you could set aside a little time every day. Or just a little time, an hour or two, in every week. That would be enough! To just not leave them behind. I can't do it all! I can't do it all myself, you know!

MARTIN

Mrs. James...TRIES TO WITHDRAW HIS HAND FROM HER. All right. I will.

MILDRED

That's all you need! Just a few hours a week. To go to a museum... to listen to some music...

MARTIN

All right, I will. Mrs. James. WITHDRAWS HIS HAND.

MILDRED

It's just that I don't want you to leave these things behind! I know! I know that you musn't! You'll be happier. Your life will be richer and better! Believe me. I know. Look at my life! It's rich and meaningful because of the good things in life.

MARTIN

I know. I can see that it is. But I have to go now. I can talk to you about this later, Mrs. James. I'll have more time then. I'll be back in a little while, Mrs. James.

MILDRED

Come back again soon!

MARTIN

Yes. I will. EXIT TO STUDY.

PHYLLIS

These children. They think because they're over twenty they know everything. Well, they don't know everything. They'll just have to learn that. Their parents still know something, whether children want to believe it or not.

MILDRED

Youth is so wonderful. That's the time when we can live beautifully... When we can spend every day thinking about beautiful things...

PHYLLIS

They spend a whole day out in the sun, their head uncovered, and then they wonder why they don't feel good. Of course they don't feel good. How can they expect to feel good?

MILDRED

We used to live like that. Reading wonderful books, listening to records, talking about them, thinking about them.

PHYLLIS

They don't know how to take care of themselves, that's all. EXIT RIGHT THROUGH HALL.

MILDRED

But they don't want to take care of themselves; that's just it. You want life to overcome you. You want all that's going to happen to happen to you. You want to meet life, to take it...to...I don't know what! STANDS. PHYLLIS RETURNS WITH DUSTER AND DUSTS THE LIVING ROOM FURNITURE. I love this wedding! I love this time of the year! It brings everything back! The same smells, the same feelings. I feel twenty-one again...before I got married! How wonderful everything was then...

PHYLLIS

DUSTING. Mrs. Grouse doesn't like to dust. But you can't get anybody else to wash the floors the way she does.

MILDRED

Oh if only...if only...GOES TO FRENCH DOORS AND LOOKS OUT. If only I could really be twenty again...If only I could be...GOES OUT ONTO TERRACE...twenty again. On this night. At this moment. LOOKS AT SKY.

PHYLLIS

You can't be twenty again.

MILDRED

I didn't say I could, I only said I wished.

PHYLLIS

That's a silly wish. I wouldn't be twenty again. Life wasn't so wonderful then.

MILDRED

Mine was!

PHYLLIS

That's your imagination. If you'd think about it you'd remember what it really was like. Life wasn't so perfect then, you can take my word for it. JOHN APPEARS FROM HALL LEFT. LISTENS.

MILDRED
Mine was wonderful! Before I got married!

PHYLLIS
Oh, before you got married. That was because you didn't have any responsibilities then. But some of us did.

MILDRED
That doesn't have anything to do with it.

PHYLLIS
Then what has it got to do with?

MILDRED
I don't know. It's got to do with the way you are.

PHYLLIS
And so are you different now?

MILDRED
It's not me. It's life. Life is different!

PHYLLIS
Life is the same as it always was. You just didn't know anything about life when you were young, otherwise you wouldn't have thought it was so wonderful. Because it wasn't. And it isn't.

MILDRED
No...! I did know about life! A better life!

JOHN
COMES INTO LIVING ROOM. What are you arguing about?

PHYLLIS
Nothing. We weren't arguing about anything.

JOHN
GOES TO FRENCH DOORS AND LOOKS OUT. What were you saying to her? Why is she crying? GOES OUTSIDE TO MILDRED.

PHYLLIS
I didn't know she was crying...I didn't say anything...

JOHN
Why don't you get her some tea or something. GOES TO MILDRED.

PHYLLIS
Of course. EXIT RIGHT THROUGH HALL.

MILDRED
It isn't true. It isn't true.

JOHN

What isn't true?

MILDRED

Life was good! Life was good!

JOHN

You better stop crying. A MOMENT PASSES.

MALCOLM

ENTER HALL FROM RIGHT. Mildred? ENTERS LIVING ROOM. Mildred? Felicia is coming over. LOOKS OUT FRENCH DOORS. Then we can have a quick game before the children get up. Oh, Hello, John. I didn't see you. You want to play a game of scrabble with us? We're going to have a little game. Felicia, Martin and me. You want to join us?

JOHN

Is it all ready?

MALCOLM

GLANCING AT BRIDGE TABLE. Yes. Somebody seems to have set it up.

JOHN

All right. HE AND MILDRED ENTER LIVING ROOM.

MALCOLM

Are you going to play too, sweetheart?

MILDRED

Yes. I guess so.

MALCOLM

That's good. Then how about playing a game right now and we can have another one when Felicia gets here. Sit down, sweetheart. SEATS HER NEAR FRENCH DOORS. You look a little tired, sweetheart. Are you feeling all right?

MILDRED

Yes.

MALCOLM

I want you to be happy. KISSES HER CHEEK. I want my sweetheart to be happy. SITS ON HER RIGHT, HIS BACK TO THE ROOM. It's just the excitement. As soon as the wedding's over, we'll all be back to normal.

JOHN

SITS ACROSS FROM MALCOLM. I hope so. I'd like some peace and quiet again.

MALCOLM

AS THEY CHOOSE THEIR TILES. But, you know, I bet a little excitement is good for people now and then. I enjoy it myself...now and then.

JOHN

But enough is enough.

MALCOLM

Oh, of course, Enough is enough. I certainly didn't mean...

CARL

APPEARING AT FRENCH DOORS. Excuse me.

JOHN

What do you want, Carl?

CARL

Excuse me...Is...is Martin or anybody around?

JOHN

TO MILDRED AND MALCOLM. Where's Martin?

MILDRED

He's in the study. He'll be out soon.

JOHN

He'll be out soon, Carl. Why don't you wait on the terrace.

CARL

All right.

JOHN

When he comes out I'll tell him you're here.

CARL

Thank you. RETIRES AND SITS ON TERRACE CHAIR.

JOHN

Where are the rest of the children? I don't see any of them around.

MILDRED

Phyllis thought they should lie down for awhile. They were out exercising in the sun all day.

JOHN

That's a good idea.

MILDRED

Felicia was lying down at home. She'll be over in a few minutes.

MALCOLM

I just called her. She was getting ready to come when I called. She'll be here in a few minutes...She's a good girl.

JOHN

Dead. LAYS TILES ON BOARD, WHICH IS ON LAZY SUSAN.

MALCOLM

What's that?

JOHN

It's my word. WRITES ON SCORE PAD. Twelve points. Double word.

MILDRED

What an awful word to start the game with.

JOHN

It's the only one I had. TURNS THE LAZY SUSAN. Your turn, Malcolm. It's just a word.

MILDRED

But it's such a morbid word.

JOHN

It's just a word. It doesn't mean anything. It's your turn, Malcolm.

MALCOLM

I'm thinking. I'm thinking.

MILDRED

It's such an awful word.

MALCOLM

False. LAYS OUT TILES.

JOHN

Do you like that any better? How many?

MALCOLM

LIFTS TILES AND COUNTS. Let me see.

MILDRED

No that's not any better. Let's start over again with different words.

MALCOLM

You can't start over once you've started. Ten points.

MILDRED

Why can't we?

JOHN

Stop thinking about the words. It's just a game. WRITES. Ten points. TURNS LAZY SUSAN. Mildred.

MILDRED

Just a minute. LOOKS AT HER TILES. If it's just a game, then why can't we start over again.

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Ten.

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JOHN

Because you don't, that's all. You don't play games that way.

MILDRED

But we can if we want to.

JOHN

It's the rules of sportmanship. Stop thinking about it so much and play.

MALCOLM

It's only a silly game, sweetheart. Don't take it so seriously.

MILDRED

I'm not taking it seriously! John is the one who's taking it seriously!

MALCOLM

Oh, now, now, sweetheart.

MILDRED

Lead! LAYS OUT TILES.

JOHN

That's not such a good word.

MILDRED

I can't help it! I can't think with you two!

JOHN

How many points.

MILDRED

I don't know.

MALCOLM

COUNTS FOR HER. One, two, three, four, five. Oh my. Look, if you'd put it up here you'd have gotten a double word score.

MILDRED

I don't care.

MALCOLM

Here, I'll put it up there for you. You probably didn't see it. MOVES HER TILES.

JOHN

What is it now? Ten?

MALCOLM

Ten.

MILDRED

No. Put it back.

MALCOLM

But sweetheart.

MILDRED

You don't have to cheat for me! I don't even care about the darn game! STANDS. Felicia darling! SHE GOES TO FELICIA, WHO HAS APPEARED IN THE HALL.

MALCOLM

...She's overwrought.

MILDRED

EMBRACES FELICIA. Darling. How are you? Did you have a good sleep? Let me feel your head...You look refreshed.

FELICIA

I feel all right.

MALCOLM

We started without you, sweetheart. You took so long getting over here. I hope you don't mind.

FELICIA

That's all right.

MILDRED

You can take my place, darling. I don't really want to play anyway.

FELICIA

That's all right. You play.

MILDRED

But I'd much rather let you play. FONDLES AND EMBRACES FELICIA.

FELICIA

Really, mother, please.

MALCOLM

You can play the next game, sweetheart.

FELICIA

All right.

JOHN

Come on, Mildred.

MILDRED

I'll be right there. IN AN UNDERTONE TO FELICIA. Are you sure you feel well?

FELICIA

Yes, I feel very well.

JOHN

Mildred.

MILDRED

I'm coming. I'm coming. FELICIA FOLLOWS HER TO TABLE. SHE SITS.

JOHN

Hello, Felicia.

FELICIA

Hello, Uncle John.

JOHN

LAYS OUT TILES. I hear all you children had a big day today. Flat. Eleven. WRITES.

FELICIA

Yes, we did.

MILDRED

They went swimming. JOHN TURNS LAZY SUSAN.

JOHN

Carl's waiting out on the terrace. Why don't you go out and talk to him. You make me nervous standing around like that.

FELICIA

All right.

MILDRED

You don't have to go if you don't want to...Sit here by me.

FELICIA

That's all right. GOES TO FRENCH DOORS.

MILDRED

But come back soon. You'll want to play the next game.

FELICIA

Yes, I will. WANDERS OUT ONTO TERRACE. STANDS NEAR CARL.

MILDRED

I hope she'll be warm enough out there. It's getting chilly.

JOHN

She'll be fine. Do you want to go, Malcolm?

MALCOLM

Yes. Yes. Just a minute.

MILDRED

CALLING OUT TO FELICIA. Are you warm enough out there, darling?

FELICIA

Yes.

MILDRED

But it's getting cooler. Maybe you ought to come inside.

FELICIA

I'm all right, mother.

JOHN

Leave her alone. You're always nagging at her.

MALCOLM

She isn't nagging at her...

MILDRED

INTERRUPTING. I'm thinking of her welfare. Do you call that nagging? I suppose you never tell Anne what you think is best for her?

JOHN

Her mother takes care of that.

MILDRED

I suppose it isn't nagging when Phyllis does it?

JOHN

She doesn't keep at her every minute.

MILDRED

I don't keep at her every minute!

JOHN

It seems like it.

MILDRED

I love my daughter! I can't help it if I want to take care of her!

MALCOLM

She's a wonderful mother...

JOHN

INTERRUPTING. You're just like mother.

MILDRED

What do you mean just like mother? I'd be honored to be just like mother!

JOHN

It's your move, Malcolm.

MILDRED

I want to know what you meant by that, John!

I didn't

She was a

Malcolm..

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STANDS.

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JOHN

I didn't mean anything. Mother was a wonderful woman.

MILDRED

She was a wonderful woman!

JOHN

Malcolm...

MILDRED

You always like to say things to upset me. Do you get some kind of enjoyment out of it?

JOHN

I don't upset you. You upset yourself.

MILDRED

How do I upset myself! Because I want to know what you mean by remarks you make?

JOHN

I don't make remarks.

MILDRED

You make them to hurt me and upset me! You get such pleasure out of tormenting me!

JOHN

If you stop thinking about yourself so much, you wouldn't get tormented.

MILDRED

STANDS. Do you want to drive me crazy? Is that what you'd like?

MALCOLM

Shh. Shh. Dearest. Sit down...sit down...

MILDRED

You wait and see! That's what he'd like! That's what he's waiting for!

MALCOLM

Dearest. Dearest. He doesn't want that. Why should he want that? Look, your face is all wet. Do you have a handkerchief? WIPES HER FACE WITH HIS HANDKERCHIEF. HELPS HER SIT. Now you're more comfortable. MOVES HER CHAIR A LITTLE CLOSER TO THE TABLE.

MILDRED

He's a sadist. He always has been.

MALCOLM

He didn't say anything. He said you were like your mother. That isn't bad. You shouldn't get so excited over nothing.

MILDRED
Try and find out what he meant by that.

JOHN
Are we going to talk or are we going to play! I'm tired from working all day! I want to relax before I go to bed if I can! Can we act like adults long enough to finish this game now!

MALCOLM
We're going to play. We're going to play.

MILDRED
It doesn't mean anything to him, how I feel. What he does to me. It's his one pleasure out of life.

JOHN
It's your move, Malcolm.

MALCOLM
I know. I know. Just a minute. Just a minute...I'm thinking...

MILDRED
Nothing means anything to him. He doesn't have a heart, that's what's the matter with him.

MALCOLM
Shh. Shh. Let's just play. Think about the game, sweetheart. You'll feel better.

MILDRED
I hate this game. I don't know why I'm playing.

JOHN
Can't we have a little fun here? Why can't we just sit here quietly and play this game like any other normal people? Why do we always have to have this trouble? What's the matter with you, Mildred? If you don't want to play then get up and let Malcolm and me play in peace!

MILDRED
THEY REARRANGE THEIR TILES. SHORT PAUSE. It's a stupid game.

FELICIA
QUIETLY...Are they still arguing?

CARL
No.

FELICIA
When are they ever going to stop arguing.

CARL
I don't know. Never.

FELICIA

GOES TO FRENCH DOORS. I'm going for a walk.

MILDRED

Oh. You'd better get a jacket. It's getting cool.

FELICIA

I'll be all right.

MALCOLM

You do what your mother says.

MILDRED

If you walk by the house you can run in and get your jacket. It won't take you a minute.

FELICIA

All right. TURNS TO GO.

MILDRED

RISES AND CALLS AFTER HER. I thought you wanted to play with us!

FELICIA

WALKS SLOWLY OFF TERRACE RIGHT. No...I'd just like to take a walk... EXIT RIGHT.

MILDRED

IN DOORWAY. Don't forget your jacket! SHORT PAUSE. She gets sick so easily. This warm weather is deceptive. Look how cool it is all of a sudden, and all she's wearing is that little cotton dress...Look at the trees blowing...She just got over that bronchitis a few weeks ago...

MALCOLM

Oh well, now, sweetheart. Don't worry. She'll be all right. LAYS OUT TILES.

MILDRED

LOOKING OUT. ...Yes. Carl, would you run after her and make sure she gets her jacket.

CARL

Oh.

MILDRED

Hurry. Hurry. CARL GETS UP AND EXIT RIGHT OFF TERRACE.

JOHN

What word is that?

MALCOLM

Pots.

JOHN

Oh yes. I see it now. It looked like "stop" for a minute.

MALCOLM

TURNS LAZY SUSAN. Let's see. Oh, you know why? That's how you spell "pots" backwards.

JOHN

P. O. T. S. You could even make "tops" out of it.

MALCOLM

So you could. LIFTS TILES. Oh, now. Look at that. If I'd had "tops" I'd have had a triple letter score for "p". All I get now is, let me see: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. Eight points. Oh my.

JOHN

What would you have gotten the other way? PAUSE WHILE HE COUNTS. Twelve. You would have gotten twelve with "tops".

MALCOLM

Oh now! LAUGHS.

JOHN

LAUGHS. WRITES. That's life!

MALCOLM

This is some game. THEY LAUGH A LITTLE. If I'd cheated a little I could have made twelve points. A MOMENT'S PAUSE.

JOHN

Oh yes?

MALCOLM

Sure. Just look. I make a mistake and then I turn them around. CHANGES TILES. See? I got "tops". Twelve points. LAUGHS.

JOHN

All right. I'll let you have the four points.

MALCOLM

Really? You don't have to do that.

JOHN

ERASES ON SCORE PAD AND WRITES. Twelve points. That's all right. I'm away ahead of you anyway. LAUGHS.

MALCOLM

Oh sure! No wonder you're so kind to me! THEY LAUGH A LITTLE.

JOHN
You just better make sure I don't lose by four points!

MALCOLM
Well, that would be your hard luck!

JOHN
We'll see about that! TURNS LAZY SUSAN. Your turn, Mildred.

MILDRED
I wish this game were over already. I'm getting a headache from it! Can't you get somebody else to take my place?

MALCOLM
Where's Martin?

MILDRED
I don't know. He's in the study.

MALCOLM
Should I get him.

JOHN
Go ahead. He's a good player.

MALCOLM
GOES TO STUDY DOOR AND KNOCKS. Martin?

MARTIN
INSIDE. Yes?

MALCOLM
Are you busy right now? How would you like to finish a little scrabble game with us? My wife wants to stop playing in the middle...It's a pretty good game...

MARTIN
OPENS THE DOOR. Are you playing right now?

MALCOLM
We're in the middle of a game...

MILDRED
He doesn't want to play. Can't you see? You come and talk to me, Martin. Let them play by themselves.

MARTIN
I was doing some work.

MILDRED
You can do office work anytime. You come and talk to me now! I want to ask you something! SHORT PAUSE.

MARTIN

All right. Just a minute. GOES INTO STUDY AND TURNS OFF LIGHT.

MALCOLM

TO MILDRED. What about our game?

MILDRED

You can get somebody else. Ask Jack.

MALCOLM

Where is he? Is he sleeping? MARTIN COMES INTO HALL AND CLOSES STUDY DOOR. How about Jack? Do you think he'd like to play?

MARTIN

I don't know. Do you want me to ask him?

MALCOLM

If you would...That would be very nice of you.

MARTIN

I'll see if he's up. EXIT UPSTAIRS.

MILDRED

Why do you have to wake him up? Can't you play by yourselves?

MALCOLM

Shh. Shh. Jack likes to play. He'd be glad to come down.

JOHN

Don't worry, Mildred. If he doesn't want to play we're not going to force him. He can say "no" if he wants to.

MILDRED

Oh, I'm sure. To his new father-in-law. He's just about to say "no" to you.

JOHN

We're not going to force him, Mildred. If he doesn't want to play he doesn't have to. Nobody's going to force him. Will you please stop worrying about it.

MILDRED

That's what you think! He'll play even if he doesn't want to! He doesn't have any choice once you ask him!

MALCOLM

Shh. Shh. Mildred. Don't get so excited.

JOHN

You always have to get melodramatic, don't you! You always have to make trouble for everybody, and take the pleasure out of life for everyone, don't you.

MALCOLM

John. Mildred.

JOHN

I can't get a moment's peace in this house anymore!

MILDRED

Good! Good! I'm paying you back! JOHN PUSHES GAME OVER.

JOHN

Now are you happy! You've ruined my game for me! EXIT QUICKLY HALL LEFT.

MALCOLM

Mildred...Why do you act so crazy...

MILDRED

Leave me alone.

MALCOLM

John didn't do anything to you. Why do you act that way to him?

MILDRED

He doesn't have to do anything.

MALCOLM

Dearest...

MILDRED

Don't dearest me! MARTIN AND JACK COME DOWNSTAIRS.

MARTIN

He was getting up.

MALCOLM

Well...I guess the game has sort of gone kaput.

JACK

Well...SHORT PAUSE.

MILDRED

You and Jack can play by yourselves. I want to talk to Martin. Martin! Come out here and talk to me! I have something I want to talk to you about!

JACK

HE AND MARTIN COME DOWN INTO LIVING ROOM. What happened to the game?

MALCOLM

HE AND JACK STRAIGHTEN THE TILES. Nothing...we'll play by ourselves until Felicia comes back. HE AND JACK SLOWLY PREPARE THE GAME AND THEN SIT TO PLAY.

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MARTIN

What did you want to talk to me about?

MILDRED

TAKES HIS ARM AND LEADS HIM OUT ONTO TERRACE. Isn't it beautiful out here? Look at the sky! All those thousands, millions of stars! Thousands and thousands and millions and billions and trillions of stars! WALKS SLOWLY ACROSS TERRACE WITH HIM. Oh breezes, you breezes, breezes of the night! Alight! Alight! Upon my eyes and face and heart and breast do you alight! Do you alight!

CURTAIN

Act II

Immediately following Act I.

MILDRED

Oh, Martin. Isn't it wonderful out here? Isn't it glorious? Isn't this just the kind of night you've always dreamed of for a wedding? The whole universe is opened up to us tonight...And that wedding, oh that wedding! I envy them...No. It's not that I envy them...But they're so young. They're starting out...If only we all could... start over again...Each time we made a mistake to start over again, from the beginning...LAUGHS. Do you think that's a strange idea?

MARTIN

No.

MILDRED

No, Of course it isn't. Everyone would wish it...People make so many mistakes...What do you think of this wedding? Are you happy for your friends?

MARTIN

Yes, of course.

MILDRED

Of course. Why don't you have a girl to get married to yourself?

MARTIN

That's a rather personal question, Mrs. James.

MILDRED

Oh Martin! Let's not say personal question! Let's just speak to each other...even if just this once...openly, honestly, straight from the heart! Let us, oh can't we? Can't we just say what we feel? I want to tell you so many things. About how I feel. What I want. What I am. I feel as if I must tell someone. And I want to know what you are and what you want. Really I do. I feel very close to you tonight. I don't know. Maybe it was that talk we had before. You seem to understand. You seem to be interested...That's a wonderful thing between people, to be close to each other, to be able to talk to each other...

MARTIN

Mrs. James...

MILDRED

Don't call me that. Call me Milly. That's what they used to call me when I was younger. When I was your age.

MARTIN

Mrs. James...

MILDRED

Milly.

MARTIN

Milly...I don't...

MILDRED

Shh. Shh.

MARTIN

I don't understand.

MILDRED

What is there to understand? I want to open my heart to you! I want you to open yours to me!

MARTIN

I don't understand.

MILDRED

I need to cleanse myself. I need to speak some pure words. I need to have some free and beautiful conversation. I need a heart which is open and free and pure. I need to open up my mind, my heart. I've been stifled and suffocated. I want to open myself up again and feel life pouring through me.

MARTIN

I don't know...

MILDRED

Shh. Shh. Let's go away from here. I don't want them to hear us. They might contaminate us with their dead thoughts. HOLDING HIS ARM WALKS RIGHT ACROSS TERRACE.

MARTIN

I can't do this. STOPS HER.

MILDRED

What can't you do? Can't you go on living? Can't I watch you live? Can't I share in it and participate in it?

MARTIN

I can't...I don't understand...

MILDRED

You don't have to understand. There is nothing to understand. Just be yourself. Be what you are.

MARTIN

What about your husband?

MILDRED

My husband has nothing to do with this. This is my life. THEY WALK. I've had enough of them. They're trying to drive me crazy. They all are. I've got to get away from them. EXEUNT RIGHT OFF TERRACE.

MALCOLM

Got anything, Jack?

JACK

Well...Grey?

MALCOLM

Oh? Yes?

JACK

LAYS OUT TILES. That's all I've got.

MALCOLM

That's pretty good. Four letters. How many points do you get?

JACK

COUNTS. I don't know. I have to count.

PHYLLIS

ENTERS FROM HALL RIGHT WITH TEA AND POT ON A TRAY. Where's Mildred?

MALCOLM

She went outside with Martin.

PHYLLIS

GOES TO FRENCH DOORS. Mildred? TURNS BACK TO MALCOLM. Why is everybody disappearing around here...just when I make a pot of tea. STARTS TO WALK THROUGH LIVING ROOM. Does anybody want this tea? Its freshly made.

MALCOLM

Oh...Jack? Do you want some tea?

JACK

I don't know...

PHYLLIS

Well hurry and make up your minds. I've got work to do.

MALCOLM

I don't know...Well, you might as well leave it here. I guess I might have some.

PHYLLIS

PUTS TRAY ON BRIDGE TABLE. Do you think you'll want some, Jack?

JACK

Oh. I don't know. I'm not feeling too well...

PHYLLIS

What's the matter?

JACK

It's just my head.

PHYLLIS

What is it?

JACK

Oh...I've got this headache.

PHYLLIS

Have you taken anything for it? I'll get you some aspirin.

JACK

No, thank you. I've had a lot of aspirin already.

PHYLLIS

Why don't you lie down. What are you doing here anyway? Weren't you sleeping when I went up a little while ago?

JACK

Yes...I was...

PHYLLIS

Lie down here on the couch; nobody will disturb you. I'll get a coverlet for you. GOES TO HALL. It was silly of you to get up when you weren't feeling well. GOES TO STUDY.

JACK

I'm all right.

PHYLLIS

No. You don't look right. You're very pale and washed-out looking... How long have you had the headache?

JACK

Since this afternoon.

PHYLLIS

COMES INTO LIVING ROOM. Is it a bad one?

JACK

Well...yes. It's pretty bad. The whole back of my head...

PHYLLIS

Here, you just lie down. You'll feel better soon.

JACK

WALKS TO THE COUCH. I'm sort of used to it. I've been getting a lot of headaches this past year.

PHYLLIS

Oh. I didn't know that. Have you seen a doctor about them? JACK LIES DOWN. SHE COVERS HIM.

JACK

It's tension.

PHYLLIS

Have you been to a doctor? Maybe it isn't tension, maybe it's your eyes...or your sinuses.

JACK

No. It's tension. I've been to a doctor.

PHYLLIS

Do they give you anything for it?

JACK

Just aspirin. I take quite a lot. I have to take four or five at one time now...the effect of them wears off when you take them as much as I do.

PHYLLIS

Is that good for you? Doesn't it hurt the heart to take so many aspirin?

JACK

No. The doctor said it was all right. Nothing else works. I've tried everything. If I take a lot of them right away, then it clears up pretty soon. It's when I wait until the headache is bad that it lasts a long time and really hurts a lot.

PHYLLIS

Didn't you take them right away this afternoon?

JACK

Well, I couldn't, you see. I was playing tennis with Anne, and I didn't want to come all the way back just to get some aspirin.

PHYLLIS

Did you tell Anne about it? I'm sure she wouldn't have minded. She wouldn't want you to be in pain.

JACK

No...I didn't want to spoil the game for her. PHYLLIS SITS BESIDE HIM.

PHYLLIS

Well...she's upstairs now. She's feeling tense herself today. It's the wedding, I'm sure. SOOTHES HIS FOREHEAD. I'm sure you'll both be fine as soon as you're married. The bride and groom are expected to be nervous before their wedding. And believe me, they always are.

JACK

I'm sure not always. There probably are some men who don't get tense and have nervous headaches all the time.

PHYLLIS

SOOTHING HIS FOREHEAD. Don't you worry about that, Jack. You're a very sensitive person. You're not a crude bruiser. You're fine, and sensitive and very intelligent. You react strongly to things. That's the way Anne is. That's probably why you get along so well. You can have sympathy for each other's nervousness. That's the way it should be. We want you and Anne to be very happy. You'll have to take care of each other, you're both so sensitive and high-strung. I hope you can...Well, I'm sure everything will be all right. Mr. Brokenshire and myself will be right here to help if anything goes wrong...I mean if you ever need any advice or someone to talk to about problems or questions you have. Of course, nothing is going to go wrong. You're both intelligent, educated people. And you love each other very much. Anyone can see that. It shines out of you when the two of you are together...SMOOTHES HIS HAIR.

JACK

...My ears feel like they're stuffed with cotton. I can't keep my eyes open because it's too painful to focus on anything. My head feels like it's going to burst open and spill all the brains in it all over the couch.

PHYLLIS

Jack...

JACK

If only I could go to sleep now.

PHYLLIS

Do you want me to call the doctor?

JACK

I just want to go to sleep.

PHYLLIS

But you're talking so strangely. What's the matter? Are you in a lot of pain?

JACK

Yes. I just want to sleep. Please let me sleep.

PHYLLIS

Perhaps I'd better call the doctor.

JACK

Nobody can help me. It's my nerves. It's the constitution of my being. It's my essence. It's what I am.

PHYLLIS

Why are you talking so strangely?

JACK

I don't know. I must sleep. I must just close my mind now and go to sleep.

PHYLLIS

TO MALCOLM. I don't know what's the matter with these children. Did you ever see anything like it? EXIT HALL RIGHT.

MALCOLM

SMOKING HIS PIPE. I don't know. I don't know. HE BEGINS TO SET THE GAME UP AGAIN.

PHYLLIS

FROM OFF. Call me when Anne comes down. I want to talk to her!

MALCOLM

When I got married, it was one, two, three. I didn't have any time for getting nervous. They just tied us up and took us away, in the old days, Jack. Those women, they knew what they were doing. You ought to have gotten a woman like that. One of those women who knows what she's doing. Anne is a nice girl, but she just doesn't know...Oh... Well, she's a nice girl...I didn't mean to say...Well...We men got to get with a strong woman, Jack. We're just lost without them, I can tell you that. We make the money and keep the house up, and provide for the children, and we should let the women take care of everything else. They know where they're going. They've got the...broader view of life than we men do. They understand life better. Leave it up to them, I say. It's easier all around...Otherwise they raise a fuss anyway...We might as well let them have their way in the beginning... What do you think, Jack? Don't you agree with that?

JACK

I don't know what I agree with. I hate women. They drive me crazy.

MALCOLM

LAUGHS. Oh, well, now. I'm sure you...Oh, well, now.

JACK

I don't want to get married.

MALCOLM

Oh, come now, now. Everybody feels that way before they get married. It's perfectly natural.

JACK

Why do people get married, then, if nobody wants to?

MALCOLM

Oh, I can't answer that. I guess they get married because...STANDS. Maybe I better get Phyllis. You probably are feeling sick.

JACK

Don't you get her.

MALCOLM

Well...oh no. I just...

JACK

My mother died when I was very young. I've been on my own for a long time. I've never known many women. I'm used to taking care of myself. When all these women start in on me I feel like they're suffocating me. I don't know how to assert myself. I feel like I'm dying. They know all the answers. They're always telling you what to do. They don't let you alone for a minute.

MALCOLM

Well, I don't know. I don't think it's that bad. I love my wife. She's a good woman.

JACK

Your wife is a nervous wreck.

MALCOLM

Oh, come now, now.

JACK

I think I'm going to quit my job. I don't like it. I don't like this country either. I don't like anything about anything. SITS UP. I think I'll leave right now. I'm getting out of here. STANDS.

MALCOLM

Oh, now, now. Jack! Wait a minute! Let me get Phyllis.

JACK

Get your old Phyllis. She can't stop me. GOES UP THE STAIRS. I'll knock her down if she gets in my way. EXIT UPSTAIRS.

MALCOLM

HURRIES TO HALL. Phyllis! Phyllis!

PHYLLIS

HURRIES INTO HALL FROM RIGHT. What's the matter? Malcolm!

MALCOLM

Jack. He's going to leave. He says he's going to leave.

PHYLLIS

What do you mean "leave"?

MALCOLM

He says he doesn't want to get married. He's getting out of here.

PHYLLIS

Where is he?

MALCOLM

He went upstairs.

PHYLLIS

HURRIES UP THE STAIRS. What's the matter with him?

MALCOLM

HE MAY NOT KNOW IT, BUT THERE IS LAUGHTER IN HIM HERE. He says he's going to quit his job. He sounds like he's going to leave the country.

PHYLLIS

John. Where's John? See if you can find John. EXIT UPSTAIRS.

MALCOLM

John! John! EXIT LEFT HALL.

JACK

FROM UPSTAIRS. SHOUTING. No! No! I'm leaving.

PHYLLIS

FROM UPSTAIRS. It's just your headache. It's the pain you're in. Pain always distorts people's feelings.

JACK

It's not the pain. It's not the pain. I'm getting out of here! You're killing me. You're all killing me, all of you!

PHYLLIS

What will people say?

JACK

I don't care what they say. It's none of their business!

PHYLLIS

But what about Anne? What about Anne? You can't be serious. You love each other. Oh, don't pack anymore. Leave your clothes alone.

JACK

No! SOUND OF A SLAP. Just keep away from me!

PHYLLIS
Oh, you bad boy, you. You bad boy!

ANNE
UPSTAIRS. What's the matter? What are you doing?

JACK
I'm leaving, that's all. I'm just leaving. RUNS DOWNSTAIRS WITH HIS SUITCASE.

ANNE
RUNS DOWN AFTER HIM. Jack! But why? What?

JACK
IN HALL, TURNS THIS WAY AND THAT, TRYING TO DECIDE WHICH WAY TO GO. Because! Because I just have to get out of here.

ANNE
HOLDS HIM. Jack! But why? But why? WEEPS.

JACK
DISTRACTED. PHYLLIS STANDS ON THE STAIRS, WEEPING, HOLDING ONTO THE BANNISTER. You're killing me! You're all killing me.

ANNE
SINKS TO THE FLOOR, HOLDS HIS LEGS. Oh, Jack, please! Don't leave me. Don't leave me. I'm sorry about before. I'm sorry I was so fresh and bad. Oh please, please. Don't leave me. I can't live without you.

JACK
And I can't live with all of you, with this house, with all these people telling me what to do.

ANNE
They won't, Jack. They won't. I promise. I promise you.

JACK
Oh God, my head. My head!

ANNE
Oh, Jack. Please. I need you. I need you.

JACK
My head, My head. STARTS TO SINK DOWN.

ANNE
Jack. I love you. I need you. Don't leave me. I can't live without you.

JACK
Oh, no. No. HOLDING HIS HEAD. SINKS DOWN BESIDE HER ON THE FLOOR. SHE EMBRACES HIM.

ANNE

I'll take care of you, Jack. Oh, I promise. I promise. I'll take such good care of you.

JACK

LIES ON THE FLOOR AND ANNE HOLDS AND SOOTHES HIM. No. No. I can't... I can't...

PHYLLIS

AFTER A MOMENT, COMES DOWNSTAIRS. Let's get him upstairs. Here, let me help you pick him up. THEY RAISE JACK, WHO IS INCAPACITATED. HE HOLDS HIS HEAD AND GROANS. We'll just get him upstairs and into bed. THEY TAKE HIM SLOWLY UPSTAIRS. It's that headache...Pain sometimes drives people right out of their minds...Don't think anything about what he said...He didn't mean a word of it...Watch, He'll apologize as soon as he feels better...He's so exhausted...and so over-wrought... nervous people like you and Jack ought to be put under lock and key... thank goodness you two have somebody to take care of you...EXEUNT UPSTAIRS...I don't know what's going to happen to you when I'm not here anymore to take care of you...SILENCE FOR A FEW MOMENTS.

MALCOLM

ENTERS FROM HALL LEFT. Phyllis! Phyllis!

PHYLLIS

COMES DOWNSTAIRS. Shh. Shh. HURRIES ACROSS HALL TO RIGHT. I'm going to call the doctor. Did you find John?

MALCOLM

FOLLOWS HER. No. I don't know where he went to.

PHYLLIS

That's just as well. It was nothing. We put him to bed, and he's quiet now. I'm going to call the doctor. EXEUNT LEFT. He's in so much pain, that poor boy. My heart bleeds for him.

CARL

COMES FROM TERRACE RIGHT AND GOES TO FRENCH DOORS. LOOKS IN AND THEN ENTERS LIVING ROOM. Mrs. James? Mrs. James?

MALCOLM

COMES INTO HALL. Yes? Did you want me?

CARL

I was supposed to see that Felicia got her jacket?

MALCOLM

Yes?

CARL

Well...she didn't get it. She went down to the lake. I was going to go after her, but I thought I should come back and tell you she didn't get her jacket.

MALCOLM

Oh, yes. Well, thank you.

CARL

Do you want me to do anything else?

MALCOLM

I don't know anything about that...Mrs. James isn't here right now, I guess. She'd have to tell you. I don't know what to tell you. She takes care of that kind of thing.

CARL

Well, all right...It's getting a little cold out, though. It's pretty damp down by the lake at night.

MALCOLM

Oh...well...Do you think Felicia will stay there long? She'll probably come right back, don't you think, if she gets chilly?

CARL

I don't know...

MALCOLM

Well, do you think you should take something along for her to put on?

CARL

I don't know...I don't even know where she is now. She was walking along. I don't know where she was going.

MALCOLM

Oh...Well then...I guess you just better wait until Mrs. James gets back and tell her about it. She'll know what to do.

CARL

Yes, sir.

MALCOLM

All right...TURNS TO GO.

CARL

Oh, Sir. Do you know if Anne is around?

MALCOLM

She's resting upstairs.

CARL

Well, is Martin in the study, do you know?

MALCOLM

Oh, no, no. He went with Mrs. James. They went out for some air.

CARL

Thank you.

MALCOLM

They'll be back soon. You just wait here.

PHYLLIS

ENTERS HALL FROM RIGHT. Dr. Brown's office is going to call him. He had an emergency near here. STARTS UP THE STAIRS. I wonder who it could have been...He should be here soon, they said...You just send him upstairs when he comes. EXIT UPSTAIRS.

CARL

Who's sick?

MALCOLM

It's nothing. Don't worry about it. Jack has a little headache, that's all.

CARL

Well, why is she calling the doctor if it's just a headache?

MALCOLM

Oh well, I don't know...It probably hurts him quite a bit. He was a little delirious before.

CARL

Delirious?

MALCOLM

Oh well. He was saying a lot of strange things. He wasn't acting like himself at all.

CARL

What was he saying?

MALCOLM

Oh, nothing, nothing. It's nothing that would interest you. We don't want to talk about that. It's unhealthy. It's not good. We should talk about something pleasant. Something healthy and pleasant. We shouldn't fill our minds with unhealthy thoughts. That's not good. That's not good at all.

CARL

Yes, sir.

MALCOLM

Would you like to play a little two-handed game of scrabble with me? It looks like everybody else has stepped out.

CARL

Well, I'm not very good at that...

MALCOLM

Yes...Yes...Hmm...Hmm. SMOKES HIS PIPE. FIDDLES WITH THE TILES. It's a nice pleasant way to relax and spend the time...It's a good game. Educational. It's good for your mind. Builds up a vocabulary. Makes you think fast. I like it. It's a good game.

CARL

All right, sir. ANNE COMES DOWN THE STAIRS. Hello, Anne.

ANNE

WALKS SLOWLY THROUGH THE LIVING ROOM TOWARDS FRENCH DOORS. Hello, Carl.

MALCOLM

How is he?

ANNE

He's all right. GOES OUT ONTO THE TERRACE.

MALCOLM

You don't want to go out there, Anne. It's getting chilly.

ANNE

No...CARL FOLLOWS HER OUTSIDE.

MALCOLM

Well, all right. I don't think your Mother would like it...going to leave me all alone in here, hmm? Well, well...that's all right. You young people have your own lives. I'll just sit here and enjoy my pipe...It sure is a quiet evening...SITS ON COUCH, SMOKING HIS PIPE.

CARL

Anne? MALCOLM DOES NOT HEAR THEIR CONVERSATION.

ANNE

What do you want, Carl?

CARL

Is there anything the matter?

ANNE

No.

CARL

I wish I could help you.

ANNE

There's nothing wrong, Carl...There's nothing you can help me with.

CARL

What's the matter, Anne?

ANNE

Oh, Carl...Jack...he's not happy.

CARL

How do you know?

ANNE

He doesn't want to get married.

CARL

Why doesn't he?

ANNE

Oh...It's the responsibility. It's everything. I don't know what it is.

CARL

But you're going to get married, aren't you?

ANNE

I guess so. I don't know. WALKS RIGHT AIMLESSLY.

CARL

Do you want to?

ANNE

I suppose so.

CARL

Well, you'll get married then. Everything will be fine after you get married.

ANNE

I don't know.

CARL

Oh, Anne...I wish I could help you. I want to help you.

ANNE

There's nothing you can do.

CARL

Can I...Can I? TRIES TO PUT HIS ARMS AROUND HER. Can I just comfort you?

ANNE

Carl. MOVES AWAY.

CARL

Oh, I'm sorry. I just want to comfort you. FOLLOWS HER WITH HIS ARMS OUT. I just want to make you feel better. I want you to be happy.

ANNE

Carl!

CARL

If only I could help you. I want to help you so much.

ANNE

You can't help me. Stop that. BURSTS INTO TEARS. Do you want to drive me crazy too?

CARL

No...no...no. Oh, Don't cry. Don't Cry, Anne. PUTS HIS ARM AROUND HER SHOULDERS. Oh Anne...Oh, I love you, Anne...

ANNE

Oh no, don't. Don't.

CARL

I do love you.

ANNE

I can't stand this.

CARL

I wish you could be marrying me. I wish I had...I wish I were older. If I were older and had a job. I would ask you to marry me.

ANNE

Oh, no. No. Don't say that.

CARL

PATTING AND SOOTHING HER SHOULDERS. If only I could be marrying you. I would take such good care of you. I would love you and take care of you...I would never hurt you or do bad things to you. We would be so happy.

ANNE

Oh, no. No.

CARL

I would be better for you than Jack...

ANNE

INTERRUPTING. No! NO! Don't say that. Don't say that.

CARL

Oh, I would take such good care of you. I would never make you cry or feel unhappy...

ANNE

Stop! Stop!

CARL

EMBRACES HER. Oh, I love you so much.

ANNE

I can't. I can't. Oh, please. Please...I'm so weak...I'm so weak... I must...sit down...Oh let me sit down...

CARL

No, no. Stay up. Lean on me. Let me help you. Hold onto me. Let me hold you up.

ANNE

I'm falling! I'm falling!

CARL

Hold onto me. Hold onto me!

ANNE

Oh. Oh. CARL TRIES TO KEEP HER UP, BUT SHE SINKS TO THE GROUND AND LIES THERE. HE KNEELS.

CARL

Why didn't you hold onto me? All you had to do was hold on. I would have held you up. I would have helped you.

ANNE

You don't know anything about it. You're too young. Life isn't that simple.

CARL

Anne...get up. Don't lie there like that. Please.

ANNE

No. No. Just leave me alone.

CARL

Anne. Let me help you. I'll get a chair.

ANNE

I don't want a chair. I want to lie here. I want to get dirty and be ugly. I want to be stepped on and spat on.

CARL

Anne...

ANNE

Go ahead. That would be the best thing you could do for me.

CARL

What?

ANNE

Step on me. Spit on me.

CARL

Oh, Anne.

ANNE

Go on. If you want to help me.

CARL

No...I can't...I don't want to.

ANNE

Don't you understand? I'm no good for anything. My life is a farce. I'm going to marry a man who doesn't want to get married, but we're going to get married anyway.

CARL

He wants to marry you.

ANNE

A lot you know about it.

CARL

He loves you.

ANNE

Ha, Ha, Ha. Life isn't that simple.

CARL

Oh, Anne.

ANNE

My life is a joke. A dirty old joke. I hate it. I hate me. I'm despicable and disgusting. How can you stand me?

CARL

Anne, don't.

ANNE

GETS UP SLOWLY, BRUSHES OFF HER HANDS. All right, then. If you're not going to kick me or spit on me...

CARL

Anne!

ANNE

It was very nice of you to want to take care of me...but to tell you the truth, I'm not worth it. Really I'm not. I'm not good enough for someone like you.

CARL

Yes you are. I'M not good enough for...

ANNE

INTERRUPTING. Go be with some nice girl, like Felicia. Somebody who's still alive.

CARL

Anne...

ANNE

Jack and me. We're a pair. The two of us. GOES INTO THE LIVING ROOM AND WALKS UPSTAGE.

MALCOLM

Anne? Coming in already?

ANNE

Yes, Uncle Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Want to play a little scrabble?

ANNE

I'm going to bed now, Uncle Malcolm. STARTS UP THE STAIRS.

MALCOLM

Oh? So early?

ANNE

GOING UPSTAIRS. I'm tired, Uncle Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Oh. Well, then. If you're tired. That's very sensible. Have a good rest.

ANNE

Thank you, Uncle Malcolm.

MALCOLM

Good Night, then.

ANNE

EXIT UPSTAIRS. Good night.

MALCOLM

CALLING OUT. Are you still out there, Carl?

CARL

...Yes, sir.

MALCOLM

I think I'll come out and get a little fresh air myself.

CARL

STANDS UP. Yes, sir.

MALCOLM

COMING OUT ONTO THE TERRACE. It's certainly a beautiful night, Carl, don't you think? A little too quiet, though. I like it when something's going on. You know. I like to have some fun. It's too bad their television set is broken. I suppose I could go home and watch it at home...but I'd better wait around for Mildred. She wouldn't know where I was...I wonder what happened to everybody tonight? I've never seen a quiet evening like this. There's nobody around. Where did they all go of a sudden, do you know? A little while ago we were all here having a good game of scrabble, then, poof, in a quarter of an hour everybody's gone. What do you think, Carl? It's a little unusual, don't you think?

CARL

Yes, sir. SITS ON A TERRACE CHAIR.

MALCOLM

You don't have to call me sir. I'm not anybody. Just plain Malcolm James...We've just got the one daughter, you know...I would have liked to have more children...but Mildred. Well, she's a high strung sort of person. She was afraid she couldn't worry about more than two people at a time. That's Felicia and me. LAUGHS. So she just thought if she was going to do a good job she'd better concentrate on the family she had... Well, I don't blame her. SHORT PAUSE. I'm not too practical, you know. I don't think of those finer details myself. I leave all that sort of thing up to her...It's easier all the way around. I just leave all that up to her. SHORT PAUSE. So you don't worry about calling me sir. We've certainly known you long enough to be friendly, don't you think? I've known you since you were a baby. You and Anne and Felicia. Of course Anne is older than you and Felicia, but the three of you always played together. Life was good in those days. SHORT PAUSE. Not that it's not good now...but you were always a polite little fellow...Your father. He certainly was a stickler for that kind of thing...We've missed your Father. He was a good man. A really solid man...I always admired him, you know. I always really did admire him. He certainly didn't let anybody tell him what to do...and he always had his eyes open. He had his finger on the pulse of things. He always knew just what to do...a born leader. He certainly was a born leader, your father was. You'd do well if you could be like him. He was a real man, that man...I always wished I were more like him...Well, that damn war...It took away all the best men from us...Ah...SMOKES HIS PIPE.

CARL

CRYING. Oh sir. Oh sir.

MALCOLM

Well now, what's that? You're not crying, are you?

CARL

Oh sir. Oh, please, Mr. James.

MALCOLM

Well, what can I do? What do you want me to do?

CARL

Oh sir...I don't know.

MALCOLM

Well, just a minute. Let me get Phyllis. She'll know...HURRIES INTO THE LIVING ROOM. Phyllis. Phyllis! CALLS FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS. Phyllis! Phyllis!

PHYLLIS

HURRYING DOWN THE STAIRS. Shh. Shh. What is it? Jack is just dropping off to sleep.

MALCOLM

Well, it's Carl, from next door. He's sitting out on the terrace crying.

PHYLLIS

What is he...?

MALCOLM

INTERRUPTING. I don't know. He just started crying.

PHYLLIS

WALKS TOWARD FRENCH DOORS. What did you say to him?

MALCOLM

FOLLOWS HER. I didn't say anything. We were talking, and he just started crying.

PHYLLIS

HURRIES TO CARL. Carl, what's the matter?

MALCOLM

BEHIND HER SOFTLY. I was just saying something about his father...

PHYLLIS

LOW. Oh, you fool. And you don't know why he's crying! SHE EMBRACES CARL'S HEAD AND PRESSES IT AGAINST HERSELF. Shh. Shh. Baby. Don't cry. Your father is happy. He's happy now.

CARL

It's not that.

PHYLLIS

KNEELS BESIDE HIM AND SMOOTHES HIS HAIR. You miss him. Of course you do. He was a wonderful man. But death is something we have to accept. Think how happy he is now where he is. Think about that. Remember, you have your whole life ahead of you. Think how he'd want you to be a man, to be like he was. A strong, brave, wonderful man. HOLDS HIS HEAD AGAINST HER BODY. We all loved him. We all miss him. Shh. Shh... It was so long ago. You must stop grieving. TO MALCOLM. I didn't know he was still so...TO CARL. Shh. Shh. Baby. Don't cry. Don't cry. Oh you poor darling. How I wish I could help you! Give you some strength! If I could take your burden on me! You're so young. TO MALCOLM. Why do the young have to suffer. Why can't they at least be spared! ROCKS CARL AGAINST HERSELF.

MALCOLM

Oh well now. Well now...now.

PHYLLIS

Here now, baby. Shh. Shh. I'll call your mother. She'll come and get you. Shh. Shh. Try to think about something nice...Why don't you think about Anne's wedding...that's a happy and good thing to think about...Malcolm, you stay here with him. I want to call his Mother.

MALCOLM

Oh, now Phyllis. I wouldn't know...let me call...

PHYLLIS

You wouldn't know what to say...STANDS. Here, just come beside him. Come on now. Here. At least put your hand on him. Hold him. Hold him, for God's sake, what's the matter with you? Comfort him a little...He won't bite you. It's your responsibility in the first place.

MALCOLM

HIS HAND ON CARL'S HEAD. LOW. Oh, come now, Phyllis. You don't have to...I'm not that bad...

PHYLLIS

Oh no you're not! GOES INTO LIVING ROOM AND WALKS UP. Insensitive... I'd like to see how you'd do if you were left to yourself for more than a minute without somebody to clean up after you. EXIT RIGHT THROUGH HALL. A MOMENT'S SILENCE.

MALCOLM

Hm. Hmm. You don't mind...If I take my hand away...do you? It's getting a little tired...out like that...You don't mind...TAKES HIS HAND AWAY. FILLS HIS PIPE. Hmm. Hmm. These things...we just have to hold on...Think of pleasant things...try and drive the bad thoughts away...I don't know what to tell you. PUTS PIPE IN HIS MOUTH. Hmm. Hmm. WALKS AROUND AIMLESSLY. I'd like a good game of scrabble now... That takes your mind off things fast enough. It's a good game. The man who invented that game ought to get a medal...I'd give him a medal... JOHN COMES SLOWLY ONTO THE TERRACE FROM THE RIGHT.

MALCOLM

We were just talking about a game of scrabble. Do you want to join us?

JOHN

Don't give me any of your scrabble. I've had enough scrabble and enough trouble to last me a lifetime.

MALCOLM

Yes. Well. We were talking about how it takes your mind off things.

JOHN

Don't get your mind on things it has to get off! Don't get on them in the first place.

MALCOLM

Well...

JOHN

You just have to make up your mind to it. The trouble is people don't have any moral fibre! Their minds are so weak, they drive themselves crazy and everybody else around them! We've got to have some control over ourselves. That's your wife's trouble. She never had any control over herself. Always having these tempers, these nervous fits of hers. Well, I tell you I'm sick and tired of them. They've just about brought me to the end of my rope! I've had enough of them! Do you hear me! I've had enough of them.

MALCOLM

Well, she's your sister...

JOHN

THUNDERING. She was her mother's daughter!

MALCOLM

Oh...Oh.

JOHN

And I listened to my father. I took after my father. A man who had to put up with the same nonsense day after day. There's nothing worse than a nervous woman, I tell you. My mother put herself into her grave and almost ruined my father into the bargain, except that he's a strong man, God bless him. But she was always unhappy. Always complaining. Nervous attacks...Screaming. Crying. Never a moment's peace from one day to the next. I tell you that woman almost drove my father out of his mind!

MALCOLM

Well...I never heard any of that. Whenever Mildred spoke of your mother...

JOHN

Oh, Mildred! Of course! She and her mother. Two of a kind. Always crying on each other's shoulders. Lying in bed together half the time with some ailment or other. Of course Mildred has nice things to say about her mother...She was cut from the same cloth. Both of them sick, useless, emotional...! Women like that ought to be wiped off the face of the earth! They're no good for anything!

MALCOLM

Why I don't think Mildred...She's a good woman. I don't think you ought to...

JOHN

INTERRUPTING. What do you know about it? You let her get her own way in everything. But my father wanted some order in his house. He wanted to be the master in his own house. You try that and you'll see what a good woman she is. Something happens to a certain kind of woman when a man tries to be the boss. She can't stand it. It goes against her grain. She starts going crazy when she can't have her own way. That's Mildred and her mother. Well, you have to bear down on them. That's the only answer. A man has got to be the boss. That's what my father did and that's what I do.

MALCOLM

Your <u>father</u> didn't have much success, from what you said.

JOHN

My father! He got into trouble because he married a spoiled woman. A woman used to getting her own way. If he'd married a woman like Phyllis he would have done all right. Now, Phyllis is a good woman. She was brought up right. Her father was the boss in her home. He taught her right. Believe you me, I would have died an unmarried man than get myself tied up with one of those spoiled women!

MALCOLM

I'm happy with my "nervous" woman! She takes care of everything just fine!

JOHN

Well, that's so if you think so.

MALCOLM

What do you mean by that?

JOHN

Just what I said.

MALCOLM

Do you think something's wrong with my life?

JOHN

If it's the life you like, then it's the life you like. It isn't the kind of life I want to live, that's all...Mildred is a fine woman... She's just a little high strung.

MALCOLM

Well...that's what I think.

JOHN

...I'm sorry I started in on Mildred like that, Malcolm. I hope you'll forgive me. But I'm at the end of my rope with this wedding and everybody's nerves. I can't take it anymore, I tell you. I'll be glad when it's all over and we can get back to normal. I need my peace and quiet, I tell you. That's what it all comes down to. I just need my peace and quiet, that's all.

MALCOLM

Well, I don't like you talking that way...about my wife. It's not that she's high strung...she's just very sensitive...She reacts strongly to things...she has a very warm heart.

JOHN

I know. I know, Malcolm. She's my sister. She's a good woman.

MALCOLM

Yes she is.

JOHN

Well...

MALCOLM

And I don't agree with you...There's not just one way to live...Some husbands and wives...the husband doesn't have to beat the wife down. He can be the boss in a different way...There doesn't have to be a boss...The both of them can be equal.

JOHN

That's what I say. If you like your life, then it's good for you. Everybody is different.

MALCOLM

That's right. That's what I think.

JOHN

Yes...I don't like to argue. I always feel bad when I do...I hope you forgive me, Malcolm. I didn't mean to go off like that...It's just that...I'm at the end...of my rope...I hope my little girl's going to have a good life. I tried to bring her up right. I just hope that that young boy...

PHYLLIS

COMES OUT ONTO THE TERRACE. Oh John. Where did you go? We were looking everywhere for you.

JOHN

Don't you start in on me, now. I've had enough trouble for one day.

PHYLLIS

I'm not starting in on you, dearest. I just wanted to know where you had got to. Don't get upset.

JOHN

Upset. Upset. I'm not upset. I'm all right.

PHYLLIS

You look upset.

JOHN

I said don't start in on me.

PHYLLIS

Shh. Shh, John. I just said you looked a little tired.

JOHN

That's not what you said.

PHYLLIS

Shh. Shh. Let's not argue.

JOHN

I'm not arguing. Who's arguing?

PHYLLIS

Nobody. Nobody's arguing. Shh. Shh. Go inside and lie down. I'll bring you some hot tea in a minute.

JOHN

I don't want any tea...

PHYLLIS

Yes. All right, dearest. But go inside and lie down anyway. You look so tired.

JOHN

WALKS TOWARD FRENCH DOORS. What are you going to do out here?

PHYLLIS

Nothing. I just want to tell Carl something.

JOHN

Carl? Where's Carl?

PHYLLIS

He's sitting right here.

JOHN

Why is he so quiet?

PHYLLIS

He's not so quiet. He's just sitting here.

JOHN

All right. I'm going to go lie down for awhile. Are you going to come in?

PHYLLIS

Yes, dearest. I'll come upstairs in just a minute. JOHN WALKS THROUGH LIVING ROOM AND EXIT UPSTAIRS. His mother isn't home. I called next door on the other side but they didn't know where she went. We'd better not let him go home alone when he's feeling like this.

CARL

I'm all right now.

PHYLLIS

Oh Carl. I didn't know you were listening.

CARL

STANDS. Yes.

PHYLLIS

You'd better stay here with us until your mother gets home. I don't like to see you wandering off by yourself like this.

CARL

I'm all right.

PHYLLIS

I don't think you are. You look very pale to me. You probably can't judge your own condition right now. I think you'd better come in and lie down for awhile. I'll keep calling your mother until she gets home and then she can come for you. That would be better.

CARL

No. I'm going to leave now. STARTS TO WALK RIGHT.

PHYLLIS

Carl. I think you'd better stay here. You're not acting like yourself.

CARL

No. HE WALKS RIGHT.

PHYLLIS

Now you just wait a minute, Carl. I'm telling you this for your own good.

CARL

No. I have to go now. EXIT RIGHT.

MALCOLM

CALLS AFTER HIM. Maybe you could look for Felicia...If you see her on your way..tell her to go home and get her jacket. Her mother will get angry!

CARL

FROM OFF. Yes. I will.

MALCOLM

Hmm. Hmm. Her mother would be very upset...She went off without her jacket...WALKS AIMLESSLY. Hmmm. SMOKES PIPE.

PHYLLIS

Oh, that boy! These children! I don't know what to make of them. They're all acting so badly tonight. GOES INTO THE HOUSE. It's as if we had a cage of wild animals here and they all had the heebeejeebees. WALKS UP. MALCOLM FOLLOWS HER.

MALCOLM

Well...the heebeejeebees. I haven't heard anybody use that word for years...PHYLLIS STARTS TO WALK UPSTAIRS. Can I help you with anything upstairs, Phyllis?

PHYLLIS

No thanks, Malcolm. There's nothing to do.

MALCOLM

Maybe I could just sit here...

PHYLLIS

EXIT UPSTAIRS. It's all right, Malcolm. I've got everything under control. Send the doctor up when he comes.

MALCOLM

It's just that it's so lonely down here...and I don't have anything to do...Everybody else seems to have gone somewhere...Phyllis? SHORT PAUSE. Well, hmm. Hmm. Maybe I could take a little nap. KNOCKS OUT PIPE AND LIES DOWN ON THE COUCH. COVERS HIMSELF WITH JACK'S COVERLET. That's what I should have done hours ago. It's the best way to spend the evening anyway, if you ask me. Father Brokenshire has the right idea...a man's got to take care of himself...if he wants to...live right...

CURTAIN

ct III

An hour later.

PHYLLIS

ROM OFF LEFT HALL, AT THE FRONT DOOR. MALCOLM IS SLEEPING ON THE OUCH. Yes, I will. Thank you, doctor. Good night. FRONT DOOR LOSES. PHYLLIS ENTERS THE LIVING ROOM. My God, my God. What errible news...COMES DOWN RATHER AIMLESSLY. Malcolm. Malcolm... OMES AROUND THE COUCH AND SHAKES HIS SHOULDER. SHE PULLS THE CHAIR OVER AND SITS BESIDE HIM. Malcolm, listen.

MALCOLM

Yes?

PHYLLIS

You remember I said the doctor had an emergency call near here? I couldn't think who it was?

MALCOLM

Yes?

PHYLLIS

He told me it was Mrs. Grouse.

MALCOLM

Mrs. Grouse?

PHYLLIS

My cleaning woman.

MALCOLM

Well...what was it?

PHYLLIS

Oh, it's terrible. Terrible.

MALCOLM

What...

PHYLLIS

She's had this condition for years. It's been eating away at her all this time, while she was working here all these years, it's been eating away inside her...

MALCOLM

What...

PHYLLIS

And I didn't know to look at her...How could you. She worked so hard. She just had a pain in her back. But it was there...all the time... eating away...This condition...This terrible thing...

MALCOLM

› what happened...SITS UP.

PHYLLIS

ıe doctor said she had a hemorrhage. Her daughter called him. She's ever been to a doctor...He said he took one look at her back...He ›esn't know how she's been walking around...He said he could feel it ther places too...it's probably all over her insides...What a horrible ıing!

MALCOLM

›u mean...he could feel it?

PHYLLIS

e doesn't know how she's still alive...how she was walking around.. e said the pain must have...A MOMENT'S SILENCE.

MALCOLM

ETS UP AND WALKS TO FRENCH DOORS. I haven't been feeling...VOICE FADES.

PHYLLIS

ıat?

MALCOLM

ı...nothing...nothing...GOES OUT ONTO THE TERRACE AND LOOKS UP AT THE TARS.

PHYLLIS

e says she'll be dead soon...maybe even now...That good woman. She ›rked so hard...She was here just this morning...I said...I told ildred that...she didn't...like to dust...Oh that poor woman...but ›body could wash floors the way she did...the poor woman...the poor ›man...the pain she must have gone through...I used to complain about er...if I had only known...I would have helped her...taken her to the ›ctor...but she never complained...just this pain in her back... uscles...I couldn't know...how could I know...I don't know about these hings...she came to work...if she could come to work...It isn't my ault...I'm not almighty...I don't know everything...I do what I can.. t's not my fault...How could I have helped her anyway?...What could I ave done?...And all these children too...they're so nervous...I don't now what to do...everything seems to be slipping out of my grasp... 'm getting older...I can't do what I used to be able to do...Why must t be me who has to take the burden of everything?...Why is it always e?...and I know everyone resents my taking the responsibility...but hat if I didn't? What if I just let things go on? What would happen hen? Someone has got to take the responsibility...someone has got to o it...even if that person isn't perfect...it's better than nothing... t's better than nobody's doing it...Don't you think so, Malcolm?

MR. BROKENSHIRE

OMES DOWN THE STAIRS. IN HIS BATHROBE. Did you hear anything, hyllis?

PHYLLIS
ther Brokenshire. What are you doing up so late?

MR. BROKENSHIRE
don't know. I couldn't sleep. I thought I heard something...WALKS
ROUGH HALL TO RIGHT. ...Everything is quiet enough though. Maybe
m hungry. EXIT RIGHT.

PHYLLIS
it a minute, Father Brokenshire. I'll help you...

MR. BROKENSHIRE
ROM OFF. I'll just warm myself some milk.

PHYLLIS
ALKS OUT AFTER HIM. I'll make you some toast...You always like toast
th your milk...EXIT HALL RIGHT. Let me help you, Father Brokenshire.

MALCOLM
N THE TERRACE. Mildred? Is that you? WALKS OFF TERRACE RIGHT.
ildred?

JACK
ROM UPSTAIRS. No...I'm all right...

ANNE
ROM UPSTAIRS. Lean on me a little more.

JACK
E AND ANNE WALK SLOWLY DOWN THE STAIRS. Let me hold onto the bannister.
don't want to hurt you.

ANNE
h no. I'm strong enough. I don't think you should exert yourself too
uch.

JACK
'm not exerting myself.

ANNE
ut if you use the bannister...

JACK
h no...I don't think that's...exertion...

ANNE
HEY COME DOWN INTO THE HALL. Do you want to rest first?

JACK
'm all right, Anne. I want to get outside in the fresh air.

ANNE
ope you won't over-tire yourself, darling.

JACK
We can go slowly.

ANNE
l right, darling. THEY WALK SLOWLY THROUGH THE LIVING ROOM. Can
ı tell me now what you were going to tell me?

JACK
...it's nothing...I was thinking maybe...I was thinking about maybe
anging my job. Well...actually, of quitting work altogether for
hile.

ANNE
y?

JACK
HEY STAND AND LOOK AT EACH OTHER. Well, Anne...

ANNE
es?

JACK
ell...SHORT PAUSE.

ANNE
h, darling...SHE EMBRACES HIM. HE PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND HER.

JACK
. don't know what to do.

ANNE
)on't say that.

JACK
...But I really don't.

ANNE
Yes you do. You do know what to do.

JACK
No I don't, Anne. I really don't.

ANNE
...Then what's going to become of us?

JACK
We can just stick with each other.

ANNE
You want us to stick together?

JACK

.

ANNE

don't want to not get married?

JACK

I want to get married...to marry you.

ANNE

'll stick together then.

JACK

TER A MOMENT. LOW. Well, listen. After all...what else can we
...

ANNE

LLING BACK. What do you mean?

JACK

ISPERS. I mean...I'm not able to quit my job if I want to...I'll
ver be able to do anything I want to...I'm a weakling...I don't know
ything...I can't do anything...I never will...

ANNE

on't talk like that!

JACK

HISPERS. I'll never be good for anything...I'm a dead man...I'll go
o work and come back...and I'll never know anything or be anything...

ANNE

hy are you talking like that! It's not true!

JACK

HISPERS. It is true...it is true...I'll never be anything...I'm
rapped and caught...my headaches will finish me off...it's all the
ension...

ANNE

The tension! What tension! What are you talking about! What do you
mean trapped and caught!

JACK

LAUGHS. SOFTLY. By everything...by everyone...I'm lost in it...with
my headaches...LAUGHS SOFTLY. But don't worry...everything will be
all right...we'll get along all right...It's nothing to worry about...

ANNE

I think you're going crazy! You're going crazy! Why are you talking
like that!

JACK

's nothing...it's just the pain...don't pay attention to anything I'm ying...we'll be all right...just you believe me...we'll be all right .LAUGHS SOFTLY.

ANNE

Jack!!

PHYLLIS

RRIES INTO THE HALL FROM THE RIGHT. HURRIES TO THEM. My God! at's the matter!

ANNE

ck! Look at him! He's going crazy!

JACK

AUGHING SOFTLY. No, I'm not...we were just talking...

PHYLLIS

hat is he doing down here? Why is he out of bed?

ANNE

hat's the matter with him!

JACK

UMBLING. LAUGHING SOFTLY. It's nothing...it's nothing...don't get pset...

PHYLLIS

h Anne. HELPS JACK SIT. It's the sedative the doctor gave him. He aid it was very strong and sometimes makes people act strangely... ow is your headache, Jack? Is it feeling any better?

JACK

h yes. Thank you. It's fine now. I'm perfectly all right.

ANNE

Are you sure!

PHYLLIS

Oh Anne. COVERING JACK'S LEGS WITH THE COVERLET. You were right there when the doctor told me.

ANNE

I don't remember!

PHYLLIS

Now you get right upstairs to bed, young lady, before <u>you</u> need the doctor. FELLS HER FOREHEAD. I think you've got a fever. You're at such a pitch of nerves it'll be a miracle if you don't get sick too. What's the matter with you children! Why can't you take care of yourselves? Why can't you practise a little calmness and common sense instead of making nervous wrecks out of yourselves? Honestly, I don't know what to do with you anymore.

ANNE

you sure it's just the medicine?

PHYLLIS

ADING ANNE TOWARDS THE STAIRS. Of course it's just the medicine.
at else would it be?

ANNE

thought he...

PHYLLIS

TERRUPTING. You silly girl. People don't go crazy all of a sudden.

ANNE

don't know.

PHYLLIS

ell, I'm telling you. You can believe your mother. Now you go
pstairs to bed right now.

ANNE

ut what about Jack?

PHYLLIS

'll take care of him. Now you go upstairs and forget about everything
except your beautiful wedding. Do you hear me?

ANNE

Yes, mother. STARTS UPSTAIRS. He wanted some fresh air. We were going
to go for a walk.

PHYLLIS

He doesn't need any walks. And neither do you, young lady. You both
need a good night's sleep, that's what you need. Now don't you worry
about Jack. SHE STANDS LOOKING UP AT ANNE, WHO STANDS ABOVE HER ON
THE STAIRS. You leave everything up to me.

ANNE

Yes, mother.

PHYLLIS

I'll take care of everything.

ANNE

Yes, mother.

PHYLLIS

Now you go to sleep.

ANNE

Yes, I will. Goodnight, mother. EXIT UPSTAIRS.

PHYLLIS

Goodnight, my dearest, darling. Don't worry about anything! I'll take care of everything; everything for you, so that you can be happy!

ANNE

OFF. Yes, mother. Goodnight, mother.

PHYLLIS

AFTER A MOMENT. TEARS COMING DOWN HER CHEEKS. I love you so much, Anne, my only child. If only I could do everything!

MR. BROKENSHIRE

ENTERING FROM HALL RIGHT. What's all the noise about?

PHYLLIS

Did you finish your toast?

MR. BROKENSHIRE

Yes. What was all the noise about?

PHYLLIS

Nothing, Father Brokenshire. Anne wanted to ask me something.

MR. BROKENSHIRE

Are you crying?

PHYLLIS

No, Father Brokenshire. Why would I be crying? WIPES HER FACE. This is the happiest time of my life. My daughter is going to be married soon to a wonderful person and will start a beautiful life of her own. I'm rejoicing for her. My darling daughter.

MR. BROKENSHIRE

Yes. That's all right for you women. But we men have to think of the practical side of things. Does he have a good job? Is he going to be able to support her the way he should?

PHYLLIS

Yes. He's a wonderful boy. John has been into all that.

MR. BROKENSHIRE

John is a good boy. I brought him up right. He's a good husband and provider. He's a son to be proud of.

PHYLLIS

Yes, Father Brokenshire. He's a wonderful man.

MR. BROKENSHIRE

He knows what to do. He'll know whether that young man is a good bargain for your daughter or not. You can leave that kind of thing up to the man of the house.

PHYLLIS
Yes, Father Brokenshire. That's just what I did.

MR. BROKENSHIRE
That's good. I'm sure everything will be all right.

PHYLLIS
Yes, Father Brokenshire. I'm sure it will.

MR. BROKENSHIRE
Goodnight then. I'm going to bed now. And don't you worry about anything. If you need some help or advice you can go to John. He's a good boy. He's the man of the house. STARTS UP THE STAIRS.

PHYLLIS
Yes, Father Brokenshire! Thank you. I will!

MR. BROKENSHIRE
Goodnight now, Phyllis. You'd better get to bed soon yourself. You need your sleep too, you know. You never get too old for sleep... EXIT UPSTAIRS. Look at me. Eighty-eight and still in perfect condition...

JACK
STANDS. I'm going for a little walk now.

PHYLLIS
Oh no. HURRIES TO HIM. The doctor said you should rest. You should go upstairs to bed right now, Jack.

JACK
TAKES HER HAND. SMILES. SOFTLY. Oh but I'm so anxious to get outside in the cool night air. It's so fresh and relaxing.

PHYLLIS
But you should be in bed. The doctor gave you a strong sedative.

JACK
Oh no. I'm all right. You see I'm all right.

PHYLLIS
Now you come upstairs to bed right now.

JACK
Oh, mommy, mommy. Let me go for a walk. And you come with me... That would be lots of fun...

PHYLLIS
I'm sure you should be in bed. I'll have to call the doctor again if you don't behave yourself.

JACK

SIMPLE. INNOCENTLY. Mommy, mommy.

PHYLLIS

LOOKS AROUND. JACK IS PULLING HER TOWARDS THE FRENCH DOORS. Where is everybody? Now you let me go, Jack, and be good. You should go upstairs to bed right this very minute! Do you hear me?

JACK

SWEETLY. WITH LOVE. Oh mommy, just a little walk. The air will be so cool and refreshing. It will refresh our minds and help us think more clearly.

PHYLLIS

Now Jack! You let me go! You're hurting my arms! Jack! HE ISN'T HURTING HER ARMS. SHE IS JUST FRIGHTENED. HE RELEASES HER IMMEDIATELY.

JACK

OPENLY. LOVINGLY. INNOCENTLY. BEAUTIFULLY. Mommy, I love you. EMBRACES HER AND BURIES HIS FACE IN HER NECK.

PHYLLIS

Jack! Oh help! Help me someone!

JACK

MURMURS. Mommy...mommy...mommy...PHYLLIS STRUGGLES TO GET AWAY.

MALCOLM

VANDERS ONTO THE TERRACE. Phyllis? Have you seen Mildred? I can't find her anywhere. WALKS TOWARDS THE FRENCH DOORS.

PHYLLIS

h Malcolm! Thank God! STRUGGLING.

JACK

OW. Mommy...mommy...

MALCOLM

TOPS IN DOORWAY AND WATCHES. What's the matter?

PHYLLIS

lcolm...! CARL, CARRYING FELICIA IN HIS ARMS, COMES ONTO THE TERRACE OM RIGHT. SHE HAS HER ARMS AROUND HIS NECK. HIS FACE IS HIDDEN AINST HIM.

CARL

. James! MALCOLM TURNS TO CARL.

PHYLLIS

k! Let me go! Someone help me! Someone! Malcolm!

JACK

EMBRACING PHYLLIS. Oh mommy...mommy...I need you so...

MALCOLM

What happened?

CARL

Well, you see!

PHYLLIS

Oh my God! Jack, let me go! STRUGGLES. Something's happened to Felicia! Let me go!

JACK

Mommy, stay with me. Be good to me. I belong to you...

MALCOLM

What is it? Did she faint?

CARL

I went to look for her! And I found her lying there!

PHYLLIS

STRUGGLING. Where! Where was she lying! What was the matter!

CARL

You see! She was lying there, all alone. A lonely girl lying by the water shivering and crying. With no one to take care of her!

MALCOLM

Well, I...

PHYLLIS

h help me! Help me! Jack! Let me go! Felicia is sick!

CARL

ell, I'm taking her with me now!

PHYLLIS

, Carl! Wait! STRUGGLES. Can't someone help me here!

MALCOLM

CARL. Take her with you?

CARL

can take care of her better than you. I'll love her and cherish her d treat her kindly and gently.

MALCOLM

...what do you mean? Take her?

PHYLLIS

ck! Now you leave me alone this instant! Jack! PUSHES HIM AWAY. BRACING HER, HE SINKS DOWN, HIS FACE AGAINST HER BODY. SHE CONTINUES PUSH HIM DOWN. I've got to help Felicia! She's ill!

CARL

st don't try to get her back.

MALCOLM

at are you going to do?

CARL

m going to marry her.

PHYLLIS

ACK IS ON THE FLOOR, HOLDING HER ANKLES, HIS FACE AGAINST THEM. Jack! top! Stop that! PULLS HER FEET AWAY. Carl! What are you talking bout!

CARL

elicia and I are going to get married.

PHYLLIS

OES OUT ONTO THE TERRACE. SHE AND MALCOLM FACE CARL AND FELICIA. Vhat do you mean get married! How can you get married! STARTS TO GO OWARDS THEM. CARL STEPS BACK.

CARL

Keep away...We'll go to a justice of the peace and get married.

PHYLLIS

You mean right now?

MALCOLM

You can't get married right now...

CARL

Then we'll wait! We'll do it tomorrow!

PHYLLIS

What about your mother? Do you think she'll let you do this?

CARL

My mother doesn't have anything to do with my life.

PHYLLIS

You have to get her permission. You're under legal age.

CARL

She'll give me permission.

PHYLLIS

u're sure?

CARL

s! And if she doesn't we'll go some place where we don't need her
rmission.

PHYLLIS

rl, stand still a minute and let me look at Felicia. Maybe she's
l. IT IS HOPED THAT JACK'S PRESENCE IS FELT DURING THIS TIME.

CARL

eave us alone. She's not ill at all. She's all right with me.

PHYLLIS

ou don't know anything about it. Perhaps we'd better call the doctor.

CARL

ou leave us alone! We can take care of ourselves!

MALCOLM

ut I won't give my permission.

CARL

e don't need it. Felicia is old enough.

PHYLLIS

And when did you fall in love so quickly? Do you think a marriage
will last that was decided in one minute?

CARL

Yes it will!

PHYLLIS

Carl, will you let me look at Felicia. You might be doing her harm
by not letting someone see whether she's ill or not.

FELICIA

I'm all right.

CARL

She's all right.

PHYLLIS

And how do you expect to support her? You're just a sophomore in
college. You don't have any money. You don't have a job.

CARL

That's not important.

PHYLLIS

Then what is important? Are you going to live on air?

CARL

We'll live together and work and study and take care of each other. And be loving and kind and good to each other. That's what's important.

PHYLLIS

You're children! You're innocent children! You don't know anything about life!

CARL

And we don't want to! We don't want to know about your life! That's just it!

PHYLLIS

Malcolm! Will you stop them!

MALCOLM

You're not being sensible.

JACK

COMES SLOWLY OUT ONTO THE TERRACE ON HIS HANDS AND KNEES. LOST. Mommy...mommy...

PHYLLIS

Oh! Stop! Stop! Get him away from me!

MALCOLM

LOOKING DOWN AT HIM. I don't know...

CARL

hat's the matter with him?

PHYLLIS

he doctor. He gave him a drug for his headache. It must have been oo strong for him. It's disgusting. Disgusting. Let me call the octor. KEEPING AWAY FROM JACK, SHE HURRIES INTO THE HOUSE AND EXIT LL RIGHT.

CARL

m going to put you down for a minute, Felicia. I have to help Jack. ll you be all right?

FELICIA

.

CARL

PS HER SIT ON A CHAIR. I'll be right back. SMOOTHS HER FACE. GOES JACK AND KNEELS BY HIM. Jack...Jack...What's the matter, old man? S HIS ARM AROUND JACK'S SHOULDERS.

JACK

LOOKS UP AT HIM. No. No. Everything's fine. Don't you worry about me. I'm just fine.

CARL

Stand up then. Can you stand up?

JACK

Stand up? LAUGHS SOFTLY. Why should I stand up? It's so nice to be here...It feels so natural...on my hands and knees. It feels so natural to me...I think I've found myself at last. LAUGHS SOFTLY.

CARL

Jack. Stand up now. I'll help you.

JACK

Oh no, no. I'm going to stay like this forever. I've found myself at last. I don't think I'll have anymore headaches...If I can just stay down here close to the ground like this...It's wonderful to find yourself at last...It's really wonderful...You feel so free and easy...so relaxed...all the tension is gone...I feel perfectly fine now...better than I ever have...I wasn't made to struggle and contend...I was made to crawl on the ground...Let my mommy take care of me...She loves me...

CARL

You had a drug and that's what's making you act like this. Try and stand up, Jack. You can come with Felicia and me.

JACK

LOOKS UP AT CARL. They told you they gave me a drug...Don't you believe that...I didn't take it at all...Listen to what I'm saying...Believe the things I'm saying to you...Listen to me...

CARL

TRIES TO LIFT JACK. Jack, stand up. Be a man.

JACK

ou're not listening to me...Why can't you just listen to what I'm aying...I'm not lying.

CARL

OW. Jack. You've got to. Save yourself. We'll help you.

JACK

, no. Leave me alone. LIES HEAVILY ON THE GROUND. Let me stay ke this. This is my way.

CARL

's not anybody's way to be like this...

JACK

You say that because you don't know anything about it...You don't listen to me...you don't believe me...This is my way...Leave me alone...

CARL

I won't leave you alone. I'm going to take you with me.

JACK

Get out of here. You're going to make me mad.

CARL

You've got to come.

JACK

I said leave me alone.

CARL

No. You're going to come with us. STARTS TO LIFT HIM. JACK BITES CARL'S ARM. CARL PULLS HIS ARM AWAY. Jack!

MALCOLM

Jack!

JACK

Go away. Go away. You better go away...

PHYLLIS

HURRIES OUT ONTO THE TERRACE. The doctor said to make him vomit. He's going to send out another prescription with the druggist. Jack, get up.

MALCOLM

e bit Carl.

PHYLLIS

t's that drug. He doesn't know what he's doing.

CARL

e says he didn't take the drug.

PHYLLIS

f course he took it. I saw him swallow it myself. Let me see where bit you. I don't know what you were fooling around with him for. u better go wash that off. He broke the skin.

CARL

m all right.

PHYLLIS

u should have left him alone. You see what state he's in...Malcolm, u've got to help me get him into the bathroom. I've got some mustard ter in there for him. Jack? Will you stand up?

JACK

Yes. If you help me.

MALCOLM

TO PHYLLIS. Be careful.

PHYLLIS

You stand up by yourself, Jack.

JACK

No. I can't. I'm so tired.

PHYLLIS

We'll have to carry him.

MALCOLM

But he seems...maybe he's dangerous.

PHYLLIS

Are you going to bite anymore?

JACK

No. Why should I bite?

PHYLLIS

Will you walk, or should we carry you?

JACK

You carry me.

PHYLLIS

Carl, will you help us, please. THEY LIFT JACK AND CARRY HIM INTO THE LIVING ROOM.

JACK

h mommy, mommy. I love you so much.

PHYLLIS

ou be quiet now! You've made enough trouble for one evening already! EXEUNT HALL RIGHT. FELICIA, ALONE ON THE TERRACE, COUGHS SOFTLY ONCE R TWICE. EXEUNT HALL.

JACK

OM OFF. Oh no! Oh no! PAUSE. FELICIA COUGHS SOFTLY ONCE OR TWICE. USE.

PHYLLIS

E, MALCOLM AND CARL COME BACK SUPPORTING JACK. Let's put him on the uch for a few minutes. He's too heavy to carry upstairs. THEY HALF RRY, HALF SUPPORT HIM. THEY LEAD HIM TOWARDS THE COUCH. When he sts a little he can walk upstairs himself. Here.

MALCOLM

Be careful...

CARL

...He's so heavy.

PHYLLIS

Just get him over to the couch. THEY BRING HIM TO THE COUCH. JACK GROANS SOFTLY. Here. Let him sit down. Why don't you lie down for a few minutes, Jack. I'll cover you up. SHE HOLDS THE COVERLET UP.

JACK

WAVES HIS HANDS WEAKLY. No. No. Let me...sit up...I feel so...My head is going around...

MALCOLM

Wipe his chin off...

PHYLLIS

Can't you wipe it off? I've got the cover in my hand.

MALCOLM

Well...SLOWLY TAKES HANDKERCHIEF FROM HIS POCKET. OFFERS IT TO JACK. Jack...do you want to wipe your chin?

JACK

WAVING HIS HANDS WEAKLY, STRIKES THE HANDKERCHIEF, WHICH FALLS TO THE FLOOR. No...no...I don't know...I feel so...

MALCOLM

PICKING UP HIS HANDKERCHIEF. Well...now, now...

PHYLLIS

ever mind, then, for heaven's sake, Malcolm. Just let him lie down.

JACK

o. No. I don't want to lie down. PUTS HIS HANDS OVER HIS FACE. I ust want to rest a minute. Let me rest a minute.

JOHN

MING DOWNSTAIRS IN HIS BATHROBE. What's all the ruckus? Why aren't u coming upstairs, Phyllis?

PHYLLIS

RRIES TO STOP HIM FROM COMING DOWN. Oh it's nothing, darling. Jack 't feeling well. He has a little headache.

JOHN

t's all?

PHYLLIS

, dear. He's all right.

JOHN

Then what's the activity about? I thought I could get some sleep at this hour of night.

PHYLLIS

It's only ten o'clock, dear.

JOHN

Well, I had a tiring day! I want to get some extra sleep on a weekend if I can! Is that all right with you?

PHYLLIS

Oh, darling. Of course. I'm sorry.

JOHN

When are you coming up?

PHYLLIS

In a few minutes. Just a few minutes. You go up and wait for me. I'll be right there, darling.

JOHN

GOES BACK UP THE STAIRS. Well, keep your voices down...I want to get some sleep.

PHYLLIS

Yes, darling.

JACK

What's the matter with me? Why do I feel so strange?

CARL

It was that medicine.

JACK

hat medicine?

CARL

ou had a headache and the doctor gave you something.

JACK

at something! What did he give me!

PHYLLIS

gave you a sedative, Jack. That's all. Don't get so excited.

JACK

t sedative? I'm allergic to certain drugs! Why didn't you ask me?

PHYLLIS

l, you were in so much pain, Jack...

JACK

But I'm not supposed to take certain drugs! They do something bad to me!

PHYLLIS

Yes, I know. I'm sorry, Jack. The doctor didn't know. He's sending over something now to soothe you.

JACK

I don't want anything! I want to see Anne! Where's Anne?

PHYLLIS

She's sleeping, Jack. I don't want to disturb her. She had a very trying day.

JACK

NEAR TEARS. I want to see her! I want to see her! I'm afraid I said something terrible to her! I want to talk to her. I want to see her!

PHYLLIS

Shh. Shh. Jack. Stop shouting. Is it so important that you have to wake her up? She's going to get sick herself if she doesn't relax and get some rest.

JACK

WEEPING. I want my Anne...I want my Anne...

PHYLLIS

Shh. Shh. Jack. Don't cry.

CARL

I'll get her! RUNS UPSTAIRS.

JACK

want my Anne...

PHYLLIS

hh. Shh. Jack. Stop crying. A man doesn't cry.

MALCOLM

ll...Well, now, now...FILLS HIS PIPE AND GOES OUT ONTO THE TERRACE.

PHYLLIS

W. Carl went to get Anne. Stop crying now, Jack. You're over-ought. You have to control yourself. Try and get some control over urself. TUCKS THE COVERLET AROUND HIM.

MALCOLM

l, Felicia. Hmm. Hmm. DRAWS ON HIS PIPE. How are you feeling? be you better go inside...if you were shivering.

FELICIA

No. I'm all right.

MALCOLM

LOOKING AROUND AIMLESSLY. Well...well...

FELICIA

Don't say anything, daddy.

MALCOLM

I wasn't going to say anything...

FELICIA

Where's mother?

MALCOLM

Well to tell you the truth, I don't know. She went out for some fresh air with Martin. That was over an hour ago. I went to look for her. I didn't see her anywhere. I don't know where she could have gone to. She just went out for some air.

FELICIA

Oh.

MALCOLM

Well what's so funny? I don't see anything to laugh about. I'm worried about your mother. I don't know where she could have gone to.

FELICIA

I'm not laughing. I'm crying. GETS UP.

MALCOLM

Where are you going?

FELICIA

'm not going anywhere.

MALCOLM

hat do you want your mother for?

FELICIA

want to ask her something.

MALCOLM

n't you ask me? I'm your father.

FELICIA

OKS AT HIM. SHORT PAUSE. I love you, father. I love you more than ove anybody else in the world.

MALCOLM

well...well...

FELICIA

You make my heart break.

MALCOLM

I make your heart break?

FELICIA

Yes. You do.

MALCOLM

That's a funny thing to say to your father.

FELICIA

Yes it is. SHORT PAUSE.

MALCOLM

Are you going to marry him? That Carl?

FELICIA

I don't know. Probably not. Maybe I will.

MALCOLM

I don't think you should.

FELICIA

Don't talk about it, daddy. You don't know what to say.

MALCOLM

Well, I know...I know something about it...

FELICIA

lo you don't.

MALCOLM

ell...I think...

FELICIA

ıh. Daddy. GOES TO HIM AND EMBRACES HIM. Don't say anything, daddy. ıst be quiet. HE PUTS HIS HANDS ON HER ARMS AWKWARDLY. A MOMENT'S LENCE. CARL AND ANNE COME DOWNSTAIRS. ANNE HURRIES TO JACK. SHE ARS A BATHROBE.

ANNE

ck! SITS BESIDE HIM. THEY EMBRACE.

JACK

p me...help me...

PHYLLIS

on't think you should over-excite yourselves like that. Calm down, l you! TRIES TO SEPARATE THEM.

JOHN

FROM UPSTAIRS. Phyllis! Will you come to bed now!

PHYLLIS

Yes, John! Just a minute!

JOHN

Come right now! I don't want to wait any more! I want to get to sleep!

PHYLLIS

Go to sleep, dear! I'll be there in a minute!

JOHN

I can't sleep without you!

PHYLLIS

Just a minute, dear! I'll be there in a minute!

JOHN

I said no, Phyllis! I want you right now!

PHYLLIS

Yes, dear! Just a minute, dear!

JOHN

Phyllis!! Now!!

PHYLLIS

Yes, dear! I'm coming! I'm coming! TO ANNE AND JACK. I've got to... I want you to come up to bed now, too. Now come on. TRIES TO SEPARATE THEM. Come on upstairs. I can't leave you alone down here.

JOHN

Phyllis!

PHYLLIS

Yes! I'm coming! Anne. Jack...Now get up and come to bed. THEY HOLD EACH OTHER AND DISREGARD HER.

JOHN

Phyllis! Don't make me come down there!

PHYLLIS

No! No! I'm coming! Now children. Will you listen to me! You've got to go to bed now! Nobody will be here to take care of you!

JOHN

Phyllis!!

PHYLLIS

I'm coming! I'm coming! Here I come! GOES TO HALL. Children! You come up right this minute! Do you hear me!

JOHN

Phyllis!!

PHYLLIS

Yes! Yes! Here I come! HURRIES UP THE STAIRS. I'm coming. I'm coming. Children! Come up now! EXIT UPSTAIRS. DOOR SLAMS UPSTAIRS. SHORT PAUSE.

FELICIA

You go home now, daddy. When mother gets back I'll tell her you went home to bed.

MALCOLM

I won't be able to sleep without her...

FELICIA

Yes you will. MOMENT'S PAUSE.

MALCOLM

Well, you tell her I was very tired.

FELICIA

I will.

MALCOLM

All right. You tell her I was worried about her.

FELICIA

I will, daddy.

MALCOLM

Well, goodnight, then.

FELICIA

Goodnight, daddy.

MALCOLM

EXIT TERRACE RIGHT. ANNE GOES TOWARDS THE HOUSE. MALCOLM COMES BACK. Felicia?

FELICIA

Yes, daddy.

MALCOLM

Did you hear about Mrs. Grouse?

FELICIA

No.

MALCOLM

She's very sick, you know.

FELICIA

No, I didn't know.

MALCOLM

She's probably going to die soon.

FELICIA

Everybody has to die.

MALCOLM

But she has this illness...it's been eating away at her. Nobody knew she had it...That's the thing.

FELICIA

Her doctor didn't know?

MALCOLM

ALMOST WHISPERING. Well, she never went to the doctor, you see. He found out about it when she had this hemorrhage tonight...terrible thing.

FELICIA

Why didn't she go to the doctor?

MALCOLM

Well, I don't know...

FELICIA

If she'd gone to him, he could probably have helped her.

MALCOLM

Vell yes. I know. But it's the idea. That it was eating away inside ıer. And she didn't know. Nobody knew it was there. And it turns ɔut that now it's gotten so that it's all over her insides. She's got .t everywhere. SHORT PAUSE. Well...goodnight, sweetheart. EXIT 'ERRACE RIGHT. FELICIA GOES TOWARDS THE HOUSE. MALCOLM RETURNS.

MALCOLM

'elicia?

FELICIA

es?

MALCOLM

h...don't tell your mother about Mrs. Grouse...It might upset her.

FELICIA

won't.

MALCOLM

ll right then. Come home early.

FELICIA

I will.

MALCOLM

Well, goodnight, then. EXIT RIGHT. FELICIA GOES INTO THE LIVING ROOM.

JACK

Turn the light out, will you, somebody?

CARL

I will. HE TURNS OUT THE LIGHTS. THE ONLY ILLUMINATION IS FROM THE MOON.

JACK

..That feels better.

ANNE

Your poor head.

JACK

I feel so sick, Anne. I feel so bad. They did such terrible things to me.

ANNE

I know. I know.

JACK

We did terrible things to each other, too.

ANNE

...I know.

JACK

ut we won't do that anymore, will we? We can be good to each other. e'll be good to each other...if we can...

ANNE

e can! We can!

JACK

don't know what's to become of us, though. I don't know what to do...

CARL

can all go away together.

JACK

?

CARL

and Anne and Felicia and me.

JACK

Felicia?

CARL

Yes. We're going to get married. SHORT PAUSE.

JACK

How are we going to live?

CARL

We'll go live with the Indians in Mexico. They're peaceful and loving. We can live with them and be good to each other.

JACK

...That would be nice.

CARL

We can do it. We'll just go away together. They can't stop us.

JACK

I don't know...I don't know...

CARL

It's easy. We just take the things we need, and get on a bus, and go there. It would be so easy.

JACK

All the things we need...

MILDRED

SHE AND MARTIN COME ONTO THE TERRACE. SHE IS LAUGHING. They're all in bed. The house is dark and quiet. Everyone is sleeping but us. We are living! We are the only ones alive!

FELICIA

LOW. That's my mother...

JACK

Shh. THE YOUNG PEOPLE LISTEN SILENTLY, NOT MOVING.

MARTIN

Milly...TRIES TO HOLD HER HANDS.

MILDRED

CLOSE TO HYSTERIA. Oh no! Don't touch me! Just let me take it all in! I want to feel everything totally! What talk! What thoughts we've had! We've been alive! Alive and beautiful!

MARTIN

Milly.

MILDRED

Yes! Yes! What is it!

MARTIN

You've aroused me...with your talk of art and life...I want to make love with you.

MILDRED

HYSTERICAL. SHE LAUGHS, TALKS LOUDLY. Oh, don't be insensitive now! What are bodies? They are the tenth part of nothing! It is the hearts we must get in tune! It is the spirit and the soul that must come to each other! Don't pull me down now! Don't stop me now! I'm living again! I'm really, really living again! At last! At last! LAUGHING AND WEEPING.

MARTIN

Milly...KNEELS IN FRONT OF HER. Your breasts...Let me touch your breasts...PRESSES HIS FACE BETWEEN HER BREASTS. HOLDS THEM.

MILDRED

Oh no! No! TOUCHES HIS HEAD. What's happening! What's happening to me! I've never felt these feelings! I want to faint, to burst apart, to turn myself inside out and press my nerves against the darkness! I want to scream! To scream!

MARTIN

Milly...Milly...

MILDRED

Help me! Help me!

MARTIN

PULLING HER DOWN. I'll help you...I'll help you...

MILDRED

No, <u>help</u> me! <u>Help</u> me!

MARTIN

I am...I am...I'm helping you...I'm helping you now...THEY LIE ON THE TERRACE FLOOR. HE EMBRACES AND KISSES HER. SHE WEEPS.

CURTAIN

CHAPTER III

EVALUATION

Two years ago, desiring to write a play for my thesis in the best way, that is, have my vision rather than an intellectually contrived and controlled idea impell my writing, I took up the original idea of this play and tried to let my imagination rather than my mind lead me...wherever it would. But how does one do this? Where does one start? I sat down and wrote the first thing that came into my head and let it go whither it would. When I came to an end of my "inspiration" I sat and waited for a new movement. Eventually, in this way, after many painful months, a second draft was completed. To my dismay, it was, except for several scenes, puerile. (Since then I have come to see that my vision, my nature causing it, was at that time puerile, immature, so that any work impelled and "inspired" by it would, of course, reproduce that immaturity.)

I then thought to employ my mind, which was more or less well-trained and dependable, in a rewriting and improving of this disappointing draft. I then analyzed the draft, trying to grasp its "deep level of meaning", or vision, so that I could construct, intellectually, a more mature and acceptable expression of this vision. (I did not know at that time that the form must arise out of the imagination's freely expressing the vision if the work is to have integrity. To put a mature form around an immature vision is to

lead one's self into depths of dishonesty and loss of self-knowledge from which one can be rescued, if at all, only with great difficulty.) I thought I understood the vision and then constructed an elaborate scenario to rationally and clearly and sophisticatedly dramatize what I thought to be my vision. The result was a stiff, contrived third draft, full of cleverness and ingenuity but without "inspiration", that is, the vision was absent. It was without individual style (with only conscious affectation and embellishment), without the ability to deeply move, without real meaningfulness (it offered no possibility for the kind of catharsis a created work of art offers). The second draft was, discouragingly, in a most important way, better than the third.

Then followed a fourth and a fifth draft. The final form of the play is the sixth draft. By "draft" I do not mean a revised edition of an earlier version. I mean a completely new play with more or less the same characters concerned with more or less the same incidents. Through the last three drafts, in almost two years of constant work on them, I tried to pull myself out of the abyss of phoniness towards integrity. The process is slow and painful. It is difficult to sacrifice the self-gratifying for the puerile. It is difficult to depend on one's imagination, which leads one to immature works, when, if one depended upon the intellect, one could write more pleasingly. It is difficult to stop contriving when one is in the habit of intellectualizing. The result is that this play, in its final form, is somewhat less puerile than the second, for my vision must have matured in two years of living, and of labor, and it is somewhat more inspired than the third, for I did not force it to go where it seemed clever for it to go, and it is a more artistic play than either, for I have,

in the course of two years, acquired more craft and skill. This means that I have learned, now, to be more simple in my writing.

I believe it is a mistake to think that the ability to plan and structure a play can be learned and accomplished rationally. The vision is a picture, so to speak, its ingredients in a certain, necessary arrangement. The perfectly reflecting play reflects this necessary arrangement in the arrangement of characters and events. The created play's structure depends upon the "structure" of the vision. Once again, the author's job is to reflect perfectly and not force the plot by arbitrary intellectual decisions. To sum up, I have learned better to not force it intellectually, and also I have learned better how to reflect.

The only thing that kept me from falling back into the abyss was my study of Christopher Marlowe and Anton Chekov, above my studies of other writers. I studied these two writers most of all and saw that their works were noble. I wrote as if to please them.

This thesis play is not distinguished by its elegance or brilliance or philosophy or sophistication. But as a more rather than less created work, it may possibly be of some small interest to the student of dramatic art.

APPENDIX

THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE WEDDING

This first draft was completed in March 1957. At that time, my apprenticeship as a playwright just beginning, I did not know how to bring the material to full blossom. The play was set aside. From 1957 to 1960 I wrote a number of one-act plays, short stories, started a novel, and took some graduate work in literature. I also read over a hundred plays by the masters. In 1960 I took the play up again. This time, having learned more about the craft of playwriting, and with the determination to see the job through, I set to work to complete what I had begun three years earlier. It took almost two years and five complete drafts before I felt that I had done all I was presently capable of doing with my material.

THE WEDDING

by

Rita Burney

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Julia	25
Frank	Her brother. 20
Jack	Another brother. 28
Anne	Jack's financee. 24
Paul	Anne's brother. A painter. 26
Pat	Anne's and Paul's uncle by marriage. 42
Felicia	Pat's daughter. 17

SCENE

Early June at Anne's and Paul's home in Stamford, Connecticut. Present.

Act I: About 3:00 in the afternoon.

Act II: A week later, about 4:00 p.m.

Act III: A few hours later, during supper and just after.

THE WEDDING

Act I

About 3:00 on a sunny day in early June. Pat is standing in the living room by the end table filling his pipe.

PAT

AS HE FILLS HIS PIPE HE MOVES HIS HEAD, SMILES, FINALLY LOOKS UP AT THE CEILING AND LAUGHS OUT LOUD. HIS LAUGH IS NOT A LOUD, ROLLING LAUGH, IT COMES IN SHORT HA'S, AS THOUGH HE HAS A NEW JOKE FOR EACH HA: THEY ARE DISTINCT AND SEPARATE FROM EACH OTHER, BUT DO COME QUICKLY, ONE AFTER THE OTHER. AS HE PUTS THE PIPE IN HIS MOUTH, STILL SMILING, BREAKING INTO LAUGHS NOW AND THEN, JULIA APPEARS IN THE DINING ROOM. SHE SEES PAT AND STOPS ON THE TOP STEP. HE LOOKS UP AND SEES HER. GREETS HER SMILINGLY, GAILY. Julia!

JULIA

COMING DOWN INTO THE LIVING ROOM SLOWLY, SMILING HESITANTLY. SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHETHER HE'S LAUGHING AT HER OR NOT. What's so funny, Pat?

PAT

Oh, nothing. LAUGHING. Just looking at the picture. A LITTLE EMBARRASSED, TURNS AWAY, SHRUGS, CAN'T STOP SMILING.

JULIA

COMING AROUND LEFT END OF COUCH, TOUCHING IT, HER HEAD COCKED IN ANTICIPATION OF A JOKE ON HERSELF. Well, it must be <u>some</u>thing this early in the day.

PAT

A QUICK LOOK AT HER, AND HE TURNS AND LOOKS OUT THE TERRACE DOOR. THE LAUGHTER IS STILL IN HIS VOICE. Three o'clock?

JULIA

STAND AT LEFT END OF COUCH, HER HAND ON ITS BACK. SHE SMILES HESITANTLY. That's early for you isn't it?

PAT

CAN'T HELP BURSTING OUT INTO MORE LAUGHTER. HE TURNS SLIGHTLY AND SO IS FACING THE DOWNSTAGE PAINTING OF PAUL'S HUNG ON THE WALL. HE CAN HARDLY CONTROL HIMSELF. What does Paul call this picture?

JULIA

Pastime.

PAT

HE TURNS AND FACES JULIA, A GREAT SMILE ON HIS FACE. SHE SMILES BACK A LITTLE UNSURELY. HE STARTS TO SAY SOMETHING, BUT CAN'T. SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS. SHAKES HIS HEAD. I'm sorry, my dear, I just can't control myself. AND LAUGHING HE EXITS THROUGH TERRACE DOORS AND GOES OUT STAGE RIGHT.

JULIA

SHE SMILES AS BEFORE. GOES TO DOOR AND HOLDS THE JAMBS AS SHE LOOKS OUT. SWINGS HER LEG BACK AND FORTH, FINALLY, CAUGHT UP IN THE MOTION SHE SWINGS WAY BACK AND BENDS SO THAT SHE IS IN AN ALMOST ARABESQUE POSITION, THEN FORWARD, AND BENDS BACK. AND AGAIN. SHE IS IN THE ARABESQUE WHEN FRANK COMES FROM KITCHEN PATH AND SEATS HIMSELF ON WALL.

FRANK

MOCK SERIOUSNESS. One and two and change. JULIA SWINGS FORWARD. And one and two and bend your knees and change. SHE SWINGS BACK. And etcetera etcetera.

JULIA

STILL IN POSITION. THEY ARE PLAYING. What's that?

FRANK

Etcetera etcetera. Certainly you know that position.

JULIA

No, I'm afraid I don't.

FRANK

JUMPING UP, HANDS ON HIPS. What! You mean you don't know the great etcetera position! Up, up, then, out of that absurd position! JULIA STRAIGHTENS, STAND AS THOUGH CHASTISED. FRANK COMES FORWARD, PUTS HIS HANDS ON HER SHOULDERS, PUTS HIS FACE VERY CLOSE TO HERS. Now what's the meaning of this? It can't go on you know. Not to know the etcetera etcetera. HE IS SPEECHLESS, SHAKES HIS HEAD, CLUCKS TCH TCH...

JULIA

SUDDENLY REMEMBERING PAT, PUSHES FRANK AWAY, WALKS OUT ONTO TERRACE AND GOES TO RIGHT OF TABLE AS SHE SPEAKS. Have you seen Pat? What's the matter with him anyway? When I saw him all he could do was laugh. JULIA SPEAKS IN A RAPID, ALMOST BREATHLESS WAY.

FRANK

HE HAS BEEN REJECTED. SITTING IN THE CHAIR AT THE TABLE NEAREST THE DOOR. HE'S NOT VERY INTERESTED, OR AT LEAST SEEMS SO. BUT BITTERNESS CREEPS IN. Oh, I don't know. He didn't come in all night. I suppose he was laughing about some new woman he seduced. I don't care if he is Anne's uncle; she shouldn't keep inviting him here every summer. He's a bad influence on everybody.

JULIA

SITTING OPPOSITE FRANK. SHE LEANS FORWARD, TOUCHES HIS HAND. SHE'S AFTER SOMETHING. Well, so what...What's the matter with you? Why do you care?

FRANK

Well, Felicia knows all about him and I think it's a damn shame. That's no way to bring up a daughter. I was just talking to her. She told me, her father didn't come in last night. She said she supposed he was out with somebody...or other. Just like that she said it, "somebody...or other". God, I could hardly stand it. I wanted to go hit him. RESTS HIS CHIN ON HIS FIST. That bastard.

JULIA

SHE HAS TAKEN HER HAND AWAY, BUT IS STILL LEANING FORWARD. Well then, why didn't you? Why didn't you just jump up and find him and punch him in the nose? PAUSE. Huh? Well, why didn't you?

FRANK

STANDING, PROTECTING HIMSELF. GETTING FLUSTERED AND DEFENSIVE. Look, Julia. Don't push me.

JULIA

SITTING BACK. SARCASTICALLY. Ho, ho I can just see it: the knight in shining armor.

FRANK

ALMOST STAMPING HIS FOOT. Now look, Julia....CONCILIATORILY: Come on, cut it out.

JULIA

SHRUGS HER SHOULDERS. Oh well, what do I care? STANDS AND LOOKS TO THE RIGHT. SARCASTICALLY. In another month Jack and Anne will be married and then Pat will be our Uncle Pat. You're lucky Anne's such a conscientious hostess, otherwise she'd send us all home and Pat might be our uncle this afternoon. Then wouldn't you feel bad, talking like that about one of your own family.

FRANK

MOVING AS IF TO COME TO HER. Oh, Julia...BUT HE SITS IN CHAIR INSTEAD AND FINGERS SOMETHING ON THE TABLE. PAUSE.

JULIA

STILL ARROGANT, BUT WITH A TOUCH OF UNSURENESS. I wrote a poem this morning.

FRANK

LOOKS UP AT HER, A QUICK SMILE LIGHTS UP HIS FACE. HE IS AWED BY HER TALENT AND IS PROUD OF HER. Great, Jule!

JULIA

TURNS TO HIM, SHE SMILES NOW TOO. Do you want to see it?

FRANK

Oh yeah, I'd love to!

JULIA

MOVES AS IF TO GO TOWARD HOUSE, STOPS. It's in my room. GOES TOWARD HOUSE, PAUSES IN DOORWAY. I don't know if it's any good...

FRANK

QUICKLY, BREAKING IN. Oh, it'll be good!

JULIA

SMILES AT HIM, MAKES A FACE WHICH DEMONSTRATES HER EXAGGERATION OF PLEASURE INTO SOMETHING ELSE. SHE IS ASHAMED TO SEEM AT THE MERCY OF HER FEELINGS, ESPECIALLY HER MORE UNSOPHISTICATED ONES. EXITS.

PAUL

ENTERS FROM RIGHT. HE AND FRANK NOD TO EACH OTHER. PAUL HAS A CANVAS UNDER HIS ARM. HE SITS AT THE TABLE, PROPPING THE PICTURE AGAINST THE LEG OF HIS CHAIR. SITS BACK IN CHAIR. FRANK AND PAUL LIKE EACH OTHER BUT HAVE REALLY NO WAY OF GETTING THROUGH TO EACH OTHER. NEITHER IS AN INITIATOR. THEY EXCHANGE "Hi's".

FRANK

AFTER A SLIGHT PAUSE. What have you got there?

PAUL

MAKING A QUICK MOVE AS IF TO GET THE PAINTING TO SHOW, BUT THINKS BETTER OF IT. ITS BACK AGAIN, ALMOST EMBARRASSED AT HAVING THOUGHT TO SHOW IT WITHOUT BEING ASKED. PAUSE. It's a . . . PAUSE TO DECIDE it's a sort of landscape. I did it out behind the garage in that field of...well there's a field backthere full of daisies. LAUGHS, SHRUGS...EMBARRASSED TO BE INTERESTED IN DAISIES. TRAILS OFF.

FRANK

NODDING KNOWINGLY. HE WANTS TO SEE IT, SHY TO ASK. Yeah, I know. LOOKS AT THE TABLE, WHICH HE FINGERS WITH CONCENTRATION. I've been out there. I thought it was paintable...LOOKING AT PAUL SIDEWAYS, THIS IS PAINFUL FOR THEM BOTH. HE WANTS TO SAY MORE, TO SAY WHAT HE MEANS. BUT HE CAN'T, SO HE LOOKS BACK AT THE TABLE. THEN HE LEANS BACK. LOOKS AT THE PAINTING PROPPED WITH ITS BACK TO HIM. Is it finished?

PAUL

NODS. LOOKS DOWN AT IT. Yeah. Well, actually, this is the third day I've worked on it. I've been working on it off and on since Monday...I'm going to take it down to New York for my show.

FRANK

NODDING. It's pretty good, huh?

PAUL

GRINS. Yeah! It's the best thing I've done in weeks.

FRANK

NODS, SMILES AWKWARDLY. Can I...see it?

PAUL

Sure! HE BENDS DOWN AND PICKS UP THE PAINTING. HOLDS IT UP BETWEEN THEM. IT IS A LARGE CANVAS. IT SHOWS A GREEN FIELD FILLED WITH WHITE: THERE IS A LINE OF VIOLENTLY GREEN AND BLACK TREES ON THE HORIZON AND A FEROCIOUS WHITE-BLUE SKY WHICH, HAVING BEEN PAINTED ON AFTER THE TREES, OVERLAP ONTO THE TREES AND SEEM TO BE EATING INTO THE TREES. IT IS A BOLD, VIOLENT PAINTING. PAUL IS GRINNING THE WHOLE WHILE HE IS HOLDING IT UP. HE LOOKS AT IT PROUDLY. Isn't it great?

FRANK

MUCH IMPRESSED. DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. NODS AT IT, STARES AT IT. SHAKES HIS HEAD. I really like it.

PAUL

The show doesn't open until next Friday. They'd better find room for it. It'll be the best thing there. How do you like that sky? Isn't it great? It just sort of bangs down on those trees.

JULIA

ENTERS. STANDS IN DOORWAY LOOKING AT PICTURE. HER POEM IS IN HER HAND. God! That's terrific, Paul. COMES FORWARD TOWARD PICTURE. BOTH MEN LOOK AT HER, FRANK COMES ALIVE AGAIN, PAUL SMILES EVEN MORE BROADLY. That sky is actually eating those trees. I've never seen anything like it. It's great. It's really great. SHE LOOKS AT HIM SERIOUSLY.

PAUL

I'm going to put it in my show.

JULIA

DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING. LOOKS BACK AT THE PAINTING. DOESN'T MOVE. SAYS SOFTLY, AS IF TO HERSELF. It's wonderful. THERE IS A SLIGHT PAUSE. FRANK IS LOOKING UP AT JULIA. AND PAUL LOOKS FROM HER TO THE PAINTING. SHAKES HER HEAD. Boy! LAUGHS SOFTLY ONCE. It's unbelievable. SHE SMILES AT PAUL. You've really got it, my friend.

FRANK

JUMPS UP, STANDING NOW A LITTLE BEHIND JULIA. Let's see your poem!

JULIA

LOOKS DOWN AT THE PAPER SHE IS HOLDING IN HER HAND. LAUGHS. Oh that. LIFTS IT AND LOOKS AT IT. It's hardly worth it after looking at this. GESTURES TOWARD PAINTING.

FRANK

GRABS IT FROM HER AND WALKS READING IT TO HIMSELF UP TO WALL, STANDS THERE 3/4/ FROM AUDIENCE.

JULIA

SITS IN FRANK'S VACATED CHAIR. PAUL PUTS THE PAINTING BACK ON THE GROUND AGAINST HIS CHAIR. SMILLING AT PAUL. I'll be able to say I knew you when.

PAUL

LAUGHS PROUDLY, LIKE A PLEASED LITTLE BOY. NO ARROGANCE IN HIM: JUST CONFIDENCE AND PLEASURE IN HIS WORK. How much do you think I should price it for? I was thinking of a thousand.

JULIA

SHRUGS, SMILES. For a new painter?

PAUL

Why not? It's as good as anything by an old painter. Why not a thousand, or even more? I could get a thousand for it. Wouldn't you pay a thousand for it? PICKS IT UP AGAIN AND LOOKS FONDLY AT IT. Isn't that patch of white there great? It's just perfect there. HE POINTS IT OUT WITH HIS FINGER. JULIA WATCHES SMILING, LEANING BACK. HE SIGHS AND PLACES IT BACK AGAINST HIS CHAIR, LEANS BACK, CLASPS HIS HANDS IN FRONT OF HIM, HIS ARMS RESTING ON THE CHAIR'S ARMS. Someday I'm going to be a really good painter. Someday I'm going to really paint pictures.

JULIA

SHRUGS, SMILES. SHE IS OBVIOUSLY NO LONGER FULL OF ENTHUSIASM. SHE IS QUIETER, HER SMILE A LITTLE SMALLER, A LITTLE ALMOST SAD AND FORLORN.

PAUL

LOOKS OVER TO HER. NOTICES HER EXPRESSION. HIS GREAT GRIN VANISHES. What's the matter? HE'S WORRIED. HE SPEAKS WITH CONCERN AND COMPASSION.

JULIA

SHRUGS. SHAKES HER HEAD. SHE DROOPS. ALMOST IN A WHISPER, STILL WITH A LITTLE SMILE. Nothing.

FRANK

TURNING, SERIOUSLY, LOOKING AT POEM. HE WANTS TO GIVE AN HONEST CRITICISM, HASN'T NOTICED WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON. Well I think this has potentiality. COMES DOWNSTAGE, LOOKING AT POEM, POINTING TO LINES AND WORDS WITH HIS FINGER. It's got a good feeling in it, but this line here, "Which cannot will to keep or lose them" is weak. And it's in such an important place it really ought to CLENCHES HAND IN ATTEMPT TO FIND THE RIGHT EXPRESSION...I mean it ought to somehow clinch the whole thing. I mean it's at the end of that stanza and I think...SEARCHES FOR JUST THE RIGHT THING...well it ought to somehow get the whole mood and everything in some very strong...some really sharp way...LOOKS UP WITH A CROOKED, ABASHED SMILE. HE IS UNSURE OF HIMSELF AND IS UNCERTAIN ABOUT HAVING SAID THE RIGHT THING. LOOKS AT JULIA, WHO LOOKS NON-COMMITTALLY BACK AT HIM. HE THEN LOOKS

QUICKLY BACK TO POEM WITH A SIGH AS IF HE HAD TO FINISH THIS CHORE, THIS HARD TASK. I guess all I mean is that it isn't focussed. It just doesn't seem to hold up with the rest of it. I mean it sort of let me down when I got to it...TRAILS OFF. LOOKS UP WITH PAINED EXPRESSION. HE HAD WANTED SO HARD TO DO RIGHT, BUT HE IS AFRAID HE MADE A MESS. HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. HE STANDS THERE WITH THE POEM IN HIS HAND, LOOKING DOWN PATHETICALLY AT JULIA. PAUSE.

JULIA

WITH A LITTLE SMILE, SOFTLY,REACHING UP AND TAKING THE POEM FROM HIM. SHE FEELS SORRY FOR HIM. That's okay, Frank. Thanks. It really isn't a very good poem. SHE PUTS IT ON THE TABLE IN FRONT OF HER AND LOOKS AT HER HAND WHICH SHE LAYS ON TOP OF IT, SHE IS STILL SLIGHTLY SMILING.

PAUL

LOOKING AT HER. SOFTLY. Can I see it?

JULIA

Sure. SHE PUSHES IT ACROSS THE TABLE TO HIM. HE TAKES IT UP AND READS IT TO HIMSELF.

FRANK

STILL STANDING AWKWARDLY. SOFTLY. Gosh, I'm sorry, Jule...HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

JULIA

LAUGHS SOFTLY. That's alright, Frank. SHE REACHES A HAND TO HIM. Come on and sit down. Really, it's okay; just forget about it. I don't feel bad about it at all, really...I know you tried. AS HE GOES TO SIT DOWN AT HER LEFT SHE CONTINUES, TURNING HER HEAD FRONT AS HE PASSES BEHIND HER. A SLIGHT BITTERNESS. I guess I just didn't give you enough lessons in criticism, that's all.

FRANK

LOOKING DOWN AT GROUND. Jule...HE WANTS HER TO STOP PICKING AT HIM AGAIN.

JULIA

NOW HER SMILE IS DEFINITELY BITTER AND SARCASTIC. SHE IS FLIPPANT NOW. Well, what difference does it make? I'm going to get married one of these days, anyway, so what do I need to be a poet for? By the way, you didn't ask me where my latest suitor is this morning?

FRANK

LOOKS UP. HE SPEAKS THROUGH HIS PAIN AND EMBARRASSMENT AND A LITTLE HOPEFULLY AT THE END. Carl? I guess I didn't notice. Isn't he at the hotel?

JULIA

QUICKLY, HARSHLY, SMILING. No. I sent him home. Poor old Carl, stupid as the day is long. I couldn't stand him any longer so I told him to go home. He's probably on the train right now crying his eyes out.

PAUL

LOOKS UP FROM THE POEM. HE HASN'T HEARD THEIR CONVERSATION. I don't think it's such a bad poem. I agree with Frank about that line, but I rather like it.

JULIA

LOOKS QUICKLY AT HIM, HER HARD LITTLE SMILE STILL ON HER FACE. QUICKLY. Thanks. What do you like about it? SARCASTIC, BUT SHE WANTS TO KNOW EVEN UNDER HER BRASHNESS.

PAUL

LOOKING STRAIGHT AT HER. SERIOUS. It's pure. It's clean and simple. I don't know much about poetry, but there's a nice clean drive in it. The only thing is, you seem to be holding yourself back. JULIA REGISTERS EXAGGERATED SURPRISE. SHE IS VERY INTERESTED THOUGH. You ought to let yourself go more. It's very strange; I would've thought that your poetry would be freer, more passionate somehow...LOOKS AT HER. AT HIS LAST WORDS SHE HAS LAUGHED OUT LOUD IN A HARSH WAY.

JULIA

ROUGHLY TAKES THE POEM FROM HIM. Thanks. I'll try to let myself go in my next poem. SHE QUICKLY AND CARELESSLY FOLDS IT AND PUTS IT IN HER BLOUSE POCKET. Don't think I don't appreciate your comments, SHE IS SPEAKING QUICKLY AND HARSHLY AS SHE FOLDS THE POEM: SHE SPEAKS ALMOST UNDER HER BREATH: HER HEAD IS DOWN LOOKING AT WHAT SHE IS DOING WITH THE POEM...WHEN SHE HAS PUT THE POEM IN HER POCKET SHE RISES, LOOKING TOWARDS PAUL SHE SEES PAT AND ANNE ENTERING FROM RIGHT. SHE CAN'T GO NOW BECAUSE THEY ARE GREETING HER.

ANNE

RUSHING IN AHEAD OF PAT. SHE IS BREEZY AND BREATHLESS, LAUGHING, HAPPY, EXCITED, AFFECTIONATE, OPEN-HEARTED. Hi! Julia! THE OTHERS NOD AND SAY "Hi". PAT ENTERS MORE SLOWLY BEHIND ANNE, PIPE IN MOUTH, HAND ON PIPE BOWL, SMILING QUIETLY AND CALMLY, STANDS WITH HIP AGAINST RIGHT END OF WALL, RELAXED. ANNE GOES UP TO JULIA (SHE IS SHORTER THAN JULIA) AND TAKES HER HAND. What did you do with Carl, you crazy thing? You didn't send him away, did you? I haven't seen him all morning and we've been all the way to town and back!

JULIA

SHRUGS, HALF SMILE, SHE HAS SOFTENED, SLUMPS NOW A LITTLE. Oh,...

ANNE

STILL HOLDING JULIA'S HAND WITH BOTH OF HERS. JERKS IT UP AND DOWN TO EMPHASIZE HER SPEECH. JULIA LOOKS AT PAT NOW AND THEN FOR A MOMENT. HE IS WATCHING HER, SMILING CALMLY. JULIA IS EMBARRASSED

IN FRONT OF HIM TO TALK ABOUT HER ERSTWHILE BOYFRIEND. Well, why did you do it? SHE IS LAUGHING AND SMILING HAPPILY ALL THE WHILE. He was the nicest boyfriend you've ever had! He was just mad about you; I can't imagine what you didn't like about him! I just loved him. He was so sweet and, God, he just loved you madly!! SHE TURNS AND SMILES AT PAT: SHE RELEASES JULIA'S HAND AND SMILES AT HER AGAIN. LOOKS AT FRANK. HE IS SMILING HAPPILY AT HER. Hi, Frank! SHE QUICKLY BENDS AND KISSES PAUL ON THE CHEEK, SEES THE PAINTING AS SHE IS LEANING OVER HIM. Morning, genius. KISSES HIM. REACHES ACROSS HIM TO THE PAINTING. Oh, a new painting! Let me see! SHE LIFTS IT OVER HIM AND HOLDS IT UP. It's wonderful! Oh, Paulie, it's just beautiful. STILL LOOKING AT IT, SINCERELY TOUCHED, SHE BRINGS IT TO PAT. Look at this, Pat, isn't it wonderful? PAT LOOKS AT IT, NODS, PUFFS ON PIPE.

PAT

Going to put it in your show?

PAUL

STANDING, STRETCHING. Yup. GOES OVER TO PAT, LOOKS AT THE PICTURE, TAKES IT FROM ANNE. I think I'll go put it up in the studio now that everybody's seen it.

FRANK

QUICKLY. Jack hasn't seen it yet.

ANNE

Neither has Felicia.

PAUL

WALKING TO TERRACE DOOR. Well, they can see it later. I want to see how it looks inside...GRINS IN DOORWAY, TURNS TO FACE THEM...I want to see it the way the buyers will see it...I think I'll price it at a thousand.

ANNE

A PLEASED CRY. Oh, Paul! Isn't that too much?

PAUL

EXITING, SMILING. It's worth it.

ANNE SITS ON WALL LEFT OF PAT, SMILES AT HIM. JULIA SITS DOWN IN HER CHAIR AGAIN. FRANK JUMPS UP AND SITS CLOSE TO ANNE, ON HER LEFT. HE IS LIKE A LITTLE BOY WITH HIS FAVORITE TEACHER, TAKES A LOCK OF HER RATHER LONGISH HAIR IN HIS FINGERS AND PLAYS WITH IT. ANNE LOOKS AT HIM AND SMILES INNOCENTLY AND HAPPILY. PAT LOOKS AT JULIA WHO LOOKS AT TABLE. SHE IS FACING 1/4 RIGHT.

FRANK

I'll be glad when you're my sister. ANNE LAUGHS, LOOKING AT HIM. HE IS SERIOUS. SOUND OF CAR PULLING UP AND STOPPING OFF STAGE RIGHT. JULIA LOOKS UP, HER FACE LIGHTING UP.

ANNE

TURNING TOWARDS RIGHT QUICKLY. There they are. ALL LOOK RIGHT. FRANK'S FACE LIGHTS UP TOO. ANNE STILL SMILES. PAT CROSSES TO DOWN RIGHT, FACES TOWARDS GROUP. SITS ON ARM OF CHAIR WHICH IS AT THAT EDGE OF THE TERRACE. HE ALWAYS WATCHES AND SMILES.

JULIA

LOOKING RIGHT, HAPPY NOW. WAVES. There's my wonderful brother. Hi! JACK AND FELICIA ENTER CARRYING GROCERIES, THEY ARE LAUGHING.

JACK

SETTING HIS BUNDLES ON THE END OF THE WALL, LOOKS FIRST AT ANNE. FELICIA, BENDING OVER HER BUNDLE, ALMOST RUNS ACROSS THE STAGE AND PLACES BUNDLE HEAVILY ON WALL AT FRANK'S LEFT DURING JACK'S SPEECH. The early birds catch the bacon. BENDS OVER BUNDLE AND KISSES ANNE ON THE CHEEK. Hiya.

FRANK

SMILING, Hi, Jack. JACK NODS, THEN SITS NEXT TO ANNE, PUTS ARM AROUND HER. FRANK'S SMILE FADES.

FELICIA

DROPPING BUNDLE, SIGHS WITH RELIEF.

FRANK

SWINGING AWAY FROM ANNE, TURNS TO FELICIA, BRAVADO RETURNS. HANDS ON KNEES. Hello, little girl.

FELICIA

LOOKING DOWN AND AWAY FROM FRANK. Oh. Hello. SHE FEELS TEASED, BUT IS PLEASED BY IT.

JACK

IS SITTING NEXT TO ANNE, BUNDLE TO HIS RIGHT. Well, where's Carl? HE IS TEASING.

JULIA

HAPPY THAT JACK IS THERE. Phooey on him. JUMPS UP, TAKES POEM FROM POCKET, GOES TO JACK. Look, read this poem I wrote. GIVES IT TO HIM. PUSHES BUNDLE TO RIGHT SO THAT SHE CAN SIT NEXT TO JACK WHILE HE READS THE POEM. JACK STARTS TO READ IT, SHE WATCHES HIS FACE.

FRANK

FELICIA LIFTS HER BUNDLE. FRANK STANDS AND TAKES IT FROM HER. SHE IS PLEASED. HE LOOKS AT HER, SMILES. HE TEASES HER. Okay, you can carry the other one. SHE IS ONCE MORE TAKEN BY HIS TEASING.

FELICIA

Oh! HURRIES ACROSS IN FRONT OF THOSE SITTING ON WALL (ANNE IS READING THE POEM OVER JACK'S SHOULDER) AND PICKS UP BUNDLE. JULIA GLANCES OVER, BUT DOESN'T SEE HER, LOOKS QUICKLY BACK TO JACK. FELICIA CARRIES BUNDLE BACK TO FRANK, WHO LAUGHS AND TAKES IT FROM HER,

SURPRISING HER AGAIN. THEY EXIT THROUGH GATEWAY, FELICIA GLANCING AT FRANK FROM TIME TO TIME. HE IS LAUGHING AT HER CONFUSION. SHE SMILES FINALLY BEFORE THEY GO OUT OF SIGHT. PAT IS WATCHING THE POETRY READERS, NODS AS HE SMOKES.

JACK

READS FOR ONLY THE FEW SECONDS IT TAKES FRANK AND FELICIA TO EXEUNT. LOOKS AT ANNE, PUTS HIS ARM AROUND HER AND HOLDS POEM BETWEEN THEM. STARTS READING AGAIN. THEY HAVE LOOKED INTIMATELY AT EACH OTHER. JULIA SEES, MOVES RESTLESSLY. JACK LOOKS UP SMILING APOLOGETICALLY, PROUD BUT IN PERPLEXITY. I can't understand your poetry, honey; you're just too deep for me. I don't even understand half the words. HE GIVES THE POEM TO JULIA. Why don't you show it to Pat and see what he thinks. He's been to college.

PAT

DEFERRING, SHAKING HEAD, LAUGHING, LOOKING DOWN. Not me! I don't know anything about poetry.

JULIA

EXITS RAPIDLY INTO LIVING ROOM AND THEN UP THE STAIRS, THE POEM HANGING IN HER HAND.

JACK

WATCHING HER GO, SHAKING HIS HEAD, LAUGHING PAINFULLY.

ANNE

LEANING BACK, SIGHING. You shouldn't have said that to her, Jack. PAUSE. THINKING NOW ABOUT THE POEM. I thought the beginning of it was sort of nice.

JACK

JUMPING UP, LAUGHING NOW BUT WITH A SUPPRESSED ANGER FROM HIS GUILT. Oh, Julia! The epitome of self-confidence. Nobody has to tell her she's good. She knows it. LAUGHS UNCERTAINLY, RATIONALIZING--GROWING BITTER AND RESENTFUL. And even if I'd have read it she wouldn't have been satisfied. If I'd told her I liked it she'd tell me I was being dishonest, and if I'd told her I didn't like it she'd tell me I wasn't being fair to it. What can I do? So I don't read her damn stuff. What's the use? I can't say anything to her; she's always accusing me of one thing or another--no matter what I do...HE HAS BEEN STANDING UP GESTURING WITH HIS HANDS IN A VERY RESTRAINED, INHIBITED WAY. NOW HE STOPS AND LOOKS DOWN AT ANNE. SHE IS LOOKING AT HIM. JACK SITS, SLOUCHES. PAUSE.

PAT

STANDING, SIGHING. Well...JACK REACHES OUT FOR ANNE'S HAND, HOLDS IT WITHOUT LOOKING, ANNE HAS GLANCED QUICKLY AT PAT. PAT WAVES HIS PIPE AT THEM. HE EXITS RIGHT. ANNE LOOKS AT JACK. PAUSE.

ANNE

SYMPATHETICALLY THOUGH HALF-EMBARRASSED, UNSURE OF WHAT TO SAY TO HIM, CONCERNED. That's alright, Jack...

JACK

LOOKING UP AT ANNE WITH PAIN IN HIS EYES. SOFTLY. I couldn't get along without you, Anne.

ANNE

OVERWHELMED, LEANS TOWARD HIM, PATS HIS SHOULDER, ALMOST AFLUTTER. Oh...you won't have to. You won't have to...SMILES EAGERLY, EMBRACES HIM.

PAUL

BOUNDING DOWN STAIRS AND ONTO THE TERRACE. ANNE AND JACK DISEMBRACE, THEY AREN'T EMBARRASSED. I've got a great idea! Oh, you love birds. If you can stand it let's have a picnic supper!

ANNE

Wonderful! What a wonderful idea! TURNS TO JACK, SMILING AT HIM. Wouldn't you like that, Jack? Don't you just love picnics? JACK NODS. HE FEELS LIKE A LITTLE BOY SOOTHED. HE SMILES AFTER THE STORM.

PAUL

Okay then. There's all that stuff in the cellar from last year. You two can get that; and on your way through the kitchen you can tell Frank and Felish to make some potato salad and stuff. And I'll get my easel and paints and paint a big picture if we can get there before the sun goes down.

ANNE

JUMPING UP, PULLING JACK UP BY HIS HAND. Well come on then; the sun's going down any minute now; we'll never get there on time at this rate. JACK STANDS, LAUGHS. THEY EXEUNT TOWARDS KITCHEN THROUGH GATE.

PAUL GOES INTO LIVING ROOM TO FOOT OF STAIRS AND LOOKS UP.

PAUL

Julia! PAUSE. Julia, come on, we're going on a picnic! You have to peel the potatoes!

JULIA

AFTER A SHORT PAUSE. A VERY HARSH, UGLY VOICE, DELIBERATE, A SPACE BETWEEN EACH WORD. I'm...not...going...

PAUL

QUICKLY, WORRIEDLY. What's the matter? Julia! HE STARTS UP THE STAIRS. SUDDENLY SHE COMES RUSHING DOWN; PUSHES HIM OUT OF THE WAY. HE TURNS AND WATCHES HER. SHE RUNS TO THE CENTER OF THE LIVING ROOM TO THE LEFT OF THE COUCH. HE ENTERS THE ROOM SLOWLY AND STANDS BEHIND THE COUCH TO HER RIGHT. HE IS ANXIOUS ABOUT HER. SHE IS EXTREMELY AGITATED. HE PUTS HIS HAND OUT TO HER. What's the matter?

JULIA

SHAKING HIS HAND OFF HER ARM. Nothing. BLURTS OUT AS PAUL WATCHES HER, HIS FACE AS PAINED AS SHE FEELS, THOUGH HER FACE IS ANGRY. Your Uncle Pat must be a sex maniac that way he looks at me. You probably take after him.

PAUL

ALL THROUGH THIS HIS FOREHEAD IS FURROWED WITH ANXIETY, CONCERN AND PERPLEXITY. SOFTLY. He's only an uncle by marriage.

JULIA

Who cares! MOVES TO FRONT OF COUCH IMPATIENTLY.

PAUL

WATCHING HER. SOFTLY. Julia...?

JULIA

Just leave me alone. Frank's my only friend. He's the only one who understands me.

PAUL

SOFTLY. Then why did you come down to me?

JULIA

QUICKLY. I didn't come down...to you!...I don't care; I should have stayed up there; you don't understand anything about me!...And that uncle of yours! SHE IS FURIOUS, CLENCHES HER FISTS, DURING THE FOLLOWING SHE BEGINS TO TALK THROUGH CLENCHED TEETH. He'd just be delighted to death to have those kids sleep with each other! The way he follows them around with his eyes watching them, hoping to catch them doing something; it would just make him as happy as could be. The old lech... the lech...the lech!

PAUL

Which kids?

JULIA

Frank and Felicia! Frank and Felicia! What makes you so stupid? SHE TAKES UP ONE OF THE PILLOWS FROM THE COUCH AND COMMENCES TO POUND IT OUT ON THE ARM OF THE COUCH. SHE IS STRAIGHTENING THE COUCH, FLUFFING UP THE PILLOWS, BUT SHE DOES IT ALL VICIOUSLY, HYSTERICALLY, VIOLENTLY. PAUL, IN PERPLEXITY, WATCHES HER. HE IS WORRIED ABOUT HER. SHE TALKS IN JERKY, IMPATIENT SENTENCES. I don't mean...Jack and Anne. God damn it..! I don't mean those... SHE STANDS, A PILLOW IN BOTH HANDS. I mean Frank and Felicia! SHE TURNS AND SITS HEAVILY ON COUCH, PILLOW HELD IN HER ARMS. SHE IS ABOUT TO WEEP. I can't stand it! I can stand the way they look at each other and don't understand!

PAUL

SOFTLY. Frank and...?

JULIA

SHOUTING. WEEPING. No! Jack, my darling brother Jack and your sister Anne... CATCHES HER BREATH; SHE IS ALMOST SOBBING. They just don't get through to each other! HIDES HER FACE IN THE PILLOW. They sit and look at each other and all their feelings are just hanging on them, but they can't get through to each other; they can't tell each other! WEEPING, VOICE IS SOFTER, HELPLESS NOW, ANGER IS GONE. I mean they can't tell each other where they hurt. They can't get through...they can't tell the truth. PAUSE. SHE WEEPS. SHE LEANS BACK, EXHAUSTED, PILLOW HELD TIGHTLY IN ARMS. They all have secrets ...we all do. And nobody tells. SHE IS DEMANDING OF THE WORLD. And I want to know why.

PAUL

LOOKS AT HER AS IF POISED ON HER WORDS. WAITS FOR HER RESPONSE.

JULIA

CALMER. I suppose it's hard to tell the truth. I suppose people think it's too hard to be honest.

PAUL

SERIOUSLY WANTING TO KNOW. SLOWLY COMING AROUND END OF COUCH. AT HER LEFT NOW. Isn't it?

JULIA

SHRUGS. CALMED NOW. Well, it doesn't make any difference. PUTS PILLOW BACK ON THE SEAT TO HER RIGHT. LEANS BACK. PAUSE. RESIGNED AND ENERVATED, WEARY. Do you want to know what I was really mad about? I was mad because Jack wouldn't read my poem. He didn't even want to try to read it. It wasn't that difficult. PAUSE. PAUL'S HEAD DROOPS, HAND ON KNEE, STILL LEANING OVER THE COUCH TOWARD JULIA. It's disgusting the lengths I go to to hide something I'm ashamed of...Jack doesn't like me very much. PAUSE. SHE LOOKS AT PAUL. WANTS TO IMPRESS THIS NEXT. But I was telling the truth about the other things, I mean about Pat and all. It's just that I didn't tell you everything. PAUL DOESN'T MOVE. JULIA FINALLY LEANS BACK AND SIGHS. I don't care if you think I'm a hypocrite.

PAUL

SURPRISED, LOOKS UP QUICKLY. Oh, I don't think that!

JULIA

SHRUGS. Well. It doesn't make any difference.

PAUL

It does! Why do you think I think you're a hypocrite? SLOWING DOWN, MORE SOFTLY. It's not true at all. I think you're just the opposite. I know you always tell the truth.

JULIA

SHE IS SURPRISED. LOOKS UP AT HIM.

JULIA

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JULIA

SHE IS SURPRISED. LOOKS UP AT HIM.

PAUL

TOUCHING HER ARM, CARESSING IT LIGHTLY ONCE OR TWICE TO EMPHASIZE HIS SPEECH. Really, Julia, I do. I know that if I know anything. I believe in you.

JULIA

LOOKS DOWN, OVERWHELMED, TOUCHED. PLAYS WITH HER FINGERS IN HER LAP. FINALLY LOOKS UP WITH A BRILLIANT SMILE. HE SMILES BACK NOW. Thanks.

PAUL

GOES TO CHAIR AND SPRAWLS IN IT.

JULIA

RELAXED NOW, LEANING BACK, SMILING. How come you know so much about me?

PAUL

I don't know so much.

JULIA

Well, you didn't run away from me in ...BLURTS IT OUT...disgust.

PAUL

CONFUSED. Why...when would I have run away from you?

JULIA

MAKES A VAGUE GESTURE WITH HER HAND, INDICATING THE AREA WHERE SHE HAD BEEN HYSTERICAL ABOUT PAT. If anybody else had been here they would've run away...

PAUL

Why?

JULIA

PAUSE WHILE SHE CONSIDERS HOW TO PUT IT. SHE IS A LITTLE ANNOYED NOW THAT HE IS SO OBTUSE, THAT HE FORCES HER TO SAY THE EMBARRASSING. I suppose because they would've thought that I was crazy or something. My brothers even, I should say especially my brothers, can't stand me when I'm in one of my, SHRUGS, I don't know,...tempers, fits.

PAUL

I didn't think you were...Actually, I felt...SEEMS HESITANT TO USE THIS WORD...sorry for you...You seemed so sad.

JULIA

PAUSE. That's amazing! PAUL LOOKS AT HER. ...you didn't think I was awful.

PAUL

SHAKES HIS HEAD. No.

JULIA

You thought I was sad. PAUSE. It's so strange. How could you know I was sad? Anybody else would've thought that I was a spoiled brat or that I should be ashamed of myself or something...That was awfully perceptive of you. I'm really amazed. In fact I can hardly believe it it's so wonderful. SHE IS NOW SITTING UP, SMILING, ONE LEG CROSSED UNDER HER. PAUL IS EMBARRASSED BUT PLEASED. LAUGHS SOFTLY, LOOKS DOWN. No; really, Paul, I mean it.

PAUL

LAUGHING, LOOKING UP SIDEWAYS AT HER, BLUSHING. We painters are all alike. All we know about is color. You just seemed...blue...to me.

JULIA

LAUGHING AS PEOPLE DO AT BAD JOKES WHICH ARE FRIGHTFULLY BAD. Oh! FALLS BACK AGAINST BACK OF COUCH. THEY CHUCKLE AND LAUGH FOR A MOMENT. Oh no! That's terrible! THEY SETTLE DOWN AT LAST; SMILE; JULIA PUTS HER HANDS BEHIND HER NECK. SOFTLY, TENDERLY ALMOST. You're a good friend, Paul. I feel so much better now that we've talked about it.

PAUL

BLUSHING AGAIN. LAUGHING TO COVER HIS FEELINGS. SOFTLY. I like you too... JACK AND ANNE, LAUGHING AND TALKING, DIRTY FROM RUMMAGING AROUND IN THE BASEMENT, CARRYING A LARGE PICNIC BASKET FILLED WITH PLATES, SILVERWARE AND A THERMOS. PAUL AND JULIA QUICKLY LOOK UP AND JOIN IN THEIR MERRIMENT. PAUL JUMPS UP AND STANDS BY THE UPSTAGE ARM OF HIS CHAIR. ANNE AND JACK COME DOWN IN FRONT OF THE COUCH AND PUT THE BASKET ON THE FLOOR TO THE LEFT OF JULIA'S FEET. JACK OPENS THE BASKET WHILE ANNE, TO THE LEFT LEANS, HALF-SITS, ON ARM OF COUCH AND WIPES HER FACE AND HANDS WITH A LITTLE WHITE HANDKERCHIEF.

JACK

AS HE ENTERS. Well, <u>we're</u> ready!

ANNE

LAUGHING. Whew! I should say! That cellar, Paul, what a dusty place. Do you know where this old thing was? It was in the back cellar behind the suitcases, under the bottom shelf of fishing tackle.

PAUL

What was it doing there?

ANNE

ALWAYS SMILING, SHRUGS, SITTING, WIPING HER FACE AND HANDS. I don't know. We must have been crazy last year. LAUGHS LIGHTLY, GAILY; LOOKS AT HANDKERCHIEF. Ooh. I'm so dirty! Isn't that awful. LAUGHS.

JULIA

WANTING TO BE NICE. SHE IS HAPPY NOW. LAUGHING. Oh sure, you're as dirty as a coal miner!

PAUL

LOOKING INTO BASKET AS JACK SQUATS NEARBY. Where'd all this stuff come from? PICKS OUT AND HOLDS UP A PAIR OF WORKMAN'S OLD GLOVES. Where'd this come from? They weren't in the basket when we put it away.

JULIA

SMILING, MOCK-SERIOUSLY, BENDING FORWARD, TOUCHING ONE OF THE FINGERS. They're for carrying the hot dogs.

ANNE

LAUGHING, THROWING HER HEAD BACK. Oh!

PAUL

AT THE SAME TIME, LEANING BACK, WITH THAT TONE PEOPLE USE TO THE MAKERS OF BAD PUNS, ETC. SIGHS. SHAKES HIS HEAD. JACK LAUGHS PLEASEDLY AT HIS BRIGHT, WITTY SISTER. THEN PAUL REMEMBERS, LOOKS AT ANNE. Oh, I remember! The coffee spilled over the lip of that dumb thermos. So we put the gloves in here for pouring the coffee.

JULIA

LEANING BACK, AFFECTING HAUT CULTURE, HER FINGER OUT AS SHE HOLDS AN IMAGINARY TEA CUP. Oh, your pouring gloves, how too too sweet! Yes, indeed, Sir Paltry, just a little more demi-tasse! THE OTHERS LAUGH AGAIN.

PAUL

PUTS ON THE GLOVES AND STANDS, THEN BOWS AND LEANS TOWARD JULIA HOLDING AN IMAGINARY KEG FULL OF SOMETHING HEAVY. POURS GREAT QUANTITIES OF THIS IMAGINARY STUFF INTO JULIA'S LAP. ALSO AFFECTING THAT STEREOTYPE BRITISH ACCENT. Just say when, Lady Julip. POURS AND POURS UNTIL THE KEG IS UPSIDE DOWN AND PRESUMABLY EMPTY. JULIA SMILES AND WATCHES. WHEN ALL THE COFFEE IS POURED SHE LOOKS INTO HER IMAGINARY DEMITASSE CUP (IT IS OBVIOUSLY SMALL FROM HER PANTOMIME).

JULIA

LOOKING UP WITH ICY POLITENESS. Well then if you hadn't any more coffee than that you needn't have asked me in at all, you know.

ALL MOVE, SMILE; ARE RELAXED. PAUL KEEPS WEARING GLOVES THROUGHOUT THE ACT. JACK CLOSES BASKET AND STANDS, STRETCHES LAZILY, GOES BEHIND COUCH AND STANDS BEHIND ANNE.

ANNE

JUMPING OFF ARM OF COUCH. Well, STRETCHES OUT HER ARMS are we ready?

PAUL

SITTING ON COUCH AT JULIA'S RIGHT NOW. Gosh, I forgot. Pat went for a walk; he doesn't even know. I'd better go find him. STARTS TO RISE.

ANNE

Oh! I'll find him if he went for a walk; I know where he always goes. SHE GOES HURRIEDLY FROM ROOM AND EXITS RIGHT OFF TERRACE. JACK IS ABOUT TO FOLLOW HER, SMILING.

JULIA

JUMPING UP TO INTERCEPT JACK--SHE DOESN'T REALIZE WHAT JACK WANT TO DO. SHE HOLDS HIS ARM, SMILING. HE LOOKS DOWN AT HER IMPATIENTLY THOUGH HE IS SMILING, BUT IN A RATHER PAINED WAY: HE WANTS TO GO BUT DOESN'T WANT TO PUSH JULIA AWAY. I just want to tell you that I'm sorry.

JACK

NOT REALLY LISTENING, NOT UNDERSTANDING, WANTING ONLY TO FOLLOW ANNE. LAUGHS AWKWARDLY, GENTLY PUSHING HER HAND FROM HIS ARM. Sorry about what?

JULIA

HOLDING HIS ARM AGAIN. About this morning...about my poem...SHE BEGINS TO BE PAINED, BUT SMILES BRAVELY.

JACK

AGAIN PUSHING HER HAND AWAY, LOOKS ANXIOUSLY OUT THE DOOR. HE IS IN A HURRY, GETTING DESPARATE. Well what about it? LAUGHS A LITTLE STILL.

JULIA

LOOKS AT HIM, DOESN'T TRY TO HOLD HIS ARM AGAIN. SHE SMILES PAINFULLY, HELPLESSLY.

JACK

STRAINED, UPSET, NOT UNDERSTANDING. Well, look, Julia, what are you sorry about? I mean, I don't see why you should be sorry. SHE DOESN'T ANSWER. HE IS COMPELLED TO KEEP TALKING. Really, I don't understand.

JULIA

SOFTLY. AFTER PAUSE. I'm sorry I got mad at you for not reading my poem.

JACK

LAUGHING BUT GETTING ANGRY NOW. Well, for God's sake, Julia! JACK LAUGHS BECAUSE HE IS AFRAID TO SHOW HIS ANGER. How am I suppose to know that's what you're sorry about? I didn't even know you were mad.

JULIA

GETTING COLD NOW. You should know.

JACK

LAUGHING WITH EMBARRASSMENT AND ANGER. ASHAMED THAT PAUL IS THERE. LOOKS QUICKLY AT PAUL, FIDGETS WITH HIS BUTTONS, PULLS HIS CUFFS, ETC. How should I know? How do you expect me to know a thing like that?

JULIA

COLDLY--DELIBERATELY, ALMOST BETWEEN UNMOVING LIPS. If you ever looked at me you'd know a lot of things.

JACK

LAUGHING, PRETENDING, FOR PAUL'S SAKE, THAT THIS IS PREPOSTEROUS. Oh, Julia, I look at you. I'm looking at you now.

JULIA

No you're not...You're looking maybe, but you're not seeing. LOUDER, A LITTLE HYSTERICAL. You're not <u>see</u>ing me!

JACK

UPSET, AFRAID, COWED. Come on, Julia. Don't. FRANK ENTERS. JACK LOOKS NOW AT FRANK ANXIOUSLY, ASHAMED, EMBARRASSED.

FRANK

ENTERING FROM TERRACE (FROM GATEWAY FROM KITCHEN). PAUSES, SEES SITUATION, SPEAKS QUICKLY WITH FRIGHT AND SUSPICION. HE DOESN'T WANT JACK HURT. Julia!

JACK

WALKING AWAY FROM JULIA TOWARDS TERRACE. STANDS NEXT TO FRANK. JULIA WALKS LEFT AND STANDS FACING VELVET CURTAINS. SHRUGS. SOTTO VOICE, LOOKING DOWN AT HIS CUFFS. It's the same damn thing! You can fight with her; I can't take her temper anymore! EXITS TO RIGHT, HURRIEDLY.

FRANK

WATCHES JACK GO, LOOKS AT PAUL, THEN AT JULIA, WHO IS TURNED TOWARD WALL. HE WALKS BEHIND COUCH AND STANDS BEHIND HER. COLDLY, SOFTLY, QUICKLY. Why don't you leave him alone? PAUSE. You think you're smart, don't you...NEW TACK, ANGRIER. You can't leave him alone for a minute, can you? Two months before his wedding and you still won't leave him alone. Why don't you stop hurting him...huh? Why don't you just leave him alone for awhile?

JACK

AT TERRACE DOOR, LOOKING IN, DISTRACTED. Frank, did you see Anne?

FRANK

TURNING TO JACK, ANGER LEAVES; HE LOOKS AT JACK DEVOTEDLY. She was looking for Pat, wasn't she? She was in the kitchen a few minutes ago.

JACK

AFTER SHORT PAUSE. STATEMENT OF FACT, NO EMOTION, NONCOMMITAL. You didn't look for him.

FRANK

I was helping Felicia. JACK TURNS AND EXITS RIGHT. FRANK TURNS BACK TO JULIA, WHO HASN'T MOVED. Did you hear what I said...

JULIA

TO WALL. COLDLY, DISTINCTLY. Go to hell.

FRANK

ALMOST SMILING, SARDONICALLY, VICIOUSLY. SOFTLY. COMING IN QUICKLY AFTER HER. AS IF HE HAD HIS WEAPON ALL READY. No wonder you can't get married, with a mouth like that. And what really happened to Carl? Can't you keep a man for more than two weeks?

JULIA

SPINNING AROUND TO FACE HIM. HE IS STILL SMILING IN THAT VICIOUS WAY. QUICKLY. ALMOST HYSTERICALLY, ON THE DEFENSIVE. He didn't leave me. I left him...HER PRIDE COMES TO HER RESCUE. SHE LEANS TOWARD FRANK, AND AS VICIOUSLY AS HE SMILES, SHE SAYS, HER FACE CONTORTED BY RAGE AND REVENGE SOFTLY, QUICKLY. I was going to tell you about him. But now I won't. I'll never tell you another thing again as long as I live. SHE GOES UPSTAIRS WITH STIFF BACK.

FRANK

WATCHES HER GO WITH SAME SMILE. THEN STRETCHING, WALKS TO TERRACE DOOR. LOOKS OUT. CONVERSATIONALLY. What a bitch.

PAUL

NOW RELAXING BACK IN THE CHAIR. UP TILL NOW HE HAS BEEN WATCHING TENSELY. HE LOOKS AT HIS GLOVED HANDS WHICH HE HOLDS OUT AND MOVES IN FRONT OF HIM. IN SAME CONVERSATIONAL, LIGHT TONE. She's not a bitch at all.

FRANK

LOOKING AT PAUL. SEES GLOVES. LAUGHS. HE FEELS A MAN NOW, CONFIDENT, SUPERIOR. Where'd you get those gloves?

PAUL

No where. I don't know. They just suddenly appeared on my hands.

FRANK

TURNING BACK TO DOOR. LAUGHING. PAUSE. What a beautiful day.

PAUL

UNDER HIS BREATH ALMOST. She's not a bitch at all.

FRANK

ANGRY FOR A MOMENT. I'll apologize to her, don't worry. SMILES. But let her wait awhile first; serves her right. SUDDENLY SEES FELICIA, CALLS, WAVES. Hey, Felicia! RUNS OUT LAUGHING.

PAUL

LOOKS AT GLOVES. SERIOUS. POURS HIMSELF IMAGINARY COFFEE FROM POT ON IMAGINARY TABLE AT HIS RIGHT. PUTS POT BACK ON TABLE, HOLDS COFFEE CUP IN BOTH HANDS, AS IF IT IS HOT. DRINKS COFFEE.

SLOW CURTAIN

Act II

A week later. Also late in the afternoon, about 4:00. It is cooler and less sunny than in Act I. A storm is brewing, which actually breaks at the end of this act. The lights, therefore, are constantly dimming, but imperceptively, until with the first roll of thunder, it is suddenly apparent to the audience that it almost dark outside. With the rising curtain we hear a Mozart Divertimento played on the phonograph in the upstage left corner. Julia barefoot, is sitting on the down end of the black bench with an imaginary cello between her knees; she plays it while Frank, standing right of the couch, conducts her and the music with greatly exaggerated gestures, half of the time his eyes are closed as he sways and grimaces and gesticulates. As each new phrase or crescendo he runs to another part of the room, conducting all the while. He leaps on the couch, on the chair, stands on the stairway, etc. Julia moves up and down the bench, a different position for each instrument she pretends to play. e.g. the center of the bench for the flute, the up end for the violin. As she plays the violin she sways and finally stands and plays with great swayings. Frank conducts that sit; she does, slides into another position and is now the trombone, etc. When music ends, Frank, with last elaborate gesture turns off the phonograph. Then he and Julia bow formally, shake hands and walk with hands behind backs, heads bowed (a la Brahms photos) to couch, onto which Julia, with as much formality as possible, throws herself, and Frank does the same on the right end of the couch. Now the game is over and they relax, Frank sprawls, Julia puts hands behind head. She is lying with her feet facing the terrace and her head on the couch arm. Frank holds her feet in his lap as he stretches out. He doesn't touch her feet, but occasionally runs his finger over them during the conversation in an absent-minded way.

JULIA

MEDITATIVELY. This is a good room. FRANK RESPONDS TO ALL HER REMARKS BY NODDING HIS HEAD: HE AGREES WITH EVERYTHING SHE SAYS WHEN THEY ARE NOT FIGHTING. THEN HE AGREES WITH NOTHING. PAUSE. I wish they had a record of the Fireworks music; this is the perfect time of day, and I'm in the perfect mood for it. SHE HUMS A FEW CHARACTERISTIC BARS--FROM FIRST MOVEMENT--FROM HANDEL'S ROYAL FIREWORKS MUSIC. SHE HUMS LOUDER AND AT LAST SINGS AN APPROPRIATE PHRASE FROM IT, ROLLING HER HEAD TO ITS GRAND SWEEP. THE END OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT WOULD BE GOOD. FRANK ACCOMPANIES HER BY ROLLING AND NODDING HIS OWN HEAD. THEY STOP AND THEN RELAX AGAIN. Boy. What a piece of music. FRANK NODS, OF COURSE. PAUSE. I'm writing a new poem. SLIGHT PAUSE. FRANK LOOKS EXPECTANTLY AT HER, HIS EYEBROWS RAISED IN ANTICIPATION JUST A TRIFLE OBSEQUIOUS. It's all about this. SHE FLINGS HER LEFT ARM AND LETS IT AT THE END OF THE NEXT FALL TO THE FLOOR. DURING THE NEXT, HOWEVER, IT REMAINS OUTSTRETCHED AND HER HAND MOVES EXPRESSIVELY. About music in the afternoon pierced with gold and everything; and my heart, SHE IS GETTING

DREAMILY IDEALISTIC AND HEROIC and the gold mites in the warm air and the thick, pulsing, music everywhere...everywhere!...SOFTER, DREAMILY INTENSE...I want to get the feeling of rays of light and sitting in their golden warmth with the music all around. A PAUSE AS SHE REMEMBERS HALF-SMILING, HER FACE FILLED WITH THESE GRAND, HEROIC THOUGHTS, THEN SHE SIGHS AND HER HAND BECOMES LIMP AND DROPS. I want it to be a really beautiful poem. I want to express myself...I want to write what I feel and not just a lot of talk. I don't want my poems to be dead... PLAINTIVELY, ALMOST DEFENSIVELY I'm not dead!

FRANK

SQUEEZES HER FOOT. Of course you're not dead! You're the most alive person I know.

JULIA

ALMOST IMPATIENT WITH HIM, SHE SWINGS AROUND, HER FEET TO THE FLOOR: SHE SITS NOW, THROWS HERSELF BACK AGAINST THE PILLOW. I'm very dissatisfied! There's something I want and I don't know what it is... Oh, Frank! If only you could help me.

FRANK

TURNING TO HER, EAGER TO PLEASE AND HELP. TAKING HIMSELF VERY SERIOUSLY. I know just how you feel..! I...DECIDES HE CAN'T SPEAK: CHANGES THE SUBJECT. I think Paul started this. You shouldn't have listened to him the other day. He doesn't know anything about your poetry. Your poetry isn't restrained. It's just...well, it's just got control is all. He doesn't know anything about it!

JULIA

EXPLODING. STANDING, TURNING QUICKLY PAST THE LEFT END OF THE COUCH. SITS ON BENCH, HOLDS PILLOW IN ARMS. Oh, Paul! He has nothing to do with it! He doesn't have to tell me, I know myself that there's something wrong with me. I am restrained. I am cold. I am dead! ON "DEAD" SHE JUMPS UP AND GOES TO PHONOGRAPH, SHE STANDS BEFORE IT A MOMENT, HER HANDS ON IT, HER SHOULDERS RAISED TENSELY. PAUSE IN WHICH FRANK STARES AT HER. SHE TURNS AWAY AND COMES DOWN STAGE RIGHT. ALMOST ABSENT-MINDEDLY, ALMOST SOTTO VOICE. I wish they had the Fireworks Music...SIGHS, THROWS HER ARMS OUT. LOUD AGAIN. Oh well. It doesn't make any difference. What do I care anyway. SHE FAKES A LAUGH AND SEEMING TO REGAIN HER OLD SPIRIT AND GAITY, SHE THROWS HERSELF INTO THE EASY CHAIR, SPRAWLS IN AN UNGRACEFUL WAY. SHE REMOVES A BRACELET SHE'S BEEN WEARING. FRANK ACCEPTS HER LAUGH AS GENUINE, BRIGHTENS WITH HER. I hate jewelry. I don't know why I wear it. SHE GETS UP AND THROWS THE BRACELET OUT THE TERRACE DOOR. RETURNS AND SPRAWLS AGAIN IN THE CHAIR. FRANK HAS BEEN LAUGHING AT WHAT HE THINKS ARE HER PRANKS.

FRANK

LAUGHING, SURPRISED. Hey, Julia, that was the bracelet Carl gave you.

JULIA

Who cares? SHRUGS. A hundred Carls, a hundred bracelets. Maybe that's what I need, a new man.

FRANK

LEANS FORWARD, SMILING. Hey, you never told me what happened with Carl.

JULIA

REMEMBERING THAT SHE SAID SHE WOULDN'T TELL HIM. A COLD PAUSE. FRANK IS WAITING, NOT UNDERSTANDING HER SUDDEN COLDNESS. COLDLY. You wouldn't be interested.

FRANK

LAUGHS UNCERTAINLY. I wouldn't be...? LEANS BACK AND THEN FORWARD AGAIN. Sure I'd be interested...PAUSE. HE UNDERSTANDS. A GENTLE REPRIMAND...Oh, Jule, I said I was sorry...

JULIA

STANDING, STIFF, ALMOST WRINGING HER HANDS. MAKES AN EFFORT TO BE COLD, BUT CHANGES HER MIND AND FALLS LOOSELY BACK INTO CHAIR, ARMS LIMP ALONG CHAIR ARMS, FALLING PERHAPS TO FLOOR, OR HANGING DOWN. GIVES UP. It was the sex, as usual.

FRANK

EAGERLY UNDERSTANDING, SMILING CONSPIRATORILY. Another cold fish?

JULIA

SHRUGS IMPATIENTLY BUT SHE HAS GIVEN UP. Fish...? PAUSE. He cried all the time as if it were his fault...CHANGES MIND ABOUT CONFESSING. I just wasn't attracted to him that's all. He just didn't interest me...HER HEAD FALLS BACK AGAINST THE PILLOWS. SHE SEEMS TIRED AND WEAK. Poor Carl with his strength that I didn't want...How hard he tried...how he needed me...

FRANK

LEANING BACK, LAUGHING. Gosh, Jule, you've got the worse luck! Won't you ever meet someone who'll sweep you off your feet?

JULIA

UNMOVING: A SOFT, HALF-LAUGH. A HAND TWITCHES. That bad luck must dog my steps like a shadow...I can't remember when there wasn't a Carl. Maybe there never was anyone else. DYING OUT. Maybe they were all Carls. Maybe there is nothing but Carls...

FRANK

LAUGHING, LYING ON COUCH, POSING SELF-CONSCIOUSLY. I know one man who isn't a Carl!

JULIA

LOOKING AT HIM SLOWLY. Who?

FRANK

Me! JULIA WAITS A MOMENT AND THEN BURSTS INTO ALMOST HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER, FALLS BACK AGAINST THE PILLOWS. FRANK JOINS IN HER LAUGH. VERY SELF-CONSCIOUS, BUT ENJOYING IT. No, really.

JULIA

TRYING TO QUELL HER LAUGHTER. Oh, how too ironical! SHE FINALLY CONTROLS HERSELF. BAITS FRANK NOW, MORE AND MORE CRUELLY. And who is the maid you've swept off her feet?

FRANK

BLUSHING, HEAD IS RESTING ON LEFT ARM OF COUCH, HANDS BEHIND NECK. Felicia. But I haven't swept her yet; I mean not really. I've been working on it. So far I've got her so that whenever she sees me she...blushes over her whole face HE BLUSHES, IS SELF-CONSCIOUS, CAN'T HELP LAUGHING AND GIGGLING ALMOST. LOOKS OVER AT JULIA, HIS FACE PAINFULLY OPEN, LAUGHING SILENTLY.

JULIA

Blushes the way you're blushing now? FRANK CAN'T STOP HIS EMBARRASSING, ADOLESCENT-UGLY SMILE. SHE SMILES CRUELLY. I'm glad to see you have everything under control, my little Romeo. SHE IS LEANING OVER THE ARM OF HER CHAIR TOWARDS HIM.

FRANK

SMILES VANISH, HE FLOPS OVER AND NOW HE LIES ON HIS STOMACH, FACE HALF IN PILLOWS. PATHETICALLY, HELPLESSLY. Ah, Jule, why do you have to ruin everything?

JULIA

GETS UP, RUFFLES HIS HAIR AND WALKS TO LEFT, STILL SMILING, SHE IS GOING TO GO UPSTAIRS. PAT APPEARS IN DINING ROOM. THEY SEE EACH OTHER. JULIA STILL FILLED WITH HER BITTERNESS FOR AND CRUELTY TO FRANK, STOPS FOR A MOMENT. SMILES. COMES TOWARD HIM SWINGING HER HIPS A BIT. TEASINGLY. Well, and there's Pat.

PAT

COMES DOWN AND GOES TO END TABLE AT RIGHT OF COUCH. KNOCKS OUT HIS PIPE AND REFILLS IT DURING THE FOLLOWING. And there's Julia, our little Miss Julia. HE SPEAKS AS IF HE WERE SHY, LOOKING AWAY FROM THE PERSON TO WHOM HE SPEAKS, BUT HE WATCHES THE FACE INTENSELY WHILE THE OTHER PERSON IS SPEAKING, SMILING, KNOWING. HE CREATES A FEELING OF INTIMACY WHERE NONE ACTUALLY EXISTS; HIS SMILE SUGGESTS UNDERCURRENTS ABOUT WHICH BOTH HE AND THE OTHERS ARE APPRISED AND WHICH THEY HAVE ALREADY ACCEPTED. HE SPEAKS SOFTLY, HIS VOICE IS RICH, MODULATED, EXPRESSIVE THOUGH HE SPEAKS LITTLE. HIS MOVEMENTS ARE ECONOMICAL, ARE CONFINED MOSTLY TO BUSINESS WITH HIS PIPE.

JULIA

STANDING WITH BACK TO PHONOGRAPH, HANDS BEHIND HER BACK, SMILING AS HE IS. Ah, yes. Our prancing one, our successful uncle-in-law-to-be, the house's hero. SARCASTICALLY, SEDUCTIVELY. All these things and many more, hmm? SMILING, SHE WALKS TOWARD HIM, HANDS BEHIND BACK. STOPS IN CENTER OF THE ROOM. FRANK HAS LIFTED HIS HEAD ENOUGH SO THAT WE SEE HE IS LISTENING. PAT GOES ON FILLING AND LIGHTING HIS PIPE, LOOKING AT JULIA, SMILING.

PAT

LAUGHING, AS HE LAUGHS HIS TONGUE COMES OUT AND TOUCHES HIS UPPER LIP, AND HE TRIES TO HOLD HIS MOUTH CLOSED, TOGETHER. You know a great deal, my dear.

JULIA

PLAYFULLY, TEASING. More than you know?

PAT

MOVING HIS HEAD, SMILING, LOOKING AWAY SUGGESTIVELY. What do you think I know?

JULIA

TAKEN ABACK A LITTLE, PAT IS AN ADVERSARY SHE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO CONQUER. SHE TURNS AWAY AND GOES TO UP RIGHT PAINTING AND STUDIES IT, ARMS FOLDED ACROSS CHEST. SHRUGS. AFFECT ABSENT-MINDEDNESS. Oh well, what difference does it make?

PAT

HE IS AMUSED. SOFTLY, HEAD DOWN. You aren't afraid, are you?

JULIA

SHRUGS HER SHOULDERS ONCE QUICKLY. Afraid of what?

PAT

Of all the things I know...

JULIA

PRETENDING TO BE ABSORBED IN PICTURE. SHE IS GETTING NERVOUS, ALMOST FRIGHTENED. VOICE IS LESS CERTAIN, THOUGH STILL HARD. It can't be much.

PAT

SUGGESTIVELY, HEAD STILL DOWN, LOOKING UP AT HER...of all the things I could teach you.

FRANK

JUMPS UP AND IS ABOUT TO RUN OUT TERRACE DOOR. God!

JULIA

SEEING HIM, RUNS TO DOOR AND HOLDS HIM. Frank! ...THEY STRUGGLE A MOMENT. HE STOPS SUDDENLY AND THEY FACE EACH OTHER, SHE IS HOLDING BOTH HIS ARMS. HE UNDERSTANDS HER EYES AS SHE LOOKS AT HIM. HE COMES BACK INTO ROOM AND THROWS HIMSELF ON COUCH AGAIN, ON HIS BACK NOW. FACING PAT, DEFINANTLY. There's nothing you could teach me. I know everything.

PAT

Oh?

JULIA

Yes. So just stop giving me your line. PAUSE, SHE IS REGAINING HER CONFIDENCE AND BRAVADO. It really isn't necessary because if I wanted to go to bed with you I wouldn't need you to convince me of it. SMILES AND SAUNTERS TO EASY CHAIR, WHERE SHE SITS GRACEFULLY. And I don't want to go to bed with you. LOOKS AT HER FINGER NAILS.

PAT

HE HAS BEEN SMILING MORE AND MORE BROADLY THROUGHOUT HER SPEECH. HE COMES NOW AND STANDS BEHIND HER CHAIR, LOOKS DOWN AT HER, AND TOUCHES HER RIGHT CHEEK WITH THE WARM BOWL OF HIS PIPE. SHE DOESN'T MOVE. I wouldn't need to convince you and you wouldn't need to convince me...HE PUTS PIPE IN HIS MOUTH AND WALKS LIESURELY OUT THE TERRACE DOOR AND EXITS RIGHT.

FRANK

BETWEEN CLENCHED TEETH, QUIETLY, SLOWLY. How I hate him. TURNS TO JULIA, MORE EXCITED NOW. Why do you fool around with him? Are you in love with him or something? I hate you when you flirt with him, you act like some kind of slut...the two of you...God...JUMPS UP. You act so disgusting with him!

JULIA

SHE IS ABOUT TO WEEP. LOOKS UP AT FRANK. NOW SHE IS PATHETIC, HELPLESS. Frank...

FRANK

PLOWING RIGHT THROUGH. Well, why don't you just keep away from him? You know every time he's around something like that happens! How can you stand to keep acting like that? Doesn't it make you sick?

JULIA

HER VOICE IS BREAKING. LOW. Yes...it does...make me sick. HER MOUTH IS TREMBLING, SHE IS LOOKING UP AT FRANK.

FRANK

STILL LOUDLY, BUT NOT SO ANGRILY. Then why do you keep doing it?

JULIA

I can't help it...the way he looks at me...

FRANK

How? How does he look at you?

JULIA

I don't know! LOOKING DOWN, BREATHLESSLY, QUICKLY, LOW. He makes me want to act like that...SHE WEEPS QUIETLY.

FRANK

QUICKLY KNEELING BY THE LEFT ARM OF THE CHAIR, PUTTING HIS ARMS AROUND HER AS BEST HE CAN IN THAT POSITION. Oh, Julia...PAUSE. SOFTLY. if you need a new man don't pick him. Please don't pick him!

JULIA

BROKENLY, CRYING. I don't want to...I don't want to!

FRANK

HUGGING HER TIGHTER. Ah, Julia, Julia. HE SPEAKS LOW, FULL OF PAIN AND REMORSE.

JULIA

NOW CALMING DOWN. FRANK GIVES HER HIS HANDKERCHIEF: HE KNEELS AT HER SIDE, LOOKING WITH CONCERN UP AT HER. SHE WIPES HER EYES AND BLOWS HER NOSE. THEY SMILE AT EACH OTHER WEAKLY BUT AFFECTIONATELY. HUMEROUSLY. Our lives just seem to be one crisis after another.

FRANK

LAUGHS, SITS ON COUCH. Yeah. PAUSE. SHE SNIFFLES, BLOWS HER NOSE. If you want someone why don't you pick Paul at least?

JULIA

Paul? HER HEART BEGINS TO POUND.

FRANK

Yeah. He's really a nice guy.

JULIA

SHRUGS. SHE HAS STOPPED SMILING. LEANS BACK, PLAYS WITH HANDS. He's alright...

FRANK

He certainly doesn't look like another Carl. Does he?

JULIA

HASN'T BEEN LISTENING, STARING AT HER HANDS.

FRANK

Hey?...did you hear me?

JULIA

WAKENING, LOOKING AT HIM. What?

FRANK

I said he probably isn't another Carl.

JULIA

STARING AT HIM, GETTING TENSE. No...I guess not...PAUSE, THEN SHE LOOKS BACK AT HANDS WHICH SHE AGAIN PLAYS WITH. But you never can tell.

FRANK

Well, you're attracted to him aren't you?

JULIA

QUICKLY. I was attracted to Carl too, at first.

FRANK

But Paul'll follow through. SMILING. He'll keep you interested. I mean, Carl didn't know how to handle you; you were just much smarter than he was. But Paul'll match you alright; I've got a lot of respect for that boy.

JULIA

TENSELY. LOOKING DOWN. LOW. Frank, don't you understand...? LOOKS UP AT FRANK. There's something wrong with me!

FRANK

SURPRISED. What?

JULIA

Don't you understand? Carl was alright, all of them were alright; it's just me. JUMPS UP AND STANDS LOOKING DOWN AT FRANK, DESPARATELY UPSET, WRINGING HER HANDS. SMALL PAUSE. Don't you understand? I just can't get interested! (SHE HAS CHOSEN THE MOST DELICATE WORD. N.B.)

FRANK

LOOKING UP AT HER. HIS WORLD IS COLLAPSING. WHISPERS. Julia.

JULIA

SHE HOLDS HER MOUTH AND RUNS OUT TERRACE TO RIGHT.

FRANK

HE SITS THERE STUNNED. THE DOOR OFF-STAGE IN THE DINING ROOM OPENS AND ANNE, PAUL AND FELICIA ENTER; FELICIA, AT ANNE'S ELBOW, GOES WITH HER UPSTAIRS. PAUL WATCHES THEM GO UPSTAIRS, THEN SLOWLY ENTERS LIVING ROOM, COMES AND FLINGS HIMSELF SPRAWLINGLY INTO THE EASY CHAIR; HE GLANCES AT FRANK AS HE COMES AROUND THE COUCH. FRANK LOOKS UP AT PAUL, HARDLY SEEING HIM, SITTING STILL MOTIONLESSLY AND SHOCKED.

PAUL

GRINNING. If they couldn't wait I don't know why they didn't get married. HE IS TRYING TO RAISE FRANK'S INTEREST AND CURIOSITY.

FRANK

LOOKING AT PAUL. THROUGH-OUT THESE NEXT SCENES FRANK IS QUIET AND TENDER: HIS WHOLE WORLD HAS TURNED UPSIDE DOWN. HE HAS THAT GENTLENESS WHICH PEOPLE IN PAIN HAVE; THEY ARE SO AFRAID OF JARRING THEMSELVES AND CAUSING MORE PAIN THAT THEY MOVE SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY, GENTLY, ARE OBLIVIOUS TO WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON AND REACT WITH THE SAME GENTLE SMILE, AFRAID TO EXPRESS ANY WILDER MOVEMENT OR EMOTION. GENTLY, LOW. What?

PAUL

SMILING EVEN MORE BROADLY. CAN'T HOLD IT IN. Our little couple is pregnant.

FRANK

IT TAKES HIM A MOMENT TO UNDERSTAND. NODS IN RESPONSE, SMILES GENTLY. Oh.

PAUL

I think every couple who is going to get married ought to get pregnant first. See, Jack, now, he's sure he's going to have heirs...or heiresses. FOLDS HIS ARMS OVER HIS CHEST. I think it's a great idea.

FRANK

GETS UP SMILING.

PAUL

Where're you going?

FRANK

I'm going to go congratulate Jack.

PAUL

JUMPS UP, LOOKS AROUND, CONSPIRATORILY, TAKES FRANK'S ARM, WHISPERS. No! Don't tell him yet. He doesn't know. Anne wants to tell him herself. She made me swear not to tell anyone, but I thought a fellow uncle ought to know. POKES FRANK. WALKS AWAY; EXPANSIVELY, LOUDER. I suppose we'll all be one big happy family before we know it. LOOKS OUT TERRACE DOOR, POSES. PRETENDS HAPPY TEARS. My little sister, a June bride.

FRANK

WATCHING, SMILING. GOES BACK TO EASY CHAIR AND SITS BACK AGAINST THE BACK OF THE CHAIR, HIS ARMS ON HIS LAP, BUT HE IS NOT RELAXED, BUT DOES NOT SPRAWL AS IS HIS CUSTOM. That's really great. My brother... he's going to have a baby...TURNS AROUND IN CHAIR TO PAUL. When did she find out?

PAUL

TURNING AROUND. Felish and I went to the doctor's with her this afternoon. She didn't tell anyone about it before, not even me. She says the little thing's about a month old already. CHUCKLES. She's going to name it Georges Rouault, after me.

FRANK

TURNS AROUND AND SITS AGAIN. SMILES FADE SUDDENLY. HE SAGS. SOTTO VOICE. Julia? What will she...?

PAUL

HEARING JULIA'S NAME. Julia! Wonderful idea! I'll go tell her! STARTS TO RUN OUT, COMES BACK IN. Hey where is she?

FRANK

HEARS, THEN COMPREHENDS, THEN TURNS TO PAUL QUICKLY. URGENTLY. No! Don't tell Julia!

PAUL

Why?

FRANK

PAUSES A MOMENT. Don't tell her.

PAUL

But why?

FRANK

THINKS A MOMENT, HE STILL IS GENTLE, SPEAKS SOFTLY. She might...she might want her brother to tell her...

PAUL

HANGING IN THE DOORWAY. SOFTLY, UNDERSTANDING. I see...okay. HE IS ABOUT TO TURN AND GO WHEN FELICIA COMES DOWNSTAIRS AND INTO LIVING ROOM. Hi, Felish!

FELICIA

HEAD DOWN, SHY. COMES INTO LIVING ROOM. ALMOST UNDER HER BREATH. Hello yourself.

PAUL

TEASING HER. What? Hello, Paul? You're nutty as a fruitcake my dear. Nutty as a fruitcake! ON THE LAST LINE SHE TURNS AND RUNS QUICKLY TOWARDS HIM WITH ARMS OUT TO PUSH HIM. HE BACKS AWAY ON LAST LINE AND THEN RUNS OFF RIGHT. Ooooh! Mad woman! Mad woman!

FELICIA

EXPRESSION BECOMES COLD. TURNS AND COMES TO COUCH. PLUNKS HERSELF DOWN AT RIGHT END. FRANK IS LOOKING AND SMILING AT HER. NOTICES HIM. JUMPS UP. Frank!

FRANK

PUTS HIS HANDS OUT, SMILING. I didn't mean to scare you. Come on, sit down. SHE DOES SO. THEY SIT SILENTLY, FRANK SMILING, FELICIA LOOKING DOWN AT HER HANDS WHICH SHE TWISTS NERVOUSLY; BUT SHE IS NOT UNHAPPY TO BE WITH FRANK.

FELICIA

FINALLY SHE SIGHS. Well.

FRANK

Well.

FELICIA

MOVING A LITTLE, LOOKING UP AT HIM SIDEWAYS, EXPECTING AND HOPING THAT HE SAY SOMETHING. SHE SETTLES DOWN, PAUSE, SHE SIGHS AGAIN. SUDDENLY SHE JUMPS UP AND STANDS FACING DINING ROOM, HER RIGHT HAND ON THE BACK OF THE CHAIR. Oh! This is so embarrassing!

FRANK

SURPRISED. What is?

FELICIA

WITH AGITATION, CHOKED. Oh, you know!

FRANK

GETTING UP AND STANDING BEHIND HER, SOFTLY. What's so embarrassing? SHE SHRUGS, LOOKS DOWN. TENDERLY. What?

FELICIA

STEPPING FORWARD, CLASPS HANDS. Didn't Paul tell you?

FRANK

SMILING, BUT SPEAKING SERIOUSLY FOR FELICIA'S SAKE. Oh. About the baby...

FELICIA

TURNING AGITATEDLY AND GOING TO THE TERRACE DOOR. Well, I don't want to talk about it anymore. LOOKS DOWN, BLUSHES.

FRANK

SITS ON ARM OF COUCH. I'm sorry. I was hoping we could talk about it; it's one of the beautiful things people can talk about.

FELICIA

MOVES AWAY IMPATIENTLY. You're wrong! It's a terrible thing! It's disgusting!

FRANK

TEASING AGAIN. I thought you didn't want to talk about it?

FELICIA

BLUSHING AGAIN, WALKS OUT ONTO TERRACE, STAMPS HER FOOT. I don't want to ever talk to you ever again about anything! So just leave me alone!

FRANK

COMING OUT AFTER HER; STANDS BEHIND HER, TOUCHES HER SHOULDER. SOFTLY, TENDERLY. It's beautiful because my brother Jack is really a very shy person, and he's never before given anything of himself to anyone. But now he's given your wonderful, sweet cousin a token of love, a wedding present almost, in the most beautiful way a man can give a most beautiful gift. I'm proud of my brother. He gave from himself to Anne. And this means he loves her more than he loves anyone else in the world.

FELICIA

TURNS TO FRANK. SHE IS CONFUSED UPSET. SHE LOOKS AT HIM AS HE HAS BEEN SPEAKING. WHEN HE HAS FINISHED SPEAKING SHE SITS AT CHAIR BY THE TABLE, HANDS CLASPED IN LAP, LOOKS DOWN. THEN LOOKS UP AT HIM. TRYING TO BE OFFENDED; BUT SHE IS UNCERTAIN, FALTERING. I never heard such nonsense...

FRANK

SITS DOWN IN A CHAIR TO HER LEFT, LEANS ACROSS TABLE TO HER. SHE FOLLOWS HIM ALMOST DEVOTEDLY WITH HER EYES. URGENTLY, WARMLY. This is the way love is; not the way your father does it.

FELICIA

LOOKS DOWN. HARD. It's the same way. There's only one kind of love.

FRANK

QUICKLY. Yes, only one. Anne's and Jack's kind. Your father doesn't even practice love; it's something different altogether!

FELICIA

SUDDENLY OPENLY AGITATED. Now see. How do I know why you're saying all this to me. Maybe you're just trying to...seduce me. STANDS UP. I don't know. SHE IS DESPARATE, SAD, UNCERTAIN. This is one of the ways my father...I've heard my father talk like this. I've heard him tell women that love is beautiful!

FRANK

INTENSELY, LOW. That bastard!

FELICIA

HURRYING ON. When I was little he would take me for walks with him and a woman, and he would kiss me a lot; but I know now it was just for the woman's sake! Well, how can I believe <u>you</u>? WEEPS.

FRANK

JUMPS UP AND PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND HER. You can believe me...You can believe me...Felicia...I'm not like your father...You can trust me ...I won't hurt you...Felicia.

FELICIA

DRYS HER EYES WITH HER HANDKERCHIEF. TURNS AWAY AND WALKS TO WALL, FACING RIGHT. I'm sorry.

FRANK

QUICKLY. Don't be sorry!

FELICIA

SLIGHT PAUSE. GETTING HARD AGAIN. You're so different now.

FRANK

LAUGHS UNCERTAINLY. Different from when?

FELICIA

From when you're with Julia. PAUSE. HARD, BITTER. I hate you when you're with Julia.

FRANK

TRYS TO LAUGH. Why?

FELICIA

SHE WANTS TO HURT HIM. JULIA IS SURE AND CONFIDENT. FELICIA IS MORE AWKWARD AND UNSURE ABOUT HERSELF IN THIS ROLE. SHRUGS. She makes you act so...THROWS HER ARM OUT AS A GESTURE...weak!

FRANK

COMES FORWARD, SMILING PAINFULLY. SOFTLY. How do you mean?

FELICIA

TURNS TO HIM. Oh, she bosses you around and you hang on every word she says like you were scared to death of doing something she didn't like! And when you fight with her; it's awful. I've never seen two people be so cruel and mean to each other. Do you love her or hate her? TURNS AWAY SUDDENLY. It's ugly! It's the ugliest thing I've ever seen. It's worse even than the way my father acts! At least he's always the same way. At least I can depend on him...!

FRANK

HE IS TERRIBLY HURT. PUTS HIS HAND OUT TO HER. Don't Felicia. Please. DROPS HIS HAND LOOKS DOWN.

FELICIA

SHE LOOKS AT HIM. SHE IS VERY YOUNG. THEN SHE TURNS AND LOOKS OFF RIGHT. I don't believe anything you've ever said to me.

FRANK

AFTER SLIGHT PAUSE. HE LOOKS UP, SIGHS. SOFTLY, PATIENTLY. Life isn't so simple that you can say things like that to people. It's much too complicated already for people to lie and make it even more complicated. And people feel bad enough already without other people making them feel worse. HE EXITS UP PATH TO KITCHEN.

FELICIA

TURNS AND WATCHES HIM GO. CALLS ANGRILY AFTER HIM. I told you the truth! I don't believe you! And I don't believe anyone! SHE LOOKS AROUND HER. SHE IS HYSTERICAL, ALMOST SOBBING THE WAY SHE CATCHES HER BREATH. SHE SPEAKS NOW SLOWLY AND HESITANTLY. HER VOICE IS FADING. And...I don't like...being...alone! SHE LOOKS AROUND AS SHE CALLS DESPERATELY. Father! Father! FINALLY SHE GOES OFF RIGHT LOOKING FOR HIM. Daddy! THE SKY HAS BECOME DARKER, THE STORM IS ABOUT TO BREAK. THE BREEZE BLOWS THE CURTAINS IN THE TERRACE DOOR A LITTLE MORE WILDLY. ANNE COMES DOWN THE STAIRS. SHE HAS A HANDKERCHIEF IN HER HANDS, WHICH SHE WRINGS IN A RATHER DESPERATE WAY. SHE SEEMS DRAINED AND IS PALE FROM WEEPING. SHE COMES SLOWLY INTO THE DARKENED LIVING ROOM TOWARDS THE COUCH. PAT ENTERS FROM RIGHT, SEES ANNE AND COMES TOWARDS THE LIVING ROOM.

PAT

Anne!

ANNE

SHE IS SHOCKED TO SEE HIM, SHRINKS BACK ALMOST IN FRIGHT. Oh!

PAT

LAUGHING AT HER FRIGHT, ENTERS ROOM. It's only me, my little Anne, I'm nothing to be afraid of. LAUGHING HE COMES UP TO HER AND TAKES ONE OF HER HANDS. SEES SHE IS REALLY UPSET, HALF-JOKING. Or am I? TURNS HIS HEAD AND LOOKS OUT TERRACE DOOR. Or is it the storm you're afraid of, hmmm? LOOKS BACK AT HER, SMILING. SHE PULLS HER HAND AWAY AND TURNS FROM HIM. HE SHRUGS TAKES HIS PIPE FROM HIS POCKET AND BEGINS THE RITUAL OF FILLING IT. Have you seen Felicia? I just heard her calling me.

ANNE

DOESN'T LOOK AT HIM. SHAKES HER HEAD. LOW. No.

PAT

PIPE FILLED, HE LIGHTS IT AND PUFFS ONCE OR TWICE. Well, in that case, my dear niece, I think I'll go see if I can find her. IS ABOUT TO LEAVE.

ANNE

SUDDENLY TURNS TO HIM, BLURTS OUT ALMOST HYSTERICALLY. I'm going to have a baby!

PAT

TURNS BACK TO HER AFTER A VERY SLIGHT PAUSE. PUTS HIS HEAD TO ONE SIDE AND SMILES. Well, then, congratulations, my dear. I'm sure you and Jack are very happy.

ANNE

You don't understand!

PAT

RAISES HIS EYEBROWS WITH STILL THE SMILE OF CONDESCENDING FLIRTATIOUSNESS. What is there to not understand? You'll just get married sooner, that's all. LAUGHS. This is probably all your fiance's plan. He's always wanted to get married sooner than September. Why aren't you overjoyed, my dear? It only means that he loves you.

ANNE

LAUGHS WILDLY. Loves me! JULIA IS APPROACHING FROM THE RIGHT. SHE WALKS SLOWLY, HER HEAD DOWN, TOUCHING THINGS AS SHE WALKS. THE SKY GETS DARKER AND DARKER. SHE REACHES DOOR TO HEAR THE NEXT. SHOCKED. ANNE TAKES A STEP TOWARDS HIM. IN A LOUD HISSING WHISPER. Loves me madly! How madly will he love me when he finds out the baby is yours!

PAT

COMPLETELY CAUGHT OFF-GUARD. DOESN'T MOVE. PUFFS ON HIS PIPE. AFTER A SHORT PAUSE HE TRYS TO LAUGH. You seem so sure...How can you be so sure?

ANNE

JULIA WATCHES FROZEN JUST OUTSIDE THE DOOR. ANNE IS FRIGHTENED AND DESPERATE. Because it couldn't be Jack's baby; because Jack has never ...! SHE CATCHES HERSELF.

PAT

PAT UNDERSTANDS. THIS STRIKES HIM AS UNBELIEVEABLE AND HUMEROUS. HE LAUGHS NOT SPITEFULLY OR MALICIOUSLY, JUST FROM THE JOKE. No! HE LAUGHS IN HIS SINGULAR "HA HA" WAY, AS DESCRIBED AT THE BEGINNING OF ACT I. HE PUTS HIS PIPE IN HIS POCKET, HIS LAUGHTER IS DISSOLVING INTO A SMILE FOR ANNE. SHAKING HIS HEAD. HE PUTS HIS ARMS OUT TO HER, THERE IS A NOT TOO DISTANT CLAP OF THUNDER. HE PULLS ANNE GENTLY INTO HIS ARMS. COMFORTS HER AS SHE WEEPS. Poor Anne. Poor little Anne. SHE CLINGS TO HIM.

JULIA

No! WITH THIS CRY OF RAGE AND PAIN SHE ENTERS. THE COOL RAIN WITH ITS HEIGHTENED BREEZE BEGINS. ANNE PULLS BACK FROM PAT. PAT TURNS AND FACES JULIA. PAT AND ANNE STARE AT JULIA AND SHE AT THEM. SHE IS OUTRAGED, HORRIFIED AND WILD. HER HYSTERIA MOUNTS. A PAUSE. SHE SHOUTS. What are you doing? SHE LOOKS FROM ONE TO THE OTHER. SHE DOESN'T, CAN'T, SAY ANYTHING TO THE POINT. STUTTERING. What... What's going on here?! PAT TURNS AWAY TO KNOCK OUT HIS PIPE.

PAT

AFFECTS CASUALNESS. An uncle embraces his niece and the world falls apart.

JULIA

No! You lie! Anne's going to have a baby...

PAT

SHRUGS, IS TURNED AWAY FROM HER. If you heard then there's nothing to say.

JULIA

SOFTLY. I can't believe it...TURNS ON ANNE THEN AFTER A MOMENT OF SHOCK. TURNS AND SEARCHES FOR WORDS, BUT FEELS SPEECHLESS. And you, what have you done to my brother? Why didn't you tell him right away?...Now, you've trapped him!...If you love him...you should have told him first!...You should have given him a chance! Do you understand? You didn't respect him! SHE RUNS TO ANNE AND BEGINS SHAKING THE WEEPING, OVERWROUGHT WOMAN. You've made him pathetic...SHE IS WILDLY WEEPING AND HYSTERICAL HERSELF. AS SHE SHAKES ANNE AND SHOUTS AT HER PAT COMES AND SEPARATES THEM. ANNE RUNS UPSTAIRS WEEPING, TERRIFIED.

PAT

HOLDING THE RAVING JULIA BY THE ARM. SPEAKING QUIETLY, TENSELY, TRYING TO CALM HER. SHE STRUGGLES IN HIS GRASP. Julia! This doesn't help. Stop it.

JULIA

PULLS AWAY FROM HIM. HER HATE IS QUIET NOW, AND NOW EVEN MORE VENEMOUS AND PASSIONATE. You! Man! You stud!...All of you...You would kill a woman rather than think of her. You great fools; you destroy a woman in your rush to give her your seed! You don't care, you don't care! All you care about is yourself! And now you've ruined my brother into the bargin!

PAT

CALMLY FILLING HIS PIPE. HE IS COOL AND DISTANT, PROTECTING HIMSELF. WITH CUNNING. But isn't your brother a man too? Why try to save him then?

JULIA

AMAZED. SLIGHT PAUSE. LOW. INTENSE. That's different.

PAT

RAISES HIS EYEBROWS; HE WON'T LOOK AT HER. Oh?

JULIA

He's a different kind of man.

PAT

Just because he's your brother...?

JULIA

FIGHTING AGAIN. That has nothing to do with it!

PAT

Because he's a virgin then...?

JULIA

RUNS TO STRIKE HIM. How dare you! THEY STRUGGLE FOR A MOMENT BUT HE EASILY OVERPOWERS HER AND HOLDS AS BEFORE. AT LAST SHE STANDS QUIETLY, BUT RAGE AND HATE EMANATE FROM HER WHOLE STIFF BODY AND FACE. Let go of me.

PAT

DOES SO. HE IS ANGRY NOW. COOL ANGER. Don't ever come at me like that again; or I'll knock you down. TURNS TO GO. SHE CAN'T BEAR TO HAVE HIM GO THE VICTOR.

JULIA

Knock me down! I know you would. How else can you stop me when I tell you the truth? You can't stand it. None of you can. You go crazy when you hear the truth. You don't know which way to turn so you knock down the first person you see.

PAT

HAS STOPPED NOW TURNS AND COMES BACK TO HER. HE IS FURIOUS, IS ABOUT TO TAKE HER ARM AND SHAKE HER. We weren't talking about truth or lies. We were talking about your brother's being a virgin...HE TAKES HER ARM AND GIVES HER A FEW VICIOUS LITTLE SHAKES. And I assume that Anne is an authority on the subject and I assume that she wouldn't lie about something that causes her so much trouble. I don't understand what you're upset about if you hate men so much. I'd have thought you'd be glad to see one of us down, brother or not. I don't understand anything about you at all; for all I know you may be crazy. SHAKES HER ONCE MORE THEN RELEASES HER. SHE SEEMS TO BE ASKING FOR IT.

JULIA

Yes, I probably am crazy. Any woman who doesn't fall madly in love with you must be crazy.

PAT

STIFFLY. I didn't say that; and I don't think I ever even intimated it.

JULIA

SHE IS HITTING HOME BUT DOESN'T KNOW IT. Oh yes. Oh yes. With all your pipe filling and emptying; don't you think I know what you are? You're just an animal. Beneath your fine white shirt is a chest with hair and beneath your expensive slacks is something that pulses day and night; and because of that you have no other thought, no other feeling, no other sensation. Don't think I don't know what you are. You are all alike, BITING SARCASM, you beautiful men. SHE HAS BEGUN TO CROUCH IN FRONT OF HIM, HER HANDS, CLAW-LIKE, HALF-RAISED.

PAT

PAUL RUNS DOWN THE STAIRS DURING THIS NEXT SPEECH AND IS IN THE LIVING ROOM FOR JULIA'S REPLY. STIFFLY, BUT SHE HAS HIM. I just told you that.

PAUL

RUNNING INTO THE ROOM. What's the matter with Anne? Why is she crying? HE STOPS AS HE SEES THE SCENE IN THE LIVING ROOM.

JULIA

SHE SEES PAUL AND IT SEEMS AS IF SHE WERE WAKING FROM A TRANCE. SHE SHAKES HER HEAD, TRIES TO STRAIGHTEN, BUT ALL THE WHILE HER BODY STILL BENDS TOWARD PAT, ATTACKING HIM. SHE IS IN TOO FAR TO STOP HERSELF NOW. SHE GLARES AT PAT IN RENEWED ANGER FOR HIS LAST REMARK, AS SHE SPEAKS. She's crying because there's a baby in her fathered by this!

PAUL

What?

JULIA

Our uncle Pat strikes again! It's not his fault! He can't help himself! He just has to do it! It's part of his nature! HER VOICE HAS RISEN TO ALMOST SCREAMING. SHE IS STANDING STRAIGHT NOW.

PAUL

PAT HAS TURNED AWAY AND IS FIDDLING WITH HIS PIPE, HIS HANDS TREMBLE THOUGH HE STILL SEEMS AS COOL AS EVER. PAUL GOES TO JULIA QUICKLY AND TRIES TO PUT HIS ARMS AROUND HER. Julia. HE IS WORRIED, HIS FACE FULL OF ANXIETY.

JULIA

IMMEDIATELY PUSHING HIM AWAY, WILDLY. What are you doing? Leave me alone! SHE AND PAUL STARE AT EACH OTHER FOR A MOMENT IN SILENCE. JULIA'S NOSTRILS ARE VERITABLY FLARING WITH EACH BREATH. TURNS BACK TO PAT. And that's not all there is to it! Oh, no. The trap is better than that! TURNS BACK TO PAUL, THEN BACK TO PAT. My brother won't even be able to think it's his own baby! He's a virgin, you see! And so there's no way out! Aren't they clever, the way they've trapped my brother! LEANS FORWARD, VICIOUSLY. He may even have to marry her, he'll be so ashamed that it isn't his baby!

PAUL

GOES TO HER AND AGAIN EMBRACES HER. HE IS FILLED WITH TENDERNESS. Julia, Julia, don't.

JULIA

PUSHES HIM AWAY AGAIN. SHE IS EXASPERATED WITH HIM. Why do you keep doing that? Why don't you stop touching me? I told you to leave me alone! PAUL JUST WATCHES HER, HIS FACE SHOWS WORRY AND CONCERN. Well, why do you just stand there? Either fight with me or go away! Why don't you just go away! SHE BREAKS DOWN, COVERS HER FACE, CRYS OUT. I can't stand this! Go away! THERE IS SILENCE. PAUL MOVES AS IF TO TOUCH HER AGAIN, BUT DOESN'T. JULIA TAKES HER HANDS AWAY FROM HER FACE. SCREAMS AT PAUL. Please! Go away!

PAUL

I don't want to go away...because I love you.

JULIA

QUICKLY. Love me...! SLIGHT PAUSE, THEN AS IF DENYING, HARSH WHISPER. No!

PAUL

SOFTLY, TENDERLY. I love you because you've given me your sadness...I know it's your sadness because I have none of my own. By myself I'm very happy.

JULIA

COMPLETELY WHIPPED, COWERING IN PAIN. SHE GOES OUT TERRACE DOOR. No, don't! Don't! PAUSE. PAUL AND PAT ARE ASHAMED TO LOOK AT EACH OTHER. PAUL STANDS BEHIND THE CHAIR AND FINGERS ITS BACK. PAT STANDS WITH HIS BACK TO PAUL, EMPTYING HIS PIPE AT THE END-TABLE. IT IS ALMOST DARK OUTSIDE, BUT LIGHT FROM THE BRIGHT SUNSET COMES IN THE DOOR NOW. THE STORM IS OVER EXCEPT FOR LIGHT RAIN SHOWER.

PAUL

QUIETLY. What are you going to do about the baby?

PAT

SHRUGS, TURNS, PIPE IN MOUTH, AND LOOKS OUT TERRACE DOOR. CALM AGAIN. I'm not going to marry her. If she wants to have an abortion I'll arrange for one. SMOKES HIS PIPE. WITH IRONIC HUMOR. My friend, men are beasts...they're beastly beasts...SILENCE. PAUL HANGS HIS HEAD.

JACK

FRONT DOOR SLAMS JACK ENTERS FROM THE LIVING ROOM. HE IS IN A CORD SUIT, WEARS A HAT, CARRIES A BRIEFCASE AND RAINCOAT, WHICH HE PUTS ON DINING ROOM TABLE. HE STOPS ON STAIRS AND LOOKS AT PAT AND PAUL. LAUGHS ALMOST WITH EMBARRASSMENT, A REPETITION OF JULIA'S ENTRANCE IN ACT I WHEN PAT STOOD ALONE IN THE ROOM. HE SPEAKS SOFTLY, ALMOST AFRAID TO HEAR HIS OWN VOICE. THE THREE MEN IN THE ROOM ILLUMINATED BY LIGHT FROM A RED SUNSET. HE COMES DOWN INTO THE ROOM SLOWLY, TOUCHING THINGS AS JULIA DID. STANDS BEHIND COUCH, A LITTLE LEFT OF CENTER. LAUGHS EMBARRASSEDLY. DOESN'T SPEAK UNTIL HE IS IN THE ROOM; THERE SHOULD BE A MOMENT IN WHICH THE AUDIENCE SEES THE PICTURE IN SILENCE. Well, what is it? You look as if...I don't know what. LAUGHS. GOES TO PUT LIGHT ON (LAMP IS ON END TABLE), CHANGES MIND. I was driving up...I saw Julia running across the lawn...PAT COMES TO END TABLE AND KNOCKS OUT PIPE. PAUL TURNS AND FACES JACK. AFFECTING CASUALNESS. I suppose she was in here stirring up a little storm of her own...she's very good at that...LAUGHS AGAIN. NO ONE SPEAKS. SUDDENLY HE SWITCHES ON THE LIGHT. BRIGHT ARTIFICIAL LIGHT ILLUMINATES EVERYTHING. THEY ALL BLINK AND SHAKE THEIR HEADS SLIGHTLY TO ACCUSTOM THEIR EYES. Well, that's my little sister Julia. Something new every minute. WALKS TO TERRACE DOOR, LOOKS OUT. You never know when you come home what new thing she's cooked up. TURNS BACK TO ROOM, PAUL HAS BEEN FOLLOWING HIM WITH HIS EYES, PAT HAS BEEN BUSY WITH EMPTYING, CLEANING AND FILLING HIS PIPE AT THE END TABLE. JACK LAUGHS EMBARRASSEDLY SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING TO SAY; GUILT PROMPTS HIM. I swear, she could drive somebody crazy with all her talk about honesty. It's ok to be honest, but my

God, you can't think about it day and night and nothing else. SILENCE, TENSION. LAUGHS AGAIN. Well, I shouldn't be standing around talking when my feet are wet. TURNS AND STARTS UPSTAGE.

PAUL

SUDDENLY. PAT LOOKS AT HIM FOR AN INSTANT. Jack!

JACK

TURNING, STOPPING. What?

PAUL

STARES AT JACK, IS ABOUT TO SPEAK, CAN'T. Nothing. Never mind. RUNS OUT TERRACE DOOR VERY AGITATED.

JACK

LAUGHING SELF-CONSCIOUSLY, WATCHING HIM RUN AWAY. He's crazy...all those crazy kids running around in the rain.

PAT

Mmmm. BUSY WITH HIS PIPE.

JACK

I guess the only sane men are us business men, hey Pat?

PAT

NOT LOOKING AT HIM. Unh hunh.

JACK

SLIGHT PAUSE. LAUGHS SELF-CONSCIOUSLY. Well, a dry pair of socks and coffee with Anne'll do me good.

PAT

LOOKING AT HIS PIPE. HE HAS RECOVERED, OR HAS SEEMED TO RECOVER, HIS BLASE AND SUAVELY, IRONICALLY HUMOROUS AIR. Something the matter with you?

JACK

EAGER TO HAVE PAT ADMIRE AND LIKE HIM. Oh no! It's just that the trip up from New York, you know, it gets awfully depressing sometimes, especially in the rain...

PAT

LIGHTING HIS PIPE. I see.

JACK

I don't know. I always seem to be worrying about one thing or another...

PAT

SMOKING, LOOKING AT JACK. There's nothing to be worried about.

JACK

I know...but...CHANGES HIS MIND. HE DOESN'T WANT TO TALK TO PAT. LAUGHS SELF-CONSCIOUSLY. Well, I guess I'll go up and see Anne; she can always cheer me up. EXITS QUICKLY UPSTAIRS. PAT STANDS LEANING AGAINST END TABLE, PIPE IN MOUTH, ARMS FOLDED ACROSS CHEST, LOOKING OUT RIGHT, THINKING PERHAPS. JULIA ENTERS FROM RIGHT. THEY SEE EACH OTHER AS SHE ENTERS. SHE PAUSES IN DOORWAY AND THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

JULIA

SHRUGS. SHE IS VERY TENSE, NERVOUS, ALMOST TREMBLING. SHE ENTERS, GOES PAST PAT AND STANDS CENTER FACING LEFT, LOOKING DOWN AT HER HELD AND FIDGITING FINGERS. PAT KEEPS LOOKING OUT THE DOOR AND SMOKING.

PAT

CASUALLY. HE IS ALMOST SMILING. Julia?

JULIA

LOW, NERVOUS. What?

PAT

WARNING HER. TEASING; SMILING. Men are beasts.

JULIA

DOESN'T MOVE, EXCEPT TO KEEP ON FIDDLING WITH HER HANDS.

PAT

LOOKS AROUND AT HER. Did you hear me?

JULIA

LOW. Yes. PAUSE. PAT LOOKS BACK OUT RIGHT, SMOKES.

PAT

AS BEFORE, CASUALLY, WITH HIS IRONICAL HUMOR. Paul loves you. SHE DOESN'T ANSWER. HE LOOKS AROUND AGAIN. SMILES. Why don't you go and find Paul?

JULIA

SLIGHT PAUSE. HER VOICE IS HARSH WITH HER TENSION. LOW. I'm afraid of what I might do to him.

PAT

What would you do to him?

JULIA

SHE IS GETTING MORE TENSE AND NERVOUS EVERY MOMENT. Nothing.

PAT

LOOKING BACK OUT RIGHT. PUFFING ON PIPE. Oh. SLIGHT PAUSE. LOOKS BACK TO HER. HUMOROUSLY. Would you do it to me?

JULIA

PAUSE. ALMOST BETWEEN HER TEETH. It wouldn't make any difference whether I did it to you or not.

PAT

Oh? HE IS PUNISHING HER WITH HIS IRONY AND COOLNESS. HE IS TEASING HER. Why wouldn't it make any difference with me?

JULIA

TURNS TO HIM. HE HAS GONE TOO FAR. HARSHLY. Because I can't go any lower than you; because I can't try anything more desperate than you!... Because I despise you!

PAT

STANDS. PUTS HIS PIPE ON THE TABLE IN THE ASH-TRAY. UTTER SARCASM. I see...Do you mind if I put out the light?

JULIA

ANGRILY. No! I don't mind if you put out the light! PAT REACHES OVER TO LAMP AND TURNS IT OFF, HE STRAIGHTENS AND THEY STAND LOOKING AT EACH OTHER IN SILENCE. PAUSE.

PAT

GOES TOWARD JULIA. PUTS HIS HAND OUT AND CIRCLES THE BACK OF HER NECK. SHE ALMOST JUMPS IN HER TENSION AND NERVOUSNESS. THEY STAND IN THIS ATTITUDE FOR A MOMENT IN SILENCE, LOOKING INTO EACH OTHERS EYES. THEY ARE IN THE SHADOWS.

JULIA

BITTERLY. LASHING THEM BOTH. You see, I'm frigid.

PAT

SLIGHT PAUSE, THEN HE MOVES HIS HAND OVER HER BACK AND THEN HER SHOULDERS AND ARMS. The rain's made you wet...have to dry you off... HE PULLS HER TO HIM; SHE GRASPS HIM VIOLENTLY, PASSIONATELY.

FAST CURTAIN

Scene

A few hours later, during supper. Twilight, early evening in early summer. It is delicate and light and cool after the afternoon's storm. There is just enough light in the sky that lamps in the living room need not be lit if one doesn't mind sitting in half shadows. There is a light in the dining room, and Felicia, Frank, Paul and Jack are eating. The light is rather soft and dim, probably from lamps set in the corners rather far from the table. Felicia is at the left end, leaning over her plate. She eats slowly, painfully. Frank sits with his back to the audience at Felicia's left. His head hangs and he appears also to be making a dismal affair of the meal. He reaches to the left and even his arm looks limp and dejected. There is an empty place next to him: Julia's. At the head of the table is Anne's empty place. Facing the audience is, at Anne's place's left, Jack. He has a good appetite. He is a quick, quiet eater, reaching, cutting, chewing, buttering, reaching, etc. To his left, in the center is Pat's empty place. To the left of this is Paul, at Felicia's right. He doesn't eat, but is looking down into his place, his elbows on the table, his head in his hands.

JACK

PREOCCUPIED WITH EATING. Where is everybody tonight? NO ANSWER.

PAUL

THINKING. TO HIMSELF. UNAWARE HE IS AUDIBLE. Mmmm. SILENCE BROKEN BY CLICKING OF KNIVES AND FORKS. FRANK REACHES TO LEFT ACROSS TABLE FOR BREAD.

JACK

EATING. I swear, ever since I got back from the city everybody's been acting so strangely. Walking in the rain, not coming to supper... Anne wants to take a nap...Well, I don't care REACHING FOR MORE FOOD, HE IS CHEWING AND CUTTING HIS FOOD ALL THE WHILE, AND ACTUALLY IS THINKING ONLY ABOUT THAT WHILE HE MAKES CASUAL CONVERSATION, that's all the more food for me...WHILE THEY CONTINUE AS BEFORE, JULIA AND PAT APPEAR FROM RIGHT AND STAND ON THE TERRACE IN THE FADING BUT STILL BRIGHT TWILIGHT. THEY WALK ONTO THE TERRACE AND JULIA SUDDENLY EMBRACES PAT PASSIONATELY. HE HOLDS HER, AND QUICKLY BUT GENTLY PUTS HER OFF. THEY SPEAK SOFTLY.

JULIA

PASSIONATELY. Pat...SHE KEEPS TOUCHING HIM. SHE IS LAUGHING, SMILING, HAPPY. HE IS SMILING CALMLY AND COOLY. HE IS COMPOSED AND THE MASTER OF THE SITUATION.

PAT

Now they're all eating supper. I think it'd be better if we went in separately...JULIA KEEPS WHISPERING "Pat" AND TOUCHING HIM, TRYING TO EMBRACE HIM. HE SMILES AND HOLDS HER AWAY. Julia...are you listening? HE IS AMUSED, PLEASED.

JULIA

I'm listening.

PAT

You go in first...Julia AMUSED REMONSTRATION...listen to me SHE KISSES HIM...Now you go in first and I'll come in later...SHE KISSES HIM AGAIN...alright?

JULIA

Yes. Alright. Wonderful...

PAT

Alright then, go on in...HE PUSHES HER WITH GENTLE ROUGHNESS TOWARDS THE DOOR. SHE GOES TO THE DOOR AND TURNS. HE IS WATCHING HER, SMILING. SHE IS SMILING TOO. Well...?

JULIA

A SLIGHT PAUSE. I love you...SHE TURNS AND UNABLE TO CONTAIN HER JOY SHE LEANS HER HEAD AGAINST THE DOOR JAMB. PAT LEAVES RIGHT.

JACK

I also brought some cake up from the city. We can have it for dessert; it looked really good. Chocolate icing with marshmallow on it... TAKES A MOUTHFUL OF FOOD. This is great. I love delicatessan.

JULIA

LOOKS UP, LAUGHS. COMES INTO ROOM. Who loves delicatessan?

JACK

LOOKS UP FOR A MOMENT. You're missing all the good part. I just had the last piece of pastrami.

JULIA

LAUGHING, COMES UP INTO DINING ROOM. You dog!

JACK

STILL EATING. It was your own fault. Where were you? PRETENDING HE IS NOT REALLY INTERESTED.

JULIA

SHRUGS. LAUGHS. Oh, here, there. Walking in the rain. Hi, Frank. Hello, little Felicia. SHE EMBRACES FELICIA FROM BEHIND HER CHAIR. FELICIA MOVES IMPATIENTLY. FRANK IS WATCHING. PAUL CAN'T LOOK AT JULIA. JULIA NOTICES FELICIA'S MOVEMENT. LOOKS DOWN AT HER. LOOKS UP AT JACK. SHE REMEMBERS EVERYBODY'S PROBLEMS. SHE RELEASES FELICIA SLOWLY, LOOKS DOWN, IS SOBERED. SIGHS. Oh well.

FRANK

ATTEMPTING TO SMILE CASUALLY. What's the matter?

JULIA

SHRUGS. Nothing. GOES TO HER PLACE BESIDE FRANK. BUT CAN'T SIT. SIGHS. Oh damn it! SHE STAMPS DOWN INTO THE LIVING ROOM AND WITH A FRUSTRATED FROWN THROWS HERSELF UNGRACEFULLY ONTO THE COUCH.

JACK

FRANK TURNS AROUND TO WATCH HER. JACK LOOKS UP, LOOKS AT THE OTHERS. HE IS REALLY PERTURBED BUT HAS TRIED NOT TO SHOW IT. HE HOLDS HIS FORK AND KNIFE. What's the matter with Julia?

FRANK

TURNING BACK TO THE TABLE. I don't know.

JACK

STARTS TO EAT AGAIN. AFFECTING CASUALNESS. Did anything happen while I was in the city today? PAUL STARTS. JACK GLANCES OVER AT HIM.

PAUL

VERY AGITATED. No! Nothing happened! JUMPS UP AND STARTS CLEARING THE TABLE, CARRIES DISHES OFF RIGHT FROM DINING ROOM TO KITCHEN.

JACK

TO FRANK. LEANING FORWARD, SOFTLY. What's going on, Frank? JULIA, NOT LISTENING TO THEM, IS RESTLESSLY WALKING ABOUT THE ROOM. SHE LOOKS OUT THE DOOR.

FRANK

Nothing. Honest, Jack. It's probably just the storm after all the heat last week. ANNE COMES DOWN THE STAIRS. SHE IS PALE, CARRIES A HANDKERCHIEF.

JACK

SEEING HER. Anne! HE BEGINS TO BEAM. JUMPS UP. TAKES HER ARM. Did you have a good nap, sweetheart? SHE NODS. AT ANNE'S ARRIVAL JULIA IS LEFT, SHE STANDS AGAINST THE WALL, HIDING IN THE SHADOWS, WATCHING ANNE. Come on. You must be starving!

ANNE

I just want some tea.

JACK

Well, you sit here and I'll make you some.

ANNE

It's alright. I'll have it in the kitchen.

JACK

HOLDING HER ARM, LEADING HER OFF RIGHT. Okay. Good. I'll have my coffee with you. EXEUNT.

FRANK

LOOKS TOWARDS FELICIA. SHE JUMPS UP, PUTS HER HANDS ON THE TABLE AND LEANS TOWARD HIM. HER FACE IS ANGRY, HARD.

FELICIA

HISSING. Leave me alone! SHE TURNS AND COMES INTO LIVING ROOM. SITS ON END OF BENCH. FRANK GETS UP AND WEARILY, HIS HEAD HANGING, GOES UPSTAIRS.

JULIA

AFTER A SLIGHT PAUSE. SHE SPEAKS IN ALMOST A WHISPER. SHE DOESN'T SUSPECT ANYTHING ABOUT FELICIA, THINKS SHE'S JUST A SIMPLE, YOUNG GIRL. You know what's going on don't you?

FELICIA

SHE IS SURPRISED. FORGOT JULIA WAS THERE. TURNS QUICKLY TO HER. What?

JULIA

STEPS OUT OF THE SHADOWS. About Anne. You know about Anne's condition don't you?

FELICIA

LOOKS AT JULIA. DOESN'T ANSWER.

JULIA

COMES OVER TO HER, KNEELS BY THE BENCH. Hasn't anyone told you yet? Well, you ought to know...It doesn't help to protect the innocent. It's worse when they find out by themselves...Anne's pregnant.

FELICIA

BITTERLY. COLDLY. I know all about it.

JULIA

SLIGHT PAUSE. Well, why didn't you say so?

FELICIA

INTENSE, LOW, HARSH, FAST. Now I suppose you're going to tell me what a beautiful, wonderful thing it is!

JULIA

SURPRISED. No...

FELICIA

Well you don't have to tell me how wonderful it is! Your wonderful brother told me already!

JULIA

SOFTLY. What?

FELICIA

JUMPS UP. LOOKS DOWN AT JULIA. Oh yes! I know how beautiful it is! I know what a wonderful gift it is!

JULIA

Felicia...

FELICIA

Oh, you don't have to tell me! I already got sick once today hearing how wonderful it is! THIS IS ALL LOW, HARSH AND INTENSE. NO SHOUTING THOUGH NEAR HYSTERIA.

JULIA

SHAKES HER HEAD. What are you talking about?

FELICIA

About your brother! About your whole disgusting family! Oh, how I hate you! How I hate you all! You're all so disgusting! FELICIA IS WEEPING. BENDING OVER JULIA. HER VOICE IS STRAINED FROM WEEPING AND RAGE. What did your brother do to her?..I can't stand it!..He made her dirty! He made her disgusting!...He's spoiled her! He's spoiled her! SHE STANDS WEEPING ONE HAND OVER HER FACE.

JULIA

Oh, Felicia. JULIA IS FILLED WITH COMPASSION AND PITY. SHE STARTS TO STAND, PUTS HER HAND OUT TO HER. FELICIA, FEELING JULIA TOUCHING HER, STRIKES HER. SLAPS HER HAND, TRIES TO SLAP HER FACE. JULIA TRIES TO PROTECT HERSELF BY PUTTING HER HANDS IN FRONT OF HER FACE. FELICIA KEEPS STRIKING, RAINING BLOWS EVERYWHERE ON JULIA'S ARMS AND HEAD. FELICIA IS SOBBING AND WEEPING NOW. JULIA FINALLY HAS TO GRAB HOLD OF FELICIA'S ARMS. THEY STRUGGLE FOR A MOMENT. JULIA FINALLY HOLDS FELICIA SO THAT SHE CAN'T STRIKE HER AGAIN. THEY ARE ALMOST EMBRACING, THEY ARE SO CLOSE, THEIR ARMS SO INTERLOCKED. FELICIA STRAINS BACK FROM JULIA. JULIA, WHO IS TALLER LOOKS DOWN AT HER IN WONDERMENT. SOFTLY, WITH WONDERMENT AS IF TO HERSELF. Why, you're just like me...

FELICIA

Oh! SHE BREAKS AWAY AND RUNS OUT THE TERRACE DOOR. JULIA STANDS AMAZED BY HER DISCOVERY. SHE EVEN SMILES.

JULIA

SOFTLY, TO HERSELF. How amazing... JACK, ANNE AND PAUL COME IN. JACK TURNS ON LAMP WHICH GIVES A PLEASANT WARM, RATHER BRIGHT LIGHT. SHE TURNS TO FACE THEM. SHE IS SMILING. SHE HAS HAD A SMALL REVELATION. THE THREE OTHERS ARE GROUPED AROUND THE RIGHT END OF THE COUCH. ANNE DOWN, JACK, HIS ARM AROUND HER, BEHIND HER AND PAUL BETWEEN THE STAIRS AND THE COUCH. THEY LOOK AT HER AS SHE SMILES AT THEM. THEY ARE FROWNING, LOOKING UNPLEASANT, THEIR TROUBLES AND PROBLEMS ARE EVIDENT UPON THEIR FACES AND SLOUCHING BODIES. THEY ARE NOT SMILING: ANNE LOOKS AS IF SHE HAD WORN HERSELF OUT WITH CRYING; JACK LOOKS CONFUSED, UPSET, UNSURE, NERVOUS; PAUL IS AFRAID TO REALLY LOOK AT JULIA--HE IS

UNHAPPY IN LOVE AND AWKWARD, TROUBLED. JULIA SMILES BEAUTIFULLY. SHE IS COOL, CALM. THERE IS A SLIGHT PAUSE IN WHICH THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER. JULIA SPEAKS PLEASANTLY, SMILING. It's all so simple.

JACK

What? (MEANING, What's that you say? NOT, What's so simple?)

JULIA

PLEASANTLY. TO THEM. We're all the same. Why haven't I seen it before.

JACK

A LITTLE ANNOYED, FRIGHTENED SLIGHTLY. What are you talking about, Julia? PAUL COMES DOWN BEHIND COUCH, PUTS BOTH HANDS ON ITS BACK. LOOKS AT HER WITH INTEREST. SHE DOESN'T ANSWER. SHE JUST KEEPS SMILING AT THEM. I don't understand you at all. HE HUGS ANNE. THEY STAND LOOKING AT HER, PERPLEXED, A LITTLE FRIGHTENED.

PAUL

SHAKES HIS HEAD. ALMOST AWED. LOW, AS IF TO HIMSELF. You're wonderful... SHE SMILES AT HIM. PAT ENTERS FROM TERRACE, SMOKING PIPE, GLANCES AT JULIA AND THEN DOESN'T LOOK AT HER AGAIN WHILE HE IS IN THE ROOM. WHEN HE ENTERS SHE LIGHTS UP EVEN MORE, BUT WHEN HE PAYS NO ATTENTION TO HER, HER SMILE FADES, SHE REMAINS STILL, THOUGH TREMBLES SLIGHTLY, AFTERMATH OF HER PREVIOUS EMOTIONAL ELATION. ANNE AND JACK TURN TO PAT AS HE ENTERS. PAUL TURNS TO HIM SLOWLY, LOOKING STILL AT JULIA FOR A MOMENT AFTER PAT ENTERS.

PAT

STOPPING FOR A MOMENT IN THE DOOR-WAY. GLANCES AT JULIA AND THEN LOOKS AT ANNE. AVOIDS JACK AND PAUL FOR THE MOST PART, EXCEPT FOR QUICK GLANCES AT THEM. OBVIOUSLY HE IS ADDRESSING ANNE. Well... family conference? WALKS BEHIND ANNE AND JACK, UP BEHIND PAUL. STOPS AT FOOT OF STAIRS. THOSE IN THE ROOM CAN'T SPEAK; IT IS AS IF THEY HAVE ALL BEEN THROUGH A TREMENDOUS EXPERIENCE TOGETHER. THEY ALL WATCH PAT. HE FEELS WATCHED. GETS A LITTLE NERVOUS, PUFFS PIPE SO THAT SMOKE IS AROUND HIS HEAD. HE WAVES HIS PIPE IN FRONT OF HIS FACE AS HE SPEAKS: TO HIDE HIMSELF. Deciding something important? SMILES A LITTLE DISCONCERTEDLY. BUT HIS POISE IS ALMOST INDESTRUCTIBLE. CAN'T LEAVE. FEELS CAUGHT, UNABLE TO ESCAPE FROM THEIR EYES. Well, let me know when you've come to a decision...LAUGHS SLIGHTLY. I suppose supper's over...?

JACK

We ate all the delicatessan I brought back from the city.

PAT

I can find something in kitchen. TO ANNE. Any of your roast left from last night?

ANNE

NODS. About a sandwich.

PAT

LAUGHS. Sandwich isn't enough! I'm a hungry man. I need a plateful of something.

ANNE

There's a bowl of jello.

PAT

A LITTLE PAUSE, PAT IS SMILING ALMOST ABSENT-MINDEDLY, TAKES HIM A SECOND TO UNDERSTAND WHAT SHE'S SAID. Bowl of jello... IT'S AS IF HIS EYES WERE UNFOCUSED ON THE BACK OF THE COUCH AND COULDN'T GET THEM BACK INTO FOCUS AGAIN. HE STANDS ABSENT-MINDEDLY FOR ANOTHER SECOND, THE WAY PEOPLE DO BEFORE OTHERS ASK THEM WHAT THEY'RE THINKING ABOUT. Well...LOOKS UP NOW AT ANNE. I guess I can find something...NODS TO EVERYONE BUT JULIA, SHE NOTICES, WAS ABOUT TO NOD BACK, WAS WAITING. HE EXITS THROUGH DINING ROOM OFF RIGHT TO KITCHEN.

JACK

TURNS TO ANNE. RELAXED. Well? SMILES.

PAUL

COMES LEFT TO END OF COUCH TOWARD JULIA. SHE IS STARING AFTER PAT. I want to talk to you. SOFTLY. SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE HEARD. Julia...? COMES TO HER AND SHAKES HER ARM SLIGHTLY. HE IS WORRIED. What's the matter?

JULIA

COMING BACK. LOOKS AT HIM, HER FACE IS PAINED. What?

PAUL

SOFTLY. ANNE AND JACK HAVE GONE OUT ONTO THE TERRACE. JACK HAS HIS ARM AROUND HER; HE IS UPSTAGE. HE LEANS OVER HER ASKING HER HOW SHE FEELS. THEY WALK BACK AND FORTH SLOWLY IN FRONT OF THE WALL. PAUL IS VERY UPSET. I want to talk to you.

JULIA

COMPLETELY HERSELF AGAIN. SHAKES HER HEAD, IS ANNOYED, IMPATIENT. Not now. I haven't had any supper. Let me get something to eat first.

PAUL

BUT HE HOLDS HER AS SHE HELD JACK BACK IN ACT I. Please...HOLDS HER ARM.

JULIA

VERY ANNOYED. Look, Paul. Leave me alone. I want to get something to eat. TRIES TO BRUSH HIS HAND FROM HER ARM.

PAUL

Can I talk to you later?

JULIA

Let me go.

PAUL

We'll take a walk when you get finished eating?

JULIA

Alright. Alright. SHE IS LOOKING DOWN AT HIS HAND, WHICH SHE IS TRYING TO DISENGAGE FROM HER ARM.

PAUL

HE IS ALMOST CHOKING. HE LOOKS AS IF HE IS ABOUT TO CRY. Julia.

JULIA

ANGRY, UPSET, ABOUT TO CRY. What!

PAUL

HE IS ALSO UPSET. HE TOO LOOKS PAINED. THEIR FACES SEEM TO MIRROW EACH OTHER'S EXPRESSION. HE SPEAKS WITH A TREMBLING, UNCERTAIN VOICE. Something's happened to me...I've got my own sadness now. I'm sad now even when you're not around...I can't stand it. What is it?

JULIA

PUSHING HIS HAND AWAY. I don't know! Leave me alone! SHE RUNS UP STAIRS INTO DINING ROOM AND EXITS RIGHT TO KITCHEN. HE STANDS STILL WHERE HE WAS. HE WIPES HIS FOREHEAD AND BETWEEN NOSE AND UPPER LIP WITH THE BACK OF HIS WRIST. HE SEEMS DAZED. FINALLY IN A MOMENT HE TAKES A DEEP, TREMBLING BREATH. HE IS RECOVERED ENOUGH TO MOVE AGAIN. HE LOOKS OUT AND SEES ANNE AND JACK WALKING, ANNE HUDDLED UNDER JACK'S ARM. THEY ARE MURMURING. JACK TALKS, LAUGHS A LITTLE. PAUL GOES UP STAIRS AND EXITS RIGHT TO KITCHEN, WALKING SLOWLY, WEARILY, DRAGGING HIS LEGS, ARMS HANGING LIMPLY, SUSPECTING NOTHING. JACK EMBRACES ANNE ON TERRACE.

JACK

SUPPRESSED, LOW. Darling... IN A MOMENT PAUL COMES RUNNING FROM KITCHEN AND RUSHES UP THE STAIRS. HIS FACE IS ALMOST GREEN WITH ANGUISH. HIS FEATURES CONTORTED AS IF HE IS ABOUT TO BREAK OUT INTO CONVULSIVE AND PROFOUND SOBS. ANNE AND JACK CONTINUE STROLLING BACK AND FORTH ON THE TERRACE, JACK BENDING OVER ANNE. SHE STOPS HIM.

ANNE

Jack...

JACK

TENDERLY, BUT WITH HIS EVER PRESENT UNCERTAINTY AND PATHETIC UNSURENESS. What is it, darling?

ANNE

SHE CAN'T TELL HIM. SHE PRESSES HERSELF TO HIM, HIDES HER FACE ON HIS CHEST. SHE SIGHS FROM TENSION AND FRIGHT. LOOKS UP INTO HIS FACE.

HE SMILES UNSURELY. I...ummm. SHE WALKS AWAY AND STANDS WITH BACK TO HIM HER HANDS ON THE TABLE. HE COMES BEHIND HER, PERPLEXED. HIS SAD SMILE ON HIS FACE, WAITING, HOPING FOR EVERYTHING TO BE ALRIGHT. HE LAUGHS IN HIS EMBARRASSED WAY.

JACK

What is it? LAUGHS, SPEAKS SOFTLY.

ANNE

TURNS TO HIM. LOOKS UP AT HIM. Well...ummmm. PUTS HER HAND OUT TO HIM, HE TAKES IT ALMOST HESITANTLY, NOT UNDERSTANDING. SHE THROWS HERSELF SUDDENLY INTO HIS ARMS IN PRETEND PASSION AND BEGINS KISSING HIS FACE AND NECK. IT TAKES HIM A MOMENT TO REALIZE WHAT HAS HAPPENED. THEN HE PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND HER GENTLY, LAUGHS FROM CONFUSION AND NEAR-FRIGHT.

JACK

Anne...? AS SHE CONTINUES HIS SMILES SHOW HAPPY SURPRISE AND PLEASURE AS WELL AS THE UNSURENESS.

ANNE

SUDDENLY SHE PULLS BACK AND TURNS AWAY FROM HIS LOOSE, UNPASSIONATE EMBRACE. LOW, QUICK, HARSH. ALMOST TO HERSELF. ALMOST ANGRILY. Oh, why don't you help me!

JACK

What?

ANNE

TURNING BACK TO HIM. SHE IS AGITATED. TRIES TO ACT AND SPEAK CALMLY. SHE IS PRETENDING NOW IN EARNEST. Don't you understand?

JACK

SHAKES HIS HEAD. No...

ANNE

DROPS HER HEAD FOR A MOMENT--SHE HAS DIFFICULTY CARRYING HER LIE OUT. SUDDENLY SHE TAKES HIS HAND AND PUTS IT ON HER BREAST. BREATHLESSLY. TRYING TO LAUGH. See how fast my heart is beating! SHE LIFTS HIS HAND QUICKLY TO HER MOUTH AND KISSES IT. THEN DROPS IT AND WALKS RIGHT AWAY FROM HIM. STOPS.

JACK

GETTING IT AT LAST. Anne. HE IS FRIGHTENED.

ANNE

TURNS QUICKLY TO HIM. Well, why not? COMES TO HIM AND EMBRACES HIM AGAIN. We'll be married soon...what's the difference...darling... SHE IS TREMBLING FROM NERVOUSNESS AT HER LIE.

JACK

HE HOLDS HER. LOW. INTENSE. FAST. But why tonight? Why tonight? We've waited so long...Can't we wait a little longer.

ANNE

QUICKLY, DESPERATELY. ALMOST CRYING, LOUD. HIGH. I can't wait! I can't wait!

JACK

LOW, INTO HER HAIR, A LITTLE AWED PERHAPS. You've never been like this before.

ANNE

WEARING HERSELF OUT. LOW. ALMOST WEEPING. Then use it.

JACK

SLIGHT PAUSE. CHOKED. HE IS REALLY SCARED. I haven't got any... I don't have any...

ANNE

NOW ALMOST HAPPY WITH HER TRIUMPH. LOOKS UP, SMILING. SHE HAS BEEN CRYING. It's alright. It doesn't matter. SHE KISSES HIM. HE RESPONDS WITH RESTRAINT AT FIRST, THEN MORE PASSIONATELY. HE IS AWKWARD, CLUMSY. THEN SHE PULLS BACK BREATHLESS; HE BENDS TOWARDS HER FACE TRYING TO KISS HER, HIS EYES CLOSED. Darling... HE OPENS HIS EYES. SEEMS BLINDED BY THIS NEW EXPERIENCE WHICH HE IS ABOUT TO HAVE. SHE SMILES. HE NODS. HE STARTS TO TAKE HER TOWARDS THE HOUSE, BUT SHE STOPS HIM. SOFT. No. Everybody will be upstairs. We can go to the garage. There's an old mattress in the loft. HE LOOKS AT HER. WAKES UP. TAKES HER INTO HIS ARMS AGAIN.

JACK

HE IS OVERWHELMED. FULL OF GRATITUDE. Darling...Anne... THEN, ARMS ABOUT EACH OTHER, THEY GO RIGHT. FELICIA ENTERS WHEN THEY ARE NEARING THE END OF THE TERRACE. SHE STOPS WHEN SHE SEES THEM. ANNE SMILES AS SHE SEES HER, THOUGH SHE IS DESPERATE, HURRIED TO FINISH THE LIE.

ANNE

PUTTING A HAND OUT TO FELICIA. EMBARRASSED TO SEE HER NOW. Oh, Felicia! FELICIA IS COLD AND STIFF, DOESN'T SMILE. ANNE LOOKS AT HER THEN TO JACK AND TO FELICIA AGAIN. ANNE LAUGHS SLIGHTLY, WITH SHAME AND EMBARRASSMENT. SHE SEES THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG, AND HESITATES TO ASK LEST HER OWN SECRET BE KNOWN. We're just going for a walk, dear. See you later? THEY HURRY OFF RIGHT. FELICIA WATCHES THEM GO, HER FACE IS HARD AND SET. THEN SHE COMES INTO THE LIVING ROOM.

FELICIA

Father! SHE GOES TO THE STAIRS AND CALLS UP. Dad! PAUSES. Pat!

PAT

COMES FROM RIGHT OF DINING ROOM. What is it?

FELICIA

TURNS QUICKLY. I don't want to stay here. I want to go home tonight.

PAT

You can't stay to the weekend?

FELICIA

No! I can't wait! I want to leave tonight!

PAT

SHRUGS. Alright. SMILES AT HER. TRIES TO TOUCH HER HEAD. BUT SHE TURNS HER HEAD IMPATIENTLY FROM HIS HAND. SHE TURNS AND GOES QUICKLY UP THE STAIRS.

FELICIA

Bring the trunk in from the garage; I'll be getting our things ready. EXITS ABOVE.

PAT

PAT IS SAD AND UNHAPPY AND GUILTY ABOUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH FELICIA. HE TAKES HIS PIPE OUT AND STANDS LOOKING DOWN AT IT FOR A MOMENT. SIGHS. BEGINS THE PROCESS OF FILLING, TAMPING AND LIGHTING IT. JULIA ENTERS. STANDS BEHIND HIM, HANDS BEHIND HER BACK.

JULIA

What was that all about?

PAT

SHRUGS, COMES DOWN INTO LIVING ROOM, WORKING ON HIS PIPE. JULIA FOLLOWS HIM DOWN.

JULIA

LAUGHS SLIGHTLY, NOT UNDERSTANDING WHY HE WON'T ANSWER. Well? HE STILL DOESN'T ANSWER. SHE ALMOST IMMEDIATELY COMES TO HIM AND TAKES HOLD OF HIS ARM WITH BOTH HER HANDS; SHE PRESSES TO HIS SIDE. Pat?...What did she want?

PAT

LIGHTING AND PUFFING ON HIS PIPE. LOOKS AT HER, SMILES. Nothing, my dear, nothing. WALKS DOWN RIGHT TO TERRACE DOOR, LOOKS OUT, SMOKING HIS PIPE. JULIA STANDS WHERE SHE WAS WATCHING HIM.

JULIA

DECIDES TO BELIEVE HIM. LAUGHS. Well...if it was just nothing. SHE COMES TO PAT, STANDS BEHIND HIM, PUTS HER ARMS AROUND HIS WAIST AND RESTS HER CHEEK AGAINST HIS BACK. Murmurs. I'm so happy. HE TURNS, SMILING, SHE EMBRACES HIM, LOOKS UP AT HIS FACE, WAITING, SERIOUS. PAT EMBRACES HER. THEY KISS.

PAT

THEY STOP KISSING. PAT LOOKS DOWN AT HER. SHE IS LOOKING UP AT HIM SERIOUSLY, WAITING. HE SMILES SLIGHTLY. HE TWEAKS HER CHIN, SHAKES HER HEAD BY IT LIGHTLY. Hmmmm. THEY KISS AGAIN. MORE PASSIONATELY. SHE BECOME VERY WILD. HE PULLS AWAY, HOLDS HER OFF. SMILES. So passionate.

JULIA

So passionate...SMILES. QUICKLY. BREATHLESSLY, INTENSELY. Thank God...TRIES TO KISS HIM AGAIN.

PAT

KEEPS HER AWAY FROM HIM. SMILING, SHAKES HIS HEAD. TEASING HER. LOOKS AT HER, LAUGHING, APPRECIATING HER ENTHUSIASM. My dear, you astonish me.

JULIA

"COMING TO HER SENSES" SHE SMILES, LOOKS UP AT HIM. I astonish myself. SHE PUTS HER ARMS AROUND HIS BACK, LEANS AGAINST HIM, LIFTS HER FACE TO HIS. Oh, Pat...SUDDENLY HIDES HER FACE AGAINST HIS CHEST. THEN, SMILING, TURNS AWAY FROM HIM AND WALKS CENTER BEHIND THE COUCH. TURNS BACK TO HIM. SOFTLY. WONDERINGLY. It's really unbelievable. I can't believe that this has happened...Here we are in the same room we were in just this morning, only now it's all different...DECIDES NOT TO BE SERIOUS. LOOKS CLOSELY AT HIM. IMPISHLY. Just think of it: I've touched your naked body. PAT LAUGHS OUTLOUD. HE TURNS AND LOOKS OUT THE TERRACE DOOR, SMOKING HIS PIPE. And I can do it again... That's the really unbelievable part. SHE STARTS TO WALK SLOWLY TOWARD PAT. And I can do it any time I want...

FELICIA

BREAKING IN ON JULIA. FROM UPSTAIRS. Dad?

PAT

TURNS QUICKLY, LOOKS TOWARD THE STAIRS. Yes?

FELICIA

Have you got the trunk?

PAT

SMALL PAUSE. HE IS CONSCIOUS OF JULIA'S STARING AT HIM, BUT HE DOESN'T LOOK AT HER. No...I haven't yet.

FELICIA

SMALL PAUSE ON HER SIDE. SHE IS EXASPERATED. I'm going to ask Paul to get it.

JULIA

Are you leaving?

PAT

SHRUGS. LOOKS AT HIS PIPE, NOT AT HER.

JULIA

LOW. Why are you leaving?

PAT

SHRUGS. FOOLS WITH HIS PIPE.

JULIA

A LITTLE DESPERATELY, DEMANDINGLY. Tell me why you're leaving.

PAT

GLANCES AT HER AND AWAY. FOOLS WITH HIS PIPE. I'm sorry, my dear; but there's nothing I can do about it...it'll be better for you.

JULIA

But why? COMES TO HIM AND TAKES HIS ARM. Tell me why? INTENSE, EMOTIONAL, LOW...Don't run away from me now, Pat, please don't....

FELICIA

BACK AGAIN. Dad?

PAT

I'm here.

FELICIA

Will you please come up and ask Frank to get the trunk. Paul won't even talk to me. WITH EXTRA VENOM AND BITTERNESS. I hate this house!

PAT

TRYING TO DISENGAGE HIMSELF OF JULIA'S HAND. THEY SPEAK LOW, FAST, INTENSE. Take your hand away, Julia. I've got to go.

JULIA

No. Please. You can't leave me now after only one time. I won't be sure. Give me a chance. Please. Help me.

PAT

AGITATED, ANNOYED. I can't do anything for you. Take your hands away. HE TRIES TO PUSH HER AWAY.

JULIA

KEEPING HOLD. THEY STRUGGLE SLIGHTLY, TENSELY. What did I do wrong? Please tell me what I did wrong...Why are you leaving me? SHE IS WEEPING, ALMOST HYSTERICAL.

PAT

FINALLY FREEING HIMSELF. HE PUSHES HER AWAY. Leave me alone, Julia. HE WALKS QUICKLY TO THE STAIRS. EXITS.

JULIA

Oh you bastard. SHE IS WEEPING. Oh you bastard. HE GOES UPSTAIRS. SHE STANDS UP RIGHT, BENT, WEEPING. REPEATS. Oh you bastard. Oh you bastard. SHE GOES TO END TABLE. SEES ASH TRAY PAT ALWAYS USES. PICKS IT UP. FINALLY GOES TO TERRACE DOOR AND THROWS IT WITH ALL HER STRENGTH OUT THE DOOR. TURNS AND STARTS TO RE-ENTER ROOM. FRANK COMES DOWN THE STAIRS. SEES HER. RUNS TO HER, TAKES HER ARMS.

FRANK

Julia! What's the matter?

JULIA

HER VOICE IS CHOKED. SHE IS WEEPING. SHAKES HER HEAD.

FRANK

HE EMBRACES HER WITH GREAT TENDERNESS AND ANXIETY. Oh sweetheart, what's the matter?

JULIA

SHE PRESSES AGAINST HIM, WEEPING. HER VOICE IS ALMOST INAUDIBLE. I've lost. I've lost.

FRANK

SOFTLY, TENDERLY. What have you lost?

JULIA

Oh, Frank...SHE PUTS HER ARMS ABOUT HIS WAIST AND WEEPS AGAINST HIS SHOULDER.

FRANK

AFTER A MOMENT. HE HAS BEEN PATTING HER BACK, SMOOTHING HER HAIR. SOFTLY. Let's sit down. Ssh. Don't cry, sweetheart. HE SOOTHES HER WITH THESE WORDS AS HE BRINGS HER TO THE COUCH. THEY SIT, HE TO HER RIGHT. HE HAS HIS ARMS ABOUT HER, SHE LEANS AGAINST HIS SHOULDER.

JULIA

AFTER THEY HAVE SEATED THEMSELVES, SHE CALMS A BIT, STOPS CRYING. SIGHS. SHUDDERS FROM HAVING WEEPED SO HARD. FRANK CARESSES HER. SHAKES HER HEAD. SPEAKS SOFTLY. WEAKLY, LEANING AGAINST FRANK. I don't know... I might as well give up...it doesn't make any difference how hard I try...I just don't have any control over anything...there's always something that ruins my plans in the end...I just can't make anything I want happen...

FRANK

SOOTHINGLY, CARESSING HER HAIR AND CHEEKS. HE IS BEING CAUGHT BY SEX. SOFTLY. BUT NOW HE IS MORE INTERESTED IN CARESSING HER THAN CALMING HER. Oh, it's not that bad...

JULIA

MOVING RESTLESSLY. SHE FEELS WHAT IS HAPPENING BUT IS NOT CONSCIOUS OF IT YET. SHE IS BECOMING UPSET AND DOESN'T KNOW WHY THIS TIME. SPEAKS ALMOST ANGRILY, BUT SHE DOES NOT MOVE AWAY FROM HIM. It is that bad!

FELICIA

COMES QUICKLY DOWN THE STAIRS. SHE IS QUITE ANGRY AND UPSET. LOOKS OVER AT THEM AS SHE HURRIES ACROSS THE STAGE TO EXIT THROUGH THE TERRACE DOORS. I'll get the trunk myself, so you don't need to bother yourself about it! EXITS. FRANK HAD LOOKED AT FELICIA GUILTILY. HE IS NOW QUITE AGITATED; HE ALSO DOESN'T QUITE UNDERSTAND WHAT IS HAPPENING. WHEN SHE HAS GONE FRANK AND JULIA LOOK AT EACH OTHER, THEIR FOREHEADS FURROWED, THEY LOOK UPSET, CONFUSED. THEY ARE EXCITED, SCARED. FRANK PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND JULIA SO THAT SHE IS PULLED DOWN, HER BACK ON HIS LAP, LOOKING UP AT HIM. THEY PAUSE A MOMENT AND STARE AT EACH OTHER. FRANK BEGINS TO CARESS HER AGAIN, STRANGELY, SLOWLY. BOTH STILL LOOK VERY UPSET. HE PAUSES. THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER. SHE HAS BEEN QUIET. HE GENTLY, SLOWLY PULLS HER UP TO KISS HER. SHE PUSHES HIM GENTLY AWAY. RISES. SHE IS TREMBLING.

JULIA

SHE WALKS TO THE LEFT END OF THE COUCH. SUPPORTS HERSELF WITH ONE HAND AGAINST ITS BACK. FRANK, HIS FACE FULL OF PAIN, FRIGHT, INCOMPREHENSION, WONDERMENT, FROWNING, HIS MOUTH OPEN AND ALMOST GRIMACING, LOOKS AT HER. HER VOICE IS LOW AND SHAKING. FULL OF EMOTION. TENDERLY. Darling, it would be too easy. HE STARES AT HER IN THE SAME WAY FOR A MOMENT, THEN HANGS HIS HEAD, CLASPS HIS HANDS TIGHTLY BETWEEN HIS LEGS.

FRANK

HE WHISPERS IN GREAT PAIN. I'm sorry...CAN'T GO ON, IS CHOKED.

JULIA

IN SAME WAY. It's not your fault...I...led you on...

FRANK

SHAKES HIS HEAD. BARELY AUDIBLE. CHOKED. No...THEY REMAIN IN THEIR POSES OF FRIGHT, SHAME AND TREMBLING FOR A MOMENT. THEN FELICIA ENTERS AND STANDS IN THE DOORWAY. SHE IS LIKE THEM, SHOCKED, AMAZED, TOUCHED.

FELICIA

SOFTLY, WONDERINGLY. What's going on in the garage? JULIA STARTS, MOVES TO THE BENCH. TURNS.

JULIA

SOFTLY, AS IF IN A TRANCE. What...?

FELICIA

SHAKES HER HEAD SLIGHTLY. SHE IS GREATLY MOVED, SOFT. Anne and Jack...they're in the garage loft...WITH GREAT FEELING...they're crying. FRANK LOOKS UP, HIS FACE KEEPS ITS LOOK OF PAIN.

JULIA

STILL NOT UNDERSTANDING. TAKES A STEP FORWARD A LITTLE ANNOYED. What...what did you say...?

FELICIA

STEPS INTO THE ROOM: SPEAKS TO JULIA OVER FRANK'S HEAD. I went to get the trunk...I saw them...lying on the mattress...WITH WONDERMENT AND COMPASSION...They were crying...

JULIA

UNDERSTANDS; TAKES ANOTHER STEP TOWARD FELICIA. SHE IS VERY NERVOUS, AGITATED. ...I see.

FELICIA

SOFTLY, TO JULIA. What are they doing up there?

JULIA

TAKES ANOTHER STEP. AGITATED. SHE SPEAKS AFTER SHE FINISHES HER MOVE. I guess they are trying to straighten out their lives.

FELICIA

SHE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND. SHAKES HER HEAD. I don't understand.

JULIA

COMES UP TO FELICIA, TOUCHES HER ARM. FRANK IS SITTING ON THE COUCH BETWEEN THEM. SLIGHT PAUSE. It's alright...

FRANK

LOOKING UP AT JULIA, ASKS HER. HE ALSO SPEAKS SOFTLY, TOUCHED. What do they have to do that for?

JULIA

LOOKS FROM FRANK TO FELICIA AND BACK TO FRANK AGAIN. PAUSE WHILE SHE DECIDES NOT TO TELL. SHE IS EXTREMELY UPSET. I don't know. Maybe love is just more complicated than we thought. THE THREE ARE IN A SMALL, CLOSE, TENDER GROUP. JULIA COMES TO HERSELF, REALIZES WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ALL OF THEM AND WITH PAIN TURNS QUICKLY AND GOES LEFT TO THE BENCH. FELICIA AND FRANK LOOK AT EACH OTHER. THEN FRANK LOOKS DOWN, OVERCOME BY HIS SHAME AT WHAT HE JUST DID TO HIS SISTER. FELICIA GOES UPSTAIRS.

JULIA

WHEN FELICIA IS GONE. SHE IS SITTING ON THE END OF THE BENCH, FACING FRONT. SHE IS PUTTING A DISTANCE AND A WALL BETWEEN HERSELF AND FRANK; SHE IS AFRAID AND ASHAMED. ATTEMPTS TO BE CASUAL, BUT IS VERY NERVOUS AND AGITATED. They're out in the garage I suppose because Anne is telling Jack that she's pregnant with Pat's baby.

FRANK

LOOKS AT HER QUICKLY. FRANK HAS BEEN DEALT BLOW AFTER BLOW AND HE IS NOW FULL OF PAIN AND IS WEAK FROM IT. SOFTLY, ALMOST A WHISPER. Oh no...!

JULIA

MAKES A POINT OF NOT LOOKING AT FRANK ANY MORE. Jack is a virgin, so she can't fool him.

FRANK

PAUSE. GETS UP SLOWLY AND STARTS TO EXIT THROUGH TERRACE DOORS. HE IS SLOUCHING, LOOKS HAGGARD, BEAT.

JULIA

TURNS QUICKLY TOWARDS HIM. JUMPS UP. SHARPLY, LOW, FAST. Where are you going?

FRANK

STOPS, TURNS TO HER. SIGHINGLY, SOFTLY, WEARILY, FULL OF PAIN. Oh, Julia. I'm too ashamed to live. HE FACES HER HOPING FOR RELIEF AND SOLACE. SHE IS SHOCKED, TOUCHED.

JULIA

SLIGHT PAUSE, THEN SHE IS RELEASED FROM HER ICY DEFENSE. WHISPERS WITH GREAT FEELING. Me too...

PAUL

HE COMES DOWN THE STAIRS, STOPS ON THE BOTTOM STEP. What's going on in the garage? JULIA AND FRANK TURN QUICKLY TO FACE PAUL. HE SPEAKS SOFTLY LIKE A CONSPIRATOR, BUT HE IS BITTER AND ANGRY ACCUSING EVEN. Felicia told me they're out in the garage. What do you think they're doing out there?

JULIA

SHE IS FRIGHTENED. I suppose she's telling him.

PAUL

LOOKS AT HER. HE SEEMS TO HATE HER. HE SPEAKS CRUELLY AND BITTERLY TO HER. BUT HE SPEAKS ALMOST IN A WHISPER, THUS SEEMING ALMOST TO HISS. At least somebody around here tells the truth. JULIA HANDS HER HEAD, TURNS AWAY. HE IS ANGRY WITH HIMSELF. SPEAKS HARSHLY. I'm sorry! I don't know what's the matter with me. I've never... IMPATIENTLY TO HIMSELF...Oh, hell! HIS FACE IS FILLED WITH PAIN, CONFLICT. Well? Do you think she should have told him?

JULIA

SHE AND FRANK SHRUG. SHE TURNS TO HIM, BUT LEANS AWAY FROM HIM. SHE SEEMS A LITTLE FRIGHTENED...I don't know what else she could do.

PAUL

ANGRILY. She could get rid of it!

JULIA

FRIGHTENED. I suppose she could.

PAUL

LOOKS AT HER. HE IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE PAINED AT HER RESPONSE. HE IS ALMOST HYSTERICAL. She could lie to him!

JULIA

She couldn't...he'd know...

PAUL

UNNERVED BY HER UNCERTAINLY AND PAIN. WILDLY. She could seduce him for Christ's sake! THEN HE IS STRIKEN BY WHAT HE HAS SAID. HE AND JULIA STARE AT EACH OTHER WITH AMAZEMENT AND PAIN. HE GIVES UP. TAKES A STEP TO HER. HIS VOICE IS BROKEN, ANGUISHED. Julia...! SHE WATCHES HIM, HER FACE IS OPEN, HOPELESS, FRIGHTENED. HE COMES TO HER, THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER. THEY ARE LIKE TWO LOST CHILDREN. HE LOOKS DOWN AT HER. HE SPEAKS HUMBLY, BROKENLY, WITH PROFOUND EMOTION. Forgive me...I say I love you...and then I make your face look like this... THEY ARE FACING EACH OTHER, JULIA'S RIGHT AND PAUL'S LEFT SIDE TO THE AUDIENCE.

JULIA

LOOKING UP AT HIM AMAZED, WEAK. HER VOICE IS LOW AND BROKEN. I don't deserve...

PAUL

ALMOST SOBS. PUTS HIS ARMS OUT TO HER. Let me love you...!

JULIA

LOW, INTENSE, STRAINED, A CHOKED, COMPRESSED WHISPER THAT SEEMS TO TEAR HER VOICE FROM HER CHEST. I've made love with Pat...

PAUL

KEEPS HIS ARMS OUT, DROPS HIS HEAD. WEEPS. Let me love you...!

JULIA

CRIES OUT. Oh Paul! Oh Paul! HUGS HERSELF WITH HER ARMS, DROPS HER HEAD, WEEPS.

PAUL

AS HE COMES TO HER AND EMBRACES HER. Please... HE WEEPS. HE HOLDS HER BENT, SELF-EMBRACED BODY TO HIS AND DROPS HIS HEAD TO HER NECK. FRANK HAS BEEN WATCHING WITH GREAT EMOTION. HE IS HIMSELF CRYING QUIETLY. NOW HE COMES TO THEM, STANDS ABOVE FACING AUDIENCE, AND PUTS HIS ARMS AROUND THEIR WAISTS, RESTS HIS HEAD AGAINST THEIRS.

FRANK

LOW, PITIFULLY. Love me too... THEY STAND A SHORT MOMENT WITH THEIR HEADS TOGETHER. THEN JULIA EMBRACES BOTH FRANK AND PAUL, AN ARM ABOUT EACH, IN A PASSIONATE, WARM WAY. SHE IS RECOVERING. SHE HUGS THEM. THEN LEANS BACK AND LOOKS AT THEM. SMILES THROUGH HER TEARS. SIGHS. HUGS THEM AGAIN. FRANK LOOKS AND THEN SMILES AT HER ADORINGLY. PAUL LOOKS UP. HIS FACE SLOWLY SOFTENS, RELAXES. HE SMILES.

JULIA

Ahhh!...HUGS THEM. LEANS BACK. Oh my two sweet men...SHE IS OVERCOME BY HER EMOTIONS. LOVE, GRATITUDE, GREAT EMOTION EMANATE FROM HER. SHE LEANS TOWARD THEM WITH THE FORCE OF HER FEELINGS. THEY HUG HER IN RETURN. THEY ALL SIGH AND EXCLAIM HAPPILY.

PAUL

HUGGING HER. Oh, Julia...

FRANK

HUGS. LAUGHING TREMULOUSLY.

JULIA

PRESSING CLOSER TO PAUL, PUTS HER FACE RIGHT NEXT TO HIS. BREATHLESSLY, EMOTIONALLY. LOW, INTENSE. Paul, thank you, thank you. HE HUGS HER ALL THE HARDER AND BURIES HIS HEAD IN HER NECK. FRANK REALIZES THAT SOMETHING NEW HAS HAPPENED. HE SLOWLY TAKES HIS ARMS FROM THEM. HIS LUAGH IS STILL TREMULOUSLY, FADING, SOON DISAPPEARS AND HIS FACE IS LEFT WITH THE SMILE OF LONELINESS WATCHING HAPPINESS. HE FEELS SELF-CONSCIOUS. TURNS AND WALKS RIGHT, HIS HEAD DOWN. PAUL AND JULIA KISS SWEETLY, SLOWLY, LOVINGLY. JACK AND ANNE ARE ENTERING THE TERRACE. THEIR ARMS ARE ABOUT EACH OTHER. ANNE LEANS AGAINST JACK. SHE IS WEAK FROM GUILT AND RELIEF. HE HOVERS OVER HER PROTECTING HER. HE LOOKS DOWN AT HER SMILING. HE IS CHANGED, MORE CONFIDENT, MORE NATURALLY EXUBERENT, LESS NERVOUSLY AND SELF-CONSCIOUSLY SO. IT'S AS IF SHE HAS GIVEN HIM HER STRENGTH AND POISE. THEY MEET FRANK AT THE DOOR.

JACK

AS FRANK STEPS ASIDE. GAILY. Frank! JULIA AND PAUL SEPARATE BUT NOT GUILTILY. Julia and Paul! HE AND ANNE COME INTO THE ROOM AND STAND THERE AS IF JACK WERE ABOUT TO MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT. HE SMILES BROADLY AT THE THREE IN THE ROOM. Well...HE LOOKS FROM ONE TO THE OTHER, THEN DOWN AT ANNE, HUGS HER TIGHTER. HE LAUGHS, ALMOST BREATHLESSLY. FRANK, PAUL AND JULIA LOOK AT HIM WARILY, EXPECTANTLY. JACK LAUGHS DURING THE FOLLOWING SCENE, IS GAY, ALMOST HYSTERICALLY SO. Shall we have a drink? KISSES ANNE THEN GOES TO LIQUER CABINET UP RIGHT. LOOKS AT BOTTLES, HANDLING THEM NOISILY. What will it be? Sherry? Nope, too late. Gin? Nope, too early. Bourbon? Scotch? Champagne? Noep, too soon. TURNS AND LOOKS AT THE OTHERS, GRINNING, LAUGHING. BACK AGAIN THEN HOLDS A BOTTLE UP HIGH. Brandy! That's it! TURNS TO OTHERS AGAIN. Everyone want a little brandy? THEY ALL NOD SLOWLY. ANNE HAS GONE TO SIT ON THE RIGHT ARM OF THE COUCH. SHE IS TOUCHING HER LITTLE HANDKERCHIEF TO HER FACE. SHE SEEMS IMPERVIOUS TO WHAT IS HAPPENING, IS CONCENTRATING ON HER HANDKERCHIEF SO IT SEEMS. SHE IS VERY BUSY WITH IT. SEEMS HOT AND WEARY, OUT OF BREATH ALMOST. JACK TURNS BACK TO CABINET AND POURS FIVE DRINKS. TALKS ALL THE WHILE. Brandy it is then, brandy it shall be! Brandy for a celebration. Brandy for the first day of my life. Brandy for the men and for their ladies. HE THEN CARRIES A GLASS TO EACH, LAUGHING AND CHATTERING. Julia, my little sister...Paul, the brother of the bride. GOES BACK TO GET TWO MORE GLASSES. I hope my bride doesn't think I'm going to marry her just for her liquor cabinet and all it contains. LAUGHS GAILY. HE CAN HARDLY

CONTAIN HIMSELF. Oh no. Not at all. TAKES A GLASS TO ANNE. GIVES IT TO HER AS HE LOOKS AT HER WITH THE UTMOST TENDERNESS AND LOVE. Not at all my little bride, my sweetest darling...HE WATCHES HER TAKE THE GLASS; HE SMILES AT HER BEAUTIFICALLY. HE THEN TURNS AND GIVES ANOTHER GLASS TO FRANK WHO IS STILL IN THE DOORWAY. And one for my little brother. Frank, a prince among men. HE RETURNS TO CABINET, TAKES UP HIS OWN GLASS AND FACES THE ROOM. Well...I've finally done it.

JULIA

What...? (MEANING "What did you say?")

JACK

It's nothing. Something you don't know about. HE DRINKS. QUICKLY TO HIDE HIS SMILE OF PRIDE. NO ONE ELSE DRINKS. Come on; everybody drink. HE LAUGHS, HOLDS HIS GLASS UP. LOOKS AT THEM, A LITTLE OF THE OLD INSECURITY RETURNS. HE SHAKES HIS DRINK AT THEM TO URGE THEM TO DRINK. FINALLY JULIA DRINKS, PAUL FOLLOWS THEN FRANK. JACK'S SMILE BROADENS INTO THE NEW PRIDE AGAIN. LOOKS AT ANNE WHO HASN'T DRUNK YET. TENDERLY. Let's drink to my little wife, Anne of the thousand kindnesses. HE DRINKS. THE OTHERS FOLLOW. ANNE STANDS; SHE HASN'T DRUNK. SHE IS NERVOUS, WEARY, PALE. SHE WRINGS THE HANDKERCHIEF A LITTLE.

ANNE

I think I'll go to bed...I'm...I'm very tired. JACK GOES TO HER AND PUTS HIS ARM AROUND HER. FELICIA APPEARS ON THE STAIRS. SHE DESCENDS SLOWLY.

FELICIA

LOW. TO ANNE. Can we leave the trunk here and send someone to get it tomorrow?

ANNE

LOOKS UP AT FELICIA. LOW. Leave the trunk here...?

JULIA

LOOKING AT ANNE. They're going home tonight.

ANNE

ALMOST A WHISPER. Oh...RECOVERS A LITTLE. SHE GOES TO FELICIA, WHO IS ON THE NEXT TO THE BOTTOM STEP. Felicia...TAKES HER HANDS, LOOKS UP AT HER...PATHETICALLY. Why are you going? Are you angry with me?

FELICIA

SHAKES HER HEAD. No. ANNE HANGS HER HEAD.

JACK

COMES TO ANNE AND FELICIA. HE IS CONCERNED. Why are you leaving?

FELICIA

TAKES HER HANDS SLOWLY FROM ANNE'S. I just don't want to stay, that's all.

JACK

LAUGHS, A LITTLE IN HIS OLD EMBARRASSED WAY. But there's got to be a reason...LAUGHS. Anne'll be so sad to see you go...You really ought to stay.

JULIA

TAKES A STEP TOWARDS THEM. QUIETLY. If she wants to go, let her go.

JACK

TURNING TO JULIA. A LITTLE ANNOYANCE CREEPING IN. What do you keep butting in for? JULIA LOOKS AT HIM, THEN TURNS AWAY.

FELICIA

MURMURS. I've got to go finish packing. TURNS AND GOES UPSTAIRS.

JULIA

PAUSE WHILE FELICIA GOES. THEN, INTENSELY, LOW. I want them to go; they're like thorns in me.

JACK

LOOKS AT HER, PUZZLED, A LITTLE OF HIS OLD UNCERTAINTY. THEN LOOKS AT ANNE, WHO STANDS WITH HER HEAD STILL DOWN, HER ARMS HANGING. LAUGHS IN HIS OLD WAY. Well...what's happened to our celebration? HE LOOKS FROM ONE TO THE OTHER. LAUGHS AGAIN. IT IS PAINFUL TO THE OTHERS. FRANK TURNS AND LOOKS OUT ONTO TERRACE. Hey...aren't we going to finish our brandy? ANNE TURNS AND EMBRACES JACK. HE HUGS HER GRATEFULLY, HIDING HIS FACE AGAINST HER NECK.

ANNE

AFTER SHORT PAUSE. QUIETLY, WITH RESIGNATION. Let's go say good-by to them. EXEUNT UPSTAIRS.

JULIA

SHE SITS HEAVILY ON RIGHT SIDE OF THE COUCH. PAUL COMES AND SITS ON THE LEFT ARM. FRANK STANDS IN THE DOORWAY. TO PAUL. She didn't tell him.

PAUL

Probably she never will. HIS HEAD IS DOWN. HE PICKS AT THE COUCH WITH HIS FINGERS.

JULIA

THEY SPEAK QUIETLY. ALMOST AS IF AWED. What's going to become of them? PAUL SHAKES HIS HEAD. NO ONE LOOKS AT ANYONE ELSE. SHORT PAUSE.

PAUL

QUIETLY, LOOKING DOWN. What we need is someone to take care of us.

FRANK

TURNS TO THEM. HIS FACE IS FULL OF PAIN. Well it's too late now. My heart hurts and nobody could make it feel better. HE IS ABOUT TO WEEP LIKE A LITTLE BOY.

JULIA

LOOKS AT HIM, HER FACE BECOMES FILLED WITH COMPASSION AND EMOTION. SHE PUTS HER ARMS OUT TO HIM. Oh Frank...

FRANK

SHAKES HIS HEAD. HE BEGINS TO CRY. HIS VOICE IS CHOKED. HE HUGS HIMSELF FOR PROTECTION. I can't...I can't! JULIA, ASHAMED, DROPS HER ARMS. COVERS HER FACE. PAUL IMMEDIATELY COMES TO HER AND EMBRACES HER. PAT COMES DOWN THE STAIRS WITH HIS PIPE IN HIS MOUTH. HE CARRIES TWO SUITCASES. PUTS THEM DOWN IN THE DINING ROOM. LOOKS INTO LIVING ROOM. THE OTHERS HAVEN'T SEEN HIM.

PAT

CHEERFULLY. Well, we're leaving now. THE THREE IN THE LIVING ROOM TURN AND LOOK AT HIM. HE SMILES AT THEM. SHRUGS. HE LOOKS AT HIS PIPE. TAMPS IT. LOOKS UP AT THEM AGAIN, SMILING. Sorry we couldn't stay longer, Paul; but Felicia's anxious to get back to the city. HE COMES DOWN INTO THE LIVING ROOM, HAND EXTENDED TO PAUL. PAUL RISES. THEY SHAKE HANDS. PAT MOVES BEHIND JULIA, TOUCHES THE TOP OF HER HEAD SMILES, NODS. FRANK TURNS AWAY SO THAT PAT MERELY LOOKS AT HIM AND SHRUGS. HE THEN TURNS BACK TO PAUL AND JULIA, SMILES. Well, it seems everything's turning out alright. FELICIA COMES DOWN THE STAIRS WITH A SMALLER SUITCASE. SHE STANDS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS.

FELICIA

Dad.

PAT

TURNS TO HER AND SMILES. THEN BACK TO PAUL AND JULIA. We're off. HE NODS PLEASANTLY TO ALL, TURNS. GOES TO DINING ROOM, PICKS UP HIS SUITCASES AND EXITS RIGHT. FELICIA STANDS A MOMENT LOOKING AT FRANK.

FELICIA

SHE SPEAKS LOW, BROKENLY, UNCERTAINLY. Frank...SHE IS VERY FORLORN. FRANK TURNS SLOWLY AND LOOKS AT HER...Frank...BREATHLESSLY, LOW. Help me...

PAT

OFFSTAGE. Felicia!

FELICIA

LOOKS A MOMENT LONGER AT FRANK. THEN TURNS AND RUNS OFF RIGHT. A SLIGHT PAUSE AFTER THEY HAVE LEFT. FRANK STANDS LOOKING AT THE DINING ROOM. THE OTHERS REMAIN IN THE SAME POSITIONS ALSO. THEN JULIA TURNS AROUND AND LEANS BACK AGAINST THE PILLOWS. SHE SIGHS. PAUL SITS NEXT TO HER AND HOLDS HER HAND. HE LOOKS AT HER AND WHEN SHE SMILES HE SMILES TOO. THEN FRANK TURNS. HIS FACE IS CLEAR. HE LOOKS AT JULIA AND PAUL, THEN COMES AND STANDS BY THE EASY CHAIR, LOOKING DOWN AT THEM. HE SMILES AS THEY LOOK AT HIM.

FRANK

SPREADING HIS ARMS OUT AND SMILING UNSTEADILY. HE IS STILL A LITTLE SHAKY. Well...HE LAUGHS A LITTLE IN A TREMBLING SORT OF WAY. THEN JULIA AND PAUL LAUGH. SOON THE THREE ARE LAUGHING. AS THE CURTAIN CLOSES THE LAUGHS SHOULD HAVE A RING OF SADNESS AND DESPERATION. THEIR FACES SHOULD SHOW NOT JOY BUT SADNESS.

SLOW CURTAIN