

"You Can't Take It With You" – Audition Sides

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(PAUL emerges from cellar again.)

PAUL. (Enters D.R. and crosses to ESSIE.) Mr. De Pinna was right about the balloon. It was too close to the powder.

ESSIE. (Points to plate.) Want a Love Dream, Father? They're on the table.

PAUL. (Starts for stairs.) No, thanks. I gotta wash.

PENNY. I'm going back to the war play, Paul.

PAUL. Oh, that's nice. We're putting some red stars after the bombs and then the balloon. That ought to do it. (He goes up stairs.)

ESSIE. (Crossing down to back of chair L. of table.) You know, Mr. Kolenkhov says I'm his most promising pupil.

PENNY. You'd think with forty monks and one girl that something would happen.

(ED CARMICHAEL comes down stairs. A nondescript young man in his mid-thirties. He removes his coat as he crosses to xylophone.)

ED. Essie! Heh! Essie! (PENNY sits at music starts. He hums a snatch of melody as he heads for the far corner of the room—the xylophone corner. Arriving there, he picks up the sticks and continues the melody on the xylophone. Immediately ESSIE is up on her toes, performing intricate ballet steps to ED's accompaniment.)

ESSIE. (After a bar, rising on toes—dancing—to R. below table.) I like that, Ed. Did you write it? (PENNY types.)

ED. (Pauses in his playing. Shakes his head.) No, Beethoven. (Music continues.)

ESSIE. (Never coming down off her toes.) Lovely. Got a lot of you in it. . . . I made those new candies this afternoon, Ed. (Dancing to the L.) (PENNY puts scripts from U.S. end to D.S. end.)

ED. (Playing away.) Yah?

ESSIE. (A series of leaping steps.) You can take 'em around tonight.

ED. All right. . . . Now, here's the finish. This is me. (He works up to an elaborate crescendo, but ESSIE keeps pace with him, right to the finish, preening to the last note.) How's that?

ESSIE. That's fine. (PENNY picks up half of pile of scripts, D.S. end desk.) Remember it when Kolenkhov comes, will you?

PENNY. (Who has been busy with her scripts.) Ed, dear. Why don't you and Essie have a baby? I was thinking about it just the other day.

(ED puts xylophone hammers down—comes down from above.)

ED. (As ESSIE busies herself with her slippers.) I don't know—we

could have one if you wanted us to. What about it, Essie? Do you want to have a baby?

ESSIE. Oh, I don't care. I'm willing if Grandpa is. (And off into kitchen.)

ED. (Calling after her.) Let's ask him.

PENNY. (Ranning through a pile of scripts.) Labor play, (ED works printing press with a bang.) religious play. (Another bang. RHEBA enters U.R. with silverware. Puts table cover from chair on buffet arm.) sex play— (Still another bang.) I know it's here some place.

DE PINNA. (Coming out of cellar D.R., bonnd for kitchen to wash up.) I was right about the balloon. It was too close to the powder.

ED. (Who has crossed to his press.) Anything you want printed,

Mr. De Pinna? How about some more calling cards?

DE PINNA. No, thanks. I've still got the first thousand.

ED. Well, call on somebody, will you?

DE PINNA. All right! (Exits U.R.)

ED. (Coming downstage—type stick in hand.) What have we got for dinner, Rheba? I'm ready to print the menu.

RHEBA. Let's see. Corn flakes, watermelon, some of these candies Miss Essie made, and some kind of meat—I forget. (Sets silverware.)

ED. I think I'll set it up in bold face Cheltenham tonight. (Going to printing press U.R.) You know, if I'm going to take those new candies around I'd better print up some descriptive matter after dinner.

PENNY. Do you think anybody reads those things, Ed—that you put in the candy boxes? . . . Oh, here's the war play. (She pulls a script out of pile.) "Poison Gas." (The doorbell rings. Changes tone.) I guess that's Donald. (RHEBA smiles and starts for ball door, U.L.) Look at Rheba smile.

ED. The boy friend, eh, Rheba?

(RHEBA is out of sight.)

PENNY. They're awfully cute, Donald and Rheba.

DONALD. (Off stage.) Hello, Rheba.

RHEBA. Donald! (RHEBA having opened door, DONALD now looms up in arch, straw hat in hand.)

DONALD. Evening, everybody!

ED. Hi, Donald! How've you been?

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DONALD. (*Coming into room.*) I'm pretty good, Mr. Ed. How you been, Mrs. Sycamore. (*He starts r.*)

PENNY. Very well, thank you. (*Rises.*) Donald?

DONALD. Yes, ma'am?

PENNY. Were you ever in a monastery?

DONALD. No-o. I don't go no place much. I'm on relief. (*Reaching for bottle of flies in his pocket.*)

PENNY. Ah, yes, of course. (*Sits.*)

DONALD. (*Crossing to RHEBA. Putting a bottle out of side pocket.*) Here's the flies, Rheba. Caught a big mess of them today.

RHEBA. (*Taking the jar.*) You sure did. (*RHEBA goes into the kitchen U.R.*) (*DONALD crosses to L.*)

DONALD. I see you've been working, Mrs. Sycamore.

PENNY. Yes, indeed, Donald.

DONALD. How's Grandpa?

PENNY. Just fine. He's over at Columbia this afternoon. The Commencement exercises.

DONALD. (*Crossing to table.*) My . . . my. The years certainly do roll 'round. M-m-m. (*Takes a candy.*)

ED. (*With his typewriting.*) M—E—A—T. . . What's he go there for all the time, Penny?

PENNY. I don't know, it's so handy—just around the corner.

(*PAUL comes down stairs, an impressive looking tome under his arm.*)

PAUL. Oh, Donald! Mr. De Pinna and I are going to take the fir-works up to Mount Vernon next week. Do you think you could give us a hand?

DONALD. Yes, sir, only I can't take no money for it this year, because if the Government finds out I'm working they'll get sore.

PAUL. Oh! (*DONALD drifts up to buffet and feeds bits of candy to the snakes.*) Ed, I got a wonderful idea in the bathroom just now.

ED. (*Crossing down.*) Yeah, I left it there.

PENNY. *Who is it?*

PAUL. (*A step to PENNY.*) You know, Trotsky. The Russian Revolution. (*Showing her book.*)

PENNY. Oh.

PAUL. (*DONALD turns.*) Anyhow, it struck me it was a great fireworks idea. Remember "The Last Days of Pompeii"?

PENNY. Oh, yes. Palisades Park. (*With a gesture of her arms she*

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loosely describes a couple of arcs, indicative of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.) That's where we met.

PAUL. Well, I'm going to do the Revolution! A full hour display.

DONALD. Say!

PENNY. Paul, that's wonderful!

ED. The red fire is the flag, huh?

PAUL. (*Crossing a step to R.*) Sure! And the Czar, and the Cossacks!

DONALD. And the freeing of the slaves?

PAUL. No, no, Donald—the Russian Revolution. (*The sound of the door slamming. A second's pause, then GRANDPA enters living room. GRANDPA is about 75, a very little man whom the years have treated kindly. His face is youthful, despite the lines that sear it; his eyes are very much alive. He is a man who made his peace with the world long, long ago, and his whole attitude and manner are quietly persuasive of this.*) Hello, Grandpa. (*DONALD crosses to door U.R. ED UP to L. of xylophone. PAUL sits above table.*)

GRANDPA. (*Putting his hat on news-press and surveying the group.*) Well, sir, you should have been there. That's all I can say—you should have been there.

PENNY. Was it a nice Commencement, Grandpa?

GRANDPA. Wonderful. They get better every year. (*He peers into snake solarium.*) You don't know how lucky you are you're snakes.

(*Crossing to alcove for his house coat.*)

ED. Big class this year, Grandpa? How many were there?

GRANDPA. Oh, must have been two acres. Everybody graduated.

(*Removes street coat.*) Yes, sir. And much funnier speeches than they had last year. (*Crossing down to his chair, putting on house coat.*)

DONALD. (*Coming D.S.*) You want to listen to a good speech you go up and hear Father Divine.

GRANDPA. I'll wait—they'll have him at Columbia. (*Sits R. of table, as DONALD crosses to R.*)

PENNY. Donald, will you tell Rheba Grandpa's home now and we won't wait for Miss Alice.

(*DE PINNA enters from kitchen, rolling down his sleeves.*)

DONALD. Yes'm . . . (*As he exits through kitchen door U.R.*)

Rheba, Grandpa's home . . . we can have dinner.

PAUL. We made a new skyrocket today, Grandpa. Wait till you see it.

DE PINNA. Evening, Grandpa.

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GRANDPA. (*Starting to remove his shoes.*) Evening, Mr. De Pinna.

PAUL. Didn't we make a fine rocket today, Mr. De Pinna?

DE PINNA. (*As he exits through cellar door d.r.*) We certainly did.

PAUL. Wonder why they don't have fireworks at Commencements?

GRANDPA. Don't make enough noise. You take a good Commencement orator and he'll drown out a whole carload of fireworks. (*ED gets a new pair of banners.*) And say just as much, too.

PENNY. Don't the graduates ever say anything?

GRANDPA. No, they just sit there in cap and nightgown, get their diplomas, and then along about forty years from now they suddenly say, "Where am I?"

ESSIE. (*ESSIE enters from kitchen, carrying a plate of tomatoes for the evening meal.*) Hello, Grandpa. Have a nice day?

GRANDPA. Hello-have-a-nice-day. Don't I even get kissed?

ESSIE. (*Kissing him.*) Excuse me, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. I'll take a tomato, too. (*ED strikes three tentative notes on xylophone.* GRANDPA takes a tomato and sits with it in his hand, weighing it.) You know I could have used a couple of these this afternoon. . . .

ESSIE. (*Offering plate to PAUL.*) Father?

(*Again ED strikes the keys of his xylophone.*)

PAUL. No, thanks.

(*ESSIE crosses to PENNY.*)

ESSIE. Mother?

PENNY. No, thanks, dear.

GRANDPA. Play something, Ed.

ED. All right. (*ED at once obliges on the xylophone. Immediately ESSIE is up on her toes, drifting through the mazes of a toe dance, placing plate of tomatoes on the table as she dances.*)

ESSIE. (*After a moment of dancing "The Dying Swan."*) There was a letter came for you, Grandpa. Did you get it?

GRANDPA. (*Cutting a tomato.*) Letter for me? I don't know anybody.

ESSIE. It was for you, though. Had your name on it.

GRANDPA. That's funny. Where is it?

ESSIE. I don't know. Where's Grandpa's letter, Mother?

PENNY. (*Who has been deep in her work.*) What, dear?

ESSIE. (*Dancing dreamily away.*) Where's that letter that came for Grandpa last week?

PENNY. I don't know. (*Then brightly.*) I remember seeing the kittens on it. (*ESSIE starts to floor.*)

GRANDPA. Who was it from? Did you notice?

ESSIE. Yes, it was on the outside.

GRANDPA. Well, who was it?

ESSIE. (*First finishing the graceful flutterings of "The Dying Swan."*) United States Government. (*The music ends.*)

GRANDPA. Really? Wonder what they wanted.

ESSIE. (*Rising and starting r.*) There was one before that, too, from the same people. There was a couple of them.

GRANDPA. Well, if any more come I wish you'd give them to me.

ESSIE. (*Exits through kitchen door on her toes.*) Yes, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. (*Rises—shoes in hand.*) I think I'll go out to Westchester tomorrow and do a little snake-hunting. (*Starts up to, above for slippers.*) (*ED looks over xylophone, figuring out time.*)

PAUL. (*Who has settled down with his book some time before this.*) "God is the State; the State is God."

GRANDPA. What's that? (*Coming down—slippers in one hand, dumb in the other.*)

PAUL. "God is the State; the State is God."

GRANDPA. Who says that?

PAUL. Trotsky.

GRANDPA. Well, that's all right—I thought you said it. (*Sits r. of table.*)

ED. It's nice for printing, you know. Good and short. (*He reaches into type case.*) G—O—D—space—I—S—space—T—H—E—space—

(*The sound of the outer door closing, and ALICE SYCAMORE enters the room. A lovely, fresh young girl of about twenty-two. She is plainly GRANDPA's granddaughter, but there is something that sets her apart from the rest of the family. For one thing, she is in daily contact with the world; in addition, she seems to have escaped the tinge of mild insanity that pervades the rest of them. But she is a Sycamore for all that, and her devotion and love for them are plainly apparent. At the moment she is in a small, nervous flutter, but she is doing her best to conceal it.*)

ALICE. (*As she makes the rounds, kissing her mother, her father, her grandfather.*) And so the beautiful princess came into the palace, and kissed her mother, and her father, and her grandfather —

GRANDPA. Hello, darling!

ALICE. Hi, Grandpa—and what do you think? They turned into the Sycamore family. Surprised? (*Removing her hat.*) (ED gets another set of hammers.)

ESSIE. (*Enters U.R. Examining ALICE's dress.*) Oh, Alice, I like it.

ALICE. Do you?

ESSIE. It's new, isn't it?

PENNY. Looks nice and summery.

ESSIE. Where'd you get it?

ALICE. Oh, I took a walk during lunch hour.

GRANDPA. You've been taking a lot of walks lately. That's the second new dress this week.

ALICE. (*Takes off gloves.*) I just like to brighten up the office once in a while. I'm known as the Kay Francis of Kirby & Co. . . .

Well, what's new around here? In the way of plays, snakes, baller dancing or fireworks. Dad, I'll bet you've been down in that cellar all day. (ED sees if hammers are straight.)

PAUL. Huh?

PENNY. I'm going back to the war play, Alice. (ESSIE does dance step exercise.)

ALICE. Really, Mother? (*She takes her hat to the hatrack.*) (ED strikes a note on xylophone.)

ESSIE. Ed, play Alice that Beethoven thing you wrote.

(ED at xylophone. *He plays. ESSIE is up on her toes.*)

GRANDPA. You know, you can mail a letter all the way from Nicaragua now for two peseros.

PAUL. Really?

PENNY. (*Reading from her script.*) "Kenneth! My virginity is a priceless thing to me."

ALICE. Listen, people. . . . Listen. (*The music dies out. She gets a scattered sort of attention.*) I'm not home to dinner. A young gentleman is calling for me. (ED fixes a xylophone hammer.)

ESSIE. Really, who is it?

PENNY. Well, isn't that nice?

ALICE. I did everything possible to keep him from coming here but he's calling for me.

PENNY. Why don't you both stay to dinner?

ALICE. No, I want him to take you in easy doses. I've tried to prepare him a little, but don't make it any worse than you can help. Don't read him any plays, Mother, and don't let a snake bite him,

Grandpa, because I like him. And I wouldn't dance for him, Essie, because we're going to the Monne Carlo baller tonight.

GRANDPA. Can't do anything. Who is he—President of the United States?

ALICE. (*Crossing to L. of C. table.*) No, he's vice-president of Kirby & Co. Mr. Anthony Kirby, Jr.

ESSIE. The boss's son?

PENNY. Well!

ALICE. (*A step to PENNY.*) The boss's son. Just like the movies.

ESSIE. (*Crossing down.*) That explains the new dresses.

ED. (*Comes down a step.*) And not being home to dinner for three weeks.

ALICE. Why, Sherlock Holmes!

PENNY. (*Rises. All aglow, script in hand.*) Are you going to marry him?

ALICE. Oh, of course. Tonight! Meanwhile I have to go up and put on my wedding dress. (PENNY laughs, crosses to desk.)

ESSIE. Is he good-looking?

ALICE. (*Vainly consulting her watch. Starts U.S.*) Yes, in a word . . . Oh, dear! What time is it?

PENNY. (*Precoccupied with scripts.*) I don't know. Anybody know what time it is?

PAUL. Mr. De Pinna might know.

ED. It was about five o'clock a couple of hours ago.

ALICE. Oh, I ought to know better than to ask you people. . . . Will you let me know the minute he comes, please?

PENNY. Of course, Alice.

ALICE. Yes, I know, but I mean the minute he comes.

PENNY. Why, of course.

(ALICE looks apprehensively from one to the other; then disappears up the stairs U.L.)

ALICE. Well, be sure.

PENNY. Well, what do you think of that?

GRANDPA. She seems to like him, if you ask me.

ESSIE. I should say so. She's got it bad.

(ED crosses into the room.)

PENNY. (*Crossing to R. a bit.*) Wouldn't it be wonderful if she married him? We could have the wedding right in this room.

PAUL. Now, wait a minute, Penny. This is the first time he's ever called for the girl.

(*ESSIE stretching exercise.*)

PENNY. You only called for me once.

PAUL. Young people are different nowadays.

ESSIE. Oh, I don't know. Look at Ed and me. He came to dinner once and just stayed. (*Toe pointing.*)

PENNY. Anyhow, I think it's wonderful. Don't you, Grandpa?

GRANDPA. She certainly seems happy about it.

PENNY. He must be crazy about her. Maybe he's the one who is taking her out every night. (*Door bell.*) There he is! Never mind, Rhoda, I'll answer it. (*She is fluttering to the door.*) Now remember what Alice said, and be very nice to him.

GRANDPA. (*Rising.*) All right—let's take a look at him.

(*PAUL rises, ED puts on his coat and comes into room. They all stand awaiting the stranger's appearance.*)

PENNY. (*At the front door: milk and honey in her voice.*) Well! Welcome to our little home!

HENDERSON. How do you do?

PENNY. I'm Alice's mother. Do come right in! Here we are! (*She reappears in archway, piloting the stranger, holding his hand.*) This is Grandpa, and that's Alice's father, and Alice's sister and her husband, Ed Carmichael. (*The family all give courteous little nods and smiles as they are introduced.*) Well! Now give me your hat and make yourself right at home. (*PENNY takes his hat.*)

THE MAN. I'm afraid you must be making a mistake. (*Reaching for his card.*)

PENNY. How's that?

THE MAN. My card.

PENNY. (*Reading.*) "Wilbur C. Henderson. Internal Revenue Department."

(*PAUL and GRANDPA exchange looks.*)

HENDERSON. That's right.

GRANDPA. What can we do for you?

HENDERSON. Does a Mr. Martin Vanderhof live here?

GRANDPA. Yes, sir. That's me.

HENDERSON. (*Coming down to table.*) Well, Mr. Vanderhof, the Government wants to talk to you about a little matter of income tax.

PENNY. Income tax?

HENDERSON. You mind if I sit down?

GRANDPA. No, no. Just go right ahead.

HENDERSON. (*Seating himself in a chair I. of the table.*) Thank you. (*GRANDPA sits. From above starts the voice of ALICE floats down.*)

ALICE. Mother! Is that Mr. Kirby?

PENNY. (*Going to stairs.*) No. No, it isn't, darling. It's—an internal something or other. (*To HENDERSON.*) Pardon me.

DE PINNA. (*Entering from D.R. carrying a freeracker.*) Mr. Syca more . . . oh, excuse me.

PAUL. What is it?

DE PINNA. (*Crossing to PAUL.*) These things are not going off.

Look. (*He strikes a match.*)

PAUL. Not here, Mr. De Pinna. Grandpa's busy.

DE PINNA. Oh!

(*They start for hall.*)

PAUL. Pardon me.

(*They start again for hall, DE PINNA looking at HENDERSON until PAUL and DE PINNA exit.*)

HENDERSON. (*Pulling a sheaf of papers from his pocket.*) Now, Mr. Vanderhof, (*A quick look toward hall.*) we've written you several letters about this, but have not had any reply. (*PENNY sits in her desk chair.*)

GRANDPA. Oh, that's what those letters were.

ESSIE. (*Sitting on couch r.*) I told you they were from the Government.

HEND. According to our records, Mr. Vanderhof, you have never paid an income tax.

GRANDPA. That's right.

HEND. Why not?

GRANDPA. I don't believe in it.

HEND. Well—you own property, don't you?

GRANDPA. Yes, sir.

HEND. And you receive a yearly income from it?

GRANDPA. I do.

HEND. Of—(*He consults his records.*)—between three and four thousand dollars.

GRANDPA. About that.

HEND. You've been receiving it for years.

GRANDPA. I have, 1901, if you want the exact date.

HEND. Well, the Government is only concerned from 1914 on. That's when the income tax started. (Pause.)

GRANDPA. Well?

HEND. Well—it seems, Mr. Vanderhof, that you owe the Government twenty-four years' back income tax.

ED. (Coming down as ESSIE joins him.) Wait a minute! You can't go back that far—that's outlawed.

HEND. (Calmly regarding him.) M-m-m! What's your name?

ED. What difference does that make?

HEND. Ever file an income tax return?

ED. (Turns to ESSIE, ESSIE steps in.) No, sir.

HEND. Ah! What was your income last year?

ED. Ah—twenty-eight dollars and fifty cents, wasn't it, Essie?

ESSIE. Yes, sir.

HEND. If you please! (Dimissing ED and ESSIE. They drift U.S.)

Now, Mr. Vanderhof, you know there's quite a penalty for not filing an income tax return.

PENNY. Penalty?

GRANDPA. Look, Mr. Henderson, let me ask you something.

HEND. Well?

GRANDPA. Suppose I pay you this money—mind you, I don't say I'm going to pay it—but just for the sake of argument—what's the Government going to do with it?

HEND. How do you mean?

GRANDPA. Well, what do I get for my money? If I go into Macy's and buy something, there it is—I see it. What's the Government give me?

HEND. Why, the Government gives you everything. It protects you.

GRANDPA. What from?

HEND. Well—invasion. Foreigners that might come over here and take everything you've got.

GRANDPA. Oh, I don't think they're going to do that.

HEND. If you didn't pay an income tax, they would. How do you think the Government keeps up the Army and Navy? All those battleships . . .

GRANDPA. Last time we used battleships was in the Spanish-American War, and what did we get out of it? Cuba—and we gave that back. I wouldn't mind paying if it were something sensible.

HEND. Sensible? Well, what about Congress, and the Supreme Court, and the President? We've got to pay them, don't we?

GRANDPA. Not with my money—no, sir.

HEND. (Furious. Rises, picks up papers.) Now wait a minute! I'm not here to argue with you. (Crossing L.) All I know is that you haven't paid an income tax and you've got to pay it!

GRANDPA. They've got to show me.

HEND. (Yelling.) We don't have to show you! I just told you! All those buildings down in Washington, (To PENNY. She nods.) and Interstate Commerce, and the Constitution!

GRANDPA. The Constitution was paid for long ago. And Interstate Commerce—what is Interstate Commerce, anyhow?

HEND. (Business of look at PENNY—at ED—at GRANDPA. With murderous calm, crosses and places his hands on table.) There are forty-eight states—see? And if there weren't Interstate Commerce, nothing could go from one state to another. See?

GRANDPA. Why not? They got fences?

HEND. (To GRANDPA.) No, they haven't got fences. They've got laws! (Crossing up to arch L.) My God, I never came across anything like this before!

GRANDPA. Well, I might pay about seventy-five dollars, but that's all it's worth.

HEND. You'll pay every cent of it, like everybody else!

ED. (Who has lost interest.) Listen, Essie—listen to this a minute.

(The xylophone again; ESSIE goes into her dance.)

HEND. (Going right ahead, battling against the music.) And let me tell you something else! You'll go to jail (PENNY rises.) if you don't pay, do you hear that? That's the law, and if you think you're bigger than the law, you've got another think coming. You're no better than anybody else, and the sooner you get that through your head, the better . . . you'll hear from the United States Government, that's all I can say. . . . (The music has stopped. He is backing out of the room.)

GRANDPA. (Gnawly.) Look out for those snakes.

HEND. (Jumping; exits off L.) Jesus! (An explosion from the hall. He exits through hall door.)

ED. How was that, Essie?

ESSIE. Fine, Ed.

PAUL. (Entering from hall with DE PINNA.) How did that sound to you folks? (ESSIE sits on couch.)

GRANDPA. I liked it.

PENNY. My goodness, he was mad, wasn't he?

GRANDPA. It's not his fault. It's just that the whole thing is so silly.

PENNY. He forgot his hat.

GRANDPA. Say, what size is that hat?

PENNY. Seven and an eighth.

GRANDPA. Just right for me.

DE PINNA. Who was that fellow, anyway? (Door bell. As bell rings DE PINNA makes for cellar door to get his coat.)

PENNY. This must be Mr. Kirby.

PAUL. Better make sure this time.

PENNY. Yes, I will. (She disappears U.L.)

ESSIE. (Rises.) I hope he's good-looking.

(The family is again standing awaiting the newcomer.)

PENNY. (Heard at the door.) How do you do?

MAN'S VOICE. Good evening.

PENNY. (Taking no chances.) Is this Mr. Anthony Kirby, Jr.?

TONY. (Business. PAUL affirms it. ED and ESSIE come D.S.) Yes.

(GRANDPA rises.)

PENNY. (Giving her all.) Well, Mr. Kirby, come right in! We've

been expecting you. Come right in! (They come into sight; PENNY

expansively addresses the family.) This is really Mr. Kirby! Now,

I'm Alice's mother, and that's Mr. Sycamore, and Alice's grand-

father, and her sister Essie, and Essie's husband. (DE PINNA waves

for recognition. There are a few mumbled greetings.) There! Now

you know all of us, Mr. Kirby. Give me your hat and make yourself

right at home.

(TONY KIRBY comes a few steps into the room. He is a personable

young man, not long out of Yale, and, as we will presently learn,

even more recently out of Cambridge. Although he fits all the physi-

cal requirements of a boss's son, his face has something of the

idealism in it. All in all, a very nice young man.)

TONY. Thank you.

(Again the voice of the vigilant ALICE floods down from upstairs.

"Is that Mr. Kirby, Mother?")

PENNY. (Shouting up stairs.) Yes, Alice. It is. He's lovely!

ALICE. (Aware of storm signals.) I'll be right down.

PENNY. (Puts TONY'S hat on desk.) Do sit down, Mr. Kirby.

TONY. (PAUL places TONY'S chair.) Thank you. (A glance at dinner table.) I hope I'm not keeping you from dinner?

GRANDPA. No, no. Have a tomato? (He sits. Also PAUL.)

TONY. No, thank you.

PENNY. (Producing candy-filled skull, crosses to TONY.) How

about a piece of candy?

TONY. (Eying the container.) Ah—no, thanks. (DE PINNA again

steps forward.)

PENNY. Oh, I forgot to introduce Mr. De Pinna. This is Mr. De

Pinna, Mr. Kirby. (An exchange of "How do you do's?")

DE PINNA. Wasn't I reading about your father in the newspaper the

other day? Didn't he get indicted or something?

TONY. (Smiling.) Hardly that. He just testified before the Securi-

ties Commission.

DE PINNA. Oh.

PENNY. (Slightly.) Yes, of course. I'm sure there was nothing

crooked about it, Mr. De Pinna. As a matter of fact—(She is now

addressing TONY. Drawing forward her desk chair, she sits.)—

Alice has often told us what a lovely man your father is.

TONY. (Sitting L. of table.) Well, I know. Father couldn't get

along without Alice. She knows more about the business than any

of us.

ESSIE. You're awful young Mr. Kirby, aren't you, to be vice-presi-

dent of a big place like that?

TONY. Well, you know what that means, vice-president. All I have

is a desk with my name on it.

PENNY. Is that all? Don't you get any salary?

TONY. (With a laugh.) Well, a little. More than I'm worth, I'm

afraid. (DE PINNA lights pipe.)

PENNY. Now you're just being modest.

GRANDPA. Sounds kind of dull to me—Wall Street. Do you like it?

TONY. Well, the hours are short. And I haven't been there very

long.

GRANDPA. Just out of college, huh?

TONY. Well, I knocked around for a while first. Just sort of had fun.

GRANDPA. What did you do? Travel?

TONY. For a while. Then I went to Cambridge for a year.

GRANDPA. (Nodding.) England.

TONY. That's right.

GRANDPA. Say, what's an English commencement like? Did you see

any?

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TONY. Oh, very impressive.

GRANDPA. They are, huh?

TONY. Anyhow, now the fun's over, and—I'm facing the world.

PENNY. Well, you've certainly got a good start, Mr. Kirby. Vice-president, and a rich father.

TONY. Well, that's hardly my fault.

PENNY. (*Brigbly.*) So now I suppose you're all ready to settle down and—get married.

PAUL. Come now, Penny, I'm sure Mr. Kirby knows his own mind. PENNY. I wasn't making up his mind for him—was I, Mr. Kirby?

TONY. That's quite all right, Mrs. Sycamore.

PENNY. (*To the others.*) You see?

ESSIE. You musn't rush him, Mother.

PENNY. Well, all I meant was he's bound to get married, (*ALICE starts down stairs.*) and suppose the wrong girl gets him?

(*The descending ALICE mercifully comes to TONY's rescue at this moment. Her voice is heard from stairs. TONY rises.*)

ALICE. Well, here I am, a vision in blue. (*She comes into the room—and very lovely indeed.*) Apparently you've had time to get acquainted. (*ESSIE a step upstage. TONY rises. Also PAUL.*)

PENNY. (*Rises and pushes chair back.*) Oh, yes, indeed. We were just having a delightful talk about love and marriage.

ALICE. Oh, dear. (*She turns to TONY. RHEBA enters.*) I'm sorry. I came down as fast as I could.

TONY. I didn't mind in the least.

RHEBA. (*Enters U.R. bringing a platter of sliced watermelon.*)

Damn those flies in the kitchen. (*ALICE looks at PENNY and back to TONY.*) Oh, Miss Alice, you look beautiful. Where you going?

ALICE. (*Making the best of it.*) I'm going out, Rheba.

RHEBA. (*Noticing TONY—looks at him.*) Stepping, huh?

(*The door bell sounds. RHEBA puts platter on table and crosses to hall door.*)

ESSIE. That must be Kolenkhor.

ALICE. (*Uneasily. She crosses to U.R.*) I think we'd better go, Tony.

TONY. (*Crossing to desk.*) All right.

(*Before they can escape, however, DONALD emerges from kitchen U.R. bearing a tray.*)

DONALD. Grandpa, you take cream on your corn flakes? I forget.

GRANDPA. Half and half, Donald.

(DONALD exits U.R. *The voice of BORIS KOLENKHOF booms from outer door.*)

KOLENKHOF. Ah, my little Rhebiskai!

GRANDPA. Yes, that's Kolenkhor, all right.

RHEBA. (*With a scream of laughter.*) Yessuh, Mr. Kolenkhor!

KOL. Good evening, everybody!

ALL. Good evening.

(*He appears in archway, his great arm completely encircling the delighted RHEBA. MR. KOLENKHOF is one of RHEBA's pets, and if you like Russians he might be one of yours. He is enormous, hairy, loud, and very, very Russian. His appearance in the archway still further traps ALICE and TONY. RHEBA exits U.R.*)

KOL. (*As he comes D.S.*) Grandpa, what do you think? I have had a letter from Russia! The Second Five-Year Plan is a failure! (*Throws hat on buffet. He lets out a laugh that shakes the rafters.*)

ESSIE. I practiced today, Mr. Kolenkhor!

KOL. (*With a deep Russian bow and a click of heels.*) My Pavlova!

ALICE. (*Crossing down.*) Well, if you'll excuse us, Mr. Kolenkhor.

(PENNY hands TONY his hat.)

KOL. My little Alice! (*He kisses her hand.*) Never have I seen you look so magnificent.

ALICE. Thank you, Mr. Kolenkhor. (*KOLENKHOF steps back.*)

Tony, this is Mr. Kolenkhor, Essie's dancing teacher. Mr. Kirby.

TONY. How do you do?

KOL. How do you do? (*A click of the heels and a bow from KOLENKHOF.*)

ALICE. (*Determined, this time. A step down.*) Will you pardon us, Mr. Kolenkhor—we're going to the Monte Carlo Ballet.

KOL. (*At the top of his tremendous voice.*) The Monte Carlo Ballet!

It sinks. (*Crossing U.C.*)

ALICE. (*Panicky now.*) Yes. . . . Well—good-bye, everybody.

Good-bye.

TONY. Good-bye. I'm so glad to have met you all.

(*A chorus of answering "Good-byes" from the family. The young people are gone. The sound of hall door closing.*)

DE PINNA. Good-bye.

KOL. (Still furious, crosses L.) Monte Carlo Ballet!

PENNY. Isn't Mr. Kirby lovely? . . . Come on, everybody! Dinner's ready! (PAUL indicates chair.)

ED. (Pulling up chair from alcove.) I thought he was a nice fellow, didn't you? (Gets another chair from ball.)

ESSIE. (Doing her toe steps.) Mm. (Bending.) And so good-looking.

PENNY. And he had such nice manners. Did you notice, Paul? Did you notice his manners?

PAUL. I certainly did. You were getting pretty personal with him.

PENNY. Oh, now, Paul. . . . Anyhow, he's a very nice young man.

(DE PINNA brings chair from alcove.)

DE PINNA. (As he seats himself.) He looks like a cousin of mine. (ESSIE bends.)

KOL. Bakst! Diaghileff! Then you had the ballet!

PENNY. I think if they get married here I'll put the altar right where the snakes are. You wouldn't mind, Grandpa, would you?

GRANDPA. Not if the snakes don't.

ESSIE. (Crossing to chair back of table and sitting.) Oh, no, they'll want to get married in a church. His family and everything.

DE PINNA. I like a church wedding.

ED. Yes, of course they would.

KOL. Of course.

GRANDPA. (Tapping on a plate for silence.) Quiet, everybody! Quiet! (They are immediately silent. . . . Grace is about to be pronounced. GRANDPA pauses a moment for her to bow then raises his eyes heavenward. He clears his throat and proceeds to say Grace.)

Well, Sir, we've been getting along pretty good for quite a while now, and we're certainly much obliged. Remember, all we ask is to just go along and be happy in our own sort of way. Of course we want to keep our health but as far as anything else is concerned, we'll leave it to You. Thank You. (RHEBA to KOLENKHOF. The beads come up as RHEBA and DONALD enter through kitchen door with steaming platters.) So the Second Five-Year Plan is a failure, eh, Kolenkhov?

KOL. Catastrophic! And wait until they try the Third Five-Year Plan!

PENNY. (On the cue "Thank You.") Of course his family is going to want to come. Imagine. Alice marrying a Kirby!

ESSIE. Think of that. Isn't it exciting?

ED. I'll play the wedding march on the xylophone.
PAUL. What have we got for dinner? I'm hungry.

CURTAIN

ACT I

SCENE 2: Late the same night. The house is in darkness save for a light in the hall. An accordion is heard off stage R., then suddenly a good loud BANG! from the cellar. Somewhere in the nether regions, one of the Sycamores is still at work. As the accordion player finishes the song the sound of a key in the outer door. The voices of ALICE and TONY drift through.

ALICE. (Off stage.) I could see them dance every night of the week. I think they're marvelous.

TONY. They are, aren't they? But of course just walking inside any theatre gives me a thrill.

ALICE. (As they come into sight in hallway.) Well, it's been so lovely, Tony, I hate to have it over.

TONY. Oh, is it over? Do I have to go right away?

ALICE. Not if you don't want to.

TONY. I don't.

ALICE. Would you like a cold drink?

TONY. Wonderful. (ALICE panics to switch on lights.)

ALICE. I'll see what's in the icebox. Want to come along?

TONY. I'd follow you to the ends of the earth.

ALICE. (At door.) Oh just the kitchen is enough.

(They exit through kitchen door. A pause, and the lights go on.)

TONY. Why, I like it. You've done it very simply, haven't you?

ALICE. Yes, we didn't know whether to do it Empire or Neogrecian.

TONY. So you settled for Frigidaire.

ALICE. Yes, it's so easy to live with. (They return. ALICE crosses to table. She is carrying two glasses. TONY, a bottle of ginger ale and a bottle opener.) Lucky you're not hungry, Mr. K. An icebox full of corn flakes. That gives you a rough idea of the Sycamores. (TONY follows down to table.)

TONY. (*Working away with the opener.*) Of course, why they make these bottle openers for Singer midgers I never did . . . (*As bottle opens.*) All over my coat.

ALICE. (*As she hands him a glass.*) I'll take mine in a glass, if you don't mind.

TONY. (*Pouring.*) There you are. A foaming beaker. (*Pours his own.*)

ALICE. Anyhow, it's cold.

TONY. (*As ALICE sits r. of the table.*) Now if you'll please be scared, I'd like to offer a toast.

ALICE. We are scared.

TONY. Miss Sycamore (*He raises his glass on high.*) . . . to you.

ALICE. Thank you, Mr. Kirby. (*Lifting her own glass.*) To you. (*She drinks and puts glass down.*)

TONY. You know something?

ALICE. What?

TONY. (*Puts his glass down and sighs happily.*) I wouldn't trade one minute of this evening for . . . all the rice in China.

ALICE. Really?

TONY. Cross my heart.

ALICE. (*A little sigh of contentment. Then shyly.*) Is there much rice in China?

TONY. Terrific. Didn't you read "The Good Earth"? (*She laughs. They are silent for a moment. He sighs and looks at his watch.*)

Well, I suppose I ought to go.

ALICE. Is it very late?

TONY. (*Looks at his watch.*) Very. (*ALICE gives a little nod. Time doesn't matter.*) I don't want to go.

ALICE. I don't want you to.

TONY. All right, I won't. (*Sits l. of table. Silence again.*) When do you get your vacation?

ALICE. Last two weeks in August.

TONY. I might take mine then, too.

ALICE. Really?

TONY. What are you going to do?

ALICE. I don't know. I hadn't thought much about it.

TONY. Going away, do you think?

ALICE. I might not. I like the city in the summer time.

TONY. I do too.

ALICE. But you always go up to Maine, don't you?

TONY. That's right. (*Rises.*) Oh—but I'm sure I *would* like the

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city in the summer time, if—— Oh, you know what I mean, Alice. I'd love it if you were here.

ALICE. Well—it'd be nice if you were here, Tony. (*Rises and crosses to r.*)

TONY. You know what you're saying, don't you?

ALICE. What?

TONY. That you'd rather spend the summer with me than anybody else.

ALICE. (*Back to TONY.*) Was I?

TONY. (*Crossing few steps r.*) Well, if it's true about the summer, how would you feel about—the winter?

ALICE. (*Seeming to weigh the matter. Turns to TONY.*) Yes, I'd like that too.

TONY. (*Tremulous.*) Then there's spring and autumn. If you could—see your way clear about those, Miss Sycamore? (*Crossing to ALICE.*)

ALICE. (*Again a little pause.*) I might.

TONY. I guess that's the whole year. We haven't forgotten anything, have we?

ALICE. No.

TONY. Well, then—— (*Another pause; their eyes meet. TONY starts to embrace ALICE. And at this moment, PENNY is heard from upstairs. TONY crosses to back of GRANDPA'S chair.*)

PENNY. (*Off stage.*) Is that you, Alice? What time is it? (*She comes into room, wrapped in a bathrobe.*) Oh! (*In sudden embarrassment.*) Excuse me, Mr. Kirby. I had no idea—that is, I—— (*She senses the situation.*)—I didn't mean to interrupt anything.

TONY. Not at all, Mrs. Sycamore.

ALICE. (*Quietly.*) No, Mother.

PENNY. I just came down for a manuscript—(*Fumbling at her desk.*)—then you can go right ahead. Ah, here it is. "Sex Takes a Holiday." Well—good night, Tony.

TONY. Good night, Mrs. Sycamore.

PENNY. Oh, I think you can call me Penny, don't you, Alice? At least I hope so. (*With a little laugh she vanishes up stairs.*) (*TONY turns back to ALICE. Before PENNY'S rippling laugh quite dies, BANG! from the cellar. TONY jumps.*)

TONY. What's that?

ALICE. (*Quietly. She crosses to below table.*) It's all right, Tony. That's father.

TONY. Oh—this time of night? (*Coming d.s.*)

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(GRANDPA comes down stairs.)

GRANDPA. (*Pausing in doorway.*) Hello there, children!

TONY. (*Turns to GRANDPA.*) Good evening, Mr. Vanderhof.

ALICE. Hello, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. (*Coming into the room.*) How's the weather? Looks like a nice summer evening.

ALICE. Yes, it's lovely, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. (*Starting up.*) Well, I'm off. Good-bye, Mr. Kirby . . .

I've got a date with the policeman on the corner.

TONY. (*Crossing U.S.*) Policeman?

GRANDPA. We've got a standing date—twelve-thirty every night.

Known him since he was a little boy. He's really a doctor, but after he graduated, he came to me and said he didn't want to be a doctor

—he had always wanted to be a policeman. So I said, "You go ahead

and be a policeman, if that's what you want to be," and that's what

he did. . . . How do you like my new hat?

TONY. It's very nice, Mr. Vanderhof.

GRANDPA. (*Regarding hat.*) Yeh, I like it. The Government gave

it to me. (*Exits U.S.*)

DONALD. (*Entering from kitchen U.R. with an accordion slung over*

his shoulder.) Oh, excuse me. I didn't know you folks was in here.

ALICE. (*Resigned.*) It's all right, Donald.

DONALD. Rheba kind of fancied some candy and I . . . Oh, there

it is. (*Crossing to buffet.*) You all don't want it, do you?

ALICE. No, Donald.

DONALD. (*Crossing to R.*) Thanks. . . . Did you have a nice eve-

ning?

ALICE. Yes, Donald.

DONALD. (*Edging over another step.*) Nice dinner?

ALICE. Yes, Donald.

DONALD. (*Another step to the R.*) Was the ballet nice?

ALICE. Yes, Donald.

DONALD. That's nice. (*He exits through kitchen door R.*)

ALICE. (*Rising.*) Now! Now, do you see what I mean? Could you explain Donald to your father? Could you explain Grandpa? You

couldn't, Tony, you couldn't! I love you, Tony, but I love them too!

And it's no use, Tony! It's no use! (*Crosses R. She is weeping now*

in spite of herself.)

TONY. (*Takes her hands, quietly says.*) There's only one thing

you've said that matters, that makes any sense at all. You love me.

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ALICE. But, Tony, I know so well . . .

TONY. But, darling, don't you think other people have had the same

problem? Everybody's got a family.

ALICE. (*Through her tears.*) But not like mine.

TONY. That doesn't stop people who love each other . . . Darling!

Darling, won't you trust me and go on loving me, and forget every-

thing else?

ALICE. How can I?

TONY. Because nothing can keep us apart. You know that. You must

know it. They want you to be happy, don't they? *They must.*

ALICE. Of course they do. But they can't change, Tony. I wouldn't

want them to change.

TONY. (*Releases her hands.*) They won't have to change. They're

charming, lovable people, just as they are. Everything will work out

. . . you're worrying about something that may never come up.

ALICE. Oh, Tony, am I?

TONY. All that matters right now is that we love each other. That's

so, isn't it?

ALICE. (*Whispering.*) Yes.

TONY. Well, then! (*They embrace, sigh and kiss.*)

ALICE. (*In his arms.*) Tony, Tony!

TONY. (*As they break.*) Now! I'd like to see a little gayer around

here. Young gentleman calling, and getting engaged and every-

thing.

ALICE. (*Smiling up into his face.*) What do I say?

TONY. Well, first you thank the young man for getting engaged to

you.

ALICE. (*Crossing to below table.*) Thank you, Mr. Kirby, for get-

ting engaged to me.

TONY. (*Following her.*) And then you tell him what it was about

him that first took your girlish heart.

ALICE. (*Leaning against table.*) The back of your head.

TONY. Huh?

ALICE. Uh-huh. It wasn't your charm, and it wasn't your money

. . . it was the back of your head. I just liked it.

TONY. What happened when I turned around?

ALICE. Oh, I got used to it after a while.

TONY. (*Tenderly.*) Oh, Alice, think of it. We're pretty lucky, aren't

we?

ALICE. I know that I am. I'm the luckiest girl in the world.

TONY. I'm not exactly unlucky myself. (*Holding her in his arms;*

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kiss; sigh.) Oh, dear, I guess I ought to . . . (*Backing away. He looks at his watch.*) Good night, darling. Until tomorrow.

ALICE. (*Crosses to TONY—they kiss.*) Good night.

TONY. Isn't it wonderful we work in the same office? Otherwise I'd be hanging around here all day.

ALICE. (*Starts with TONY for the hall.*) Won't it be funny in the office tomorrow—seeing each other and just going on as though nothing had happened?

TONY. Thank God I'm vice-president. (*Turns up.*) I can dictate to you all day (*Accordion.*) "Dear Miss Sycamore: I love you, I love you, I love you." (*They embrace.*)

ALICE. Oh, darling! You're such a fool.

TONY. (*An arm about her as he starts toward hallway U.I.*) Why don't you meet me in the drugstore in the morning—before you go up to the office? I'll have millions of things to say to you. (*Picks up his hat as they head for the door.*)

ALICE. (*Off stage.*) All right.

TONY. And then lunch, and then dinner tomorrow night.

ALICE. Oh, Tony! What will people say?

TONY. It's got to come out sometime. In fact, if you know a good housewife, I'd like to do a little shouting. (*She laughs—a happy little ripple. They are out of sight in hallway by this time; their voices become inaudible.*)

(PAUL, at this point, decides to call in a day down in the cellar. He comes through door, followed by DE PINNNA. He is carrying a small metal container, filled with powder.)

PAUL. (*Crossing to table C.*) Yes, sir, Mr. De Pinna, we did a good night's work.

DE PINNNA. (*Following.*) That's what. Five hundred Black Panthers, three hundred Willow Trees, and eight dozen Junior Kiddie Bombers. (*ALICE comes back from hallway, still under the spell of her love.*)

PAUL. Pretty good! . . . Why, hello, Alice. You just come in?

ALICE. (*Softly; leans against wall.*) No. No, I've been home quite a while.

PAUL. Have a nice evening?

ALICE. (*Almost singing it.*) I had a beautiful evening, Father.

PAUL. Say, I'd like you to take a look at this new red fire. Will you turn out the lights, Mr. De Pinna? I want Alice to get the full effect.

(DE PINNNA goes up to switch.)

ALICE. (*Who hasn't heard a word.*) What, Father?

PAUL. Take a look at this new red fire. It's beautiful. (*DE PINNNA switches lights out; PAUL touches a match to the powder. The red fire blazes, shedding a soft glow over the room.*) There! What do you think of it? Isn't it beautiful?

ALICE. (*Radiant; her face aglow, her voice soft.*) Yes, Oh, Father, everything's beautiful, it's the most beautiful red fire in the world! (*She rushes to him and throws her arms about him, almost unable to bear her own happiness.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

As curtain rises, GRANDPA is seated R. of the table, PAUL above table, and a newcomer, GAY WELLINGTON, is seated L. of table. PENNY stands with one of her scripts at L. of table and ED is standing to R. of table. DONALD stands back of GAY WELLINGTON holding tray of used dinner dishes. GAY is drinking as curtain rises. ED stands R. holding type stick.

GAY. All right, I said to him, you can take your old job . . . (She drinks.)

PENNY. I'm ready to read you the new play, Miss Wellington, any time you are.

GAY. (Pours.) Just a minute, dearie. Just a minute. (Drinks again.) (ED preoccupied with type stick.)

PENNY. The only thing is—I hope you won't mind my mentioning this, but—you don't drink when you're acting, do you, Miss Wellington? I'm just asking, of course.

GAY. (Crossing to PENNY.) I'm glad you brought it up. Once a play opens, I never touch a drop. Minute I enter a stage door, the bottle gets put away until intermission.

(RHEBA enters U.R. and crosses down to table carrying a tray.)

GRANDPA. Have you been on the stage a long time, Miss Wellington?

GAY. All my life. I've played everything. Ever see "Peg o' My Heart"?

GRANDPA. Yes.

GAY. I saw it too. Good show. . . . My! Hot night, ain't it?

DONALD. You want me to open the window, Miss Wellington?

GAY. No, the Hell with the weather. . . . Say, he's cure.

(RHEBA, clearing table at this moment, throws GAY a black look, bangs a glass on her tray and exits U.R.)

I'd read the play up in my room. (Crosses up to stairs.) (ED drifts up to xylophone.)

GAY. (Circling U.S.—takes glass from table.) All right, dearie, I'm ready. (Suddenly her gaze becomes transfixed. She shakes her head as though to dislodge the image, then looks again and receives verification. Puts gin bottle and glass on table.) When I see snakes, it's time to lay down. (She makes for couch R.) (ESSIE starts down stairs.)

PENNY. (Crossing back of table to couch.) Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh, but those are real, Miss Wellington! (DONALD enters up R. bearing a tray. PAUL rises.) They're Grandpa's. Those are real! (GAY has passed right out cold.) Oh, dear! I hope she is not going to—

Miss Wellington!

ED. (Crossing up to hand press.) She's out like a light.

PAUL. (Crossing U.S. a step.) Better let her sleep it off.

DONALD. Rheba, Miss Wellington just passed out. (Exits U.R.)

RHEBA. (Off stage.) Good.

PENNY. Do you think she'll be all right?

GRANDPA. Yes, but I wouldn't cast her in the religious play.

PENNY. Well, I suppose I'll just have to wait.

(ED bangs the hand press. ESSIE crosses down to chair L. of table.)

GRANDPA. Next time you meet an actress on the top of a bus, Penny, I think I'd send her the play instead of bringing her home to read it.

(Another bang. PENNY covers GAY with couch cover.)

ESSIE. Ed, I wish you'd stop printing and take those "Love Dreams" around. You've got to get back in time to play for me when Kolenkov comes. (A bang of the hand press again.)

GRANDPA. Kolenkov coming tonight? (Goes to bookcase for stamp album and returns to table.)

ESSIE. (Executing a few toe steps.) Yes, tomorrow night's his night, but I had to change it on account of Alice.

GRANDPA. Oh! . . . Big doings around here tomorrow night, huh? PENNY. (Crossing to desk.) Isn't it exciting? You know I'm so nervous—you'd think it was me he was engaged to instead of Alice.

(Sitting in desk chair. Takes script and pencil.) (GRANDPA busies himself with album.)

ESSIE. (Doing leg exercise. She is L. of table.) What do you think they'll be like—his mother and father? . . . Ed, what are you doing now?

There was a young lady of Wheeling
Said to her beau, "I've a feeling
My little brown jug
Has need of a plug" --
And straightaway she started to peeling.

There was a young lady from Ealing
Who once did a dance so appealing
There was never a sound
For miles around
only fly-buttons hitting the ceiling

A crazy old rascal from Wheeling,
was drunk to the point he was reeling.
When he read on the door,
'Please don't spit on the floor',
He leapt up and spat on the ceiling.

There was a young girl of Vancouver,
Who, when told it was not 'horses doover,'
Found she hadn't the nerve
To ask for hors d'oeuvres,
So had soup as a saving manoeuvre.

Dear sir, don't make yourself queasy.
We assure you the lady's not sleezy.
She'll wow all your friends
And when the night ends,
You'll find she's not cheap, but she's easy!

(The voice of KOLENKHOV is heard at door, booming as usual.)

KOL. Rhebshka! My little Rhebshka!

RHEBA. *(Delighted, as usual.)* Yassuh, Mr. Kolenkhov!
PENNY. *(As she goes up stairs.)* Hello, Mr. Kolenkhov. Essie's in the kitchen.

KOL. Madame Sycamore, I greet you! *(His great arm again encircling RHEBA, he drags her protestingly into room.)* Tell me, Grandpa—what should I do about Rhebshka! I keep telling her she would make a great toe dancer—*(Breaking away, she laughs.)*—but she laughs only!

RHEBA. *(Starts off for U.R.)* No, suh! I couldn't get up on my toes, Mr. Kolenkhov! I got corns! *(She goes into kitchen.)*

KOL. *(Calling after her.)* Rhebshka, you could wear diamonds! *(Throws his hat on buffet.)* A great girl, Grandpa. *(Suddenly he rights portrait of DE PINNA.)* What is that?

GRANDPA. It's a picture of Mr. De Pinna. Penny painted it.

KOL. *(Summing it up.)* It stinks. *(Sits L. of table.)*

GRANDPA. I know. *(He indicates figure on couch.)* How do you like that?

KOL. *(Half rising. Peering over.)* What is that?

GRANDPA. She's an actress. Friend of Penny's. *(Gav matters.)*

KOL. She is drunk—no?

GRANDPA. She is drunk—yes. . . . How are you, Kolenkhov?

KOL. Magnificent! Life is chasing around inside of me, like a squirrel.

GRANDPA. 'Tis, huh? . . . What's new in Russia? Any more letters from your friend in Moscow?

KOL. *(Nods.)* I have just heard from him. I saved for you the

stamp.

GRANDPA. Thanks, Kolenkhov.

KOL. They have sent him to Siberia.

GRANDPA. They have, eh? How's he like it?

KOL. He has escaped. He has escaped and gone back to Moscow. He will get them yet if they do not get him. The Soviet Government! I could take the whole Soviet Government and—grah! *(He crushes Stalin and all in one great paw, just as ESSIE comes in from kitchen U.R. KOLENKHOV rises.)*

ESSIE. I'm sorry I'm late, Mr. Kolenkhov. I'll get into my dancing clothes right away.

KOL. *(Crossing up to stairs.)* Tonight you will really work, Pav-

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lowa. *(As ESSIE goes up stairs.)* Tonight we will take something new.

GRANDPA. Essie making any progress, Kolenkhov?

KOL. *(First making elaborately sure that ESSIE is gone, then in a voice that would carry to Long Island.)* Confidentially, she stinks! *(Lights cigarette.)*

GRANDPA. Well, as long as she's having fun . . .

(DONALD ambles in from kitchen, buckling, carrying tray. He crosses down to table.)

DONALD. You sure do tickle Rheba, Mr. Kolenkhov. She's laughing her head off out there. *(Gathers up remaining cups, bottle and glass.)*

KOL. *(Sits L. of table.)* She is a great woman. . . . Donald, what do you think of the Soviet Government?

DONALD. *(Puzzled.)* The what, Mr. Kolenkhov?

KOL. *(Gesture.)* I withdraw the question. What do you think of this Government?

DONALD. Oh, I like it fine. I'm on relief, you know.

KOL. Oh, yes. And you like it?

DONALD. Yassuh, it's fine. *(Starts to go R.)* Only thing is you got to go round to the place every week to get it, and sometimes you got to stand in line pretty near half an hour. Government ought to be run better than that—don't you think, Grandpa?

GRANDPA. *(As he fishes envelope out of his pocket. Opens letter.)* Government ought to stop sending me letters. Want me to be at the United States Marshal's office Tuesday morning at ten o'clock. Look at that. *(Throws letter to KOLENKHOV.)*

KOL. *(Peering at letter.)* Ah! Income tax! They have got you, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. *(Puts letter back in pocket.)* Mm. I'm supposed to give 'em a lot of money so as to keep Donald on relief.

DONALD. You don't say, Grandpa? You going to pay it from now on?

GRANDPA. That's what they want.

DONALD. You mean I can come right here and get it instead of standing in that line?

GRANDPA. No, Donald. I'm afraid you will have to waste a full half hour of your time every week.

DONALD. Well, I don't like it. It breaks up my week. *(Exits U.R.)*

KOL. He should have been in Russia when the Revolution came.

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Then he would have stood in line . . . a bread line. Ah, Grandpa, what they have done to Russia. Think of it! The Grand Duchess Olga Karitina, a cousin of the Czar, she is a waitress in Childs' Restaurant! I ordered baked beans from her, only yesterday. It broke my heart. A crazy world, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. Oh, the world's not so crazy, Kolenkhov. It's the people in it. Life's pretty simple if you just relax.

KOL. (*Rising, crosses U.C.*) How can you relax in times like these? GRANDPA. Well, if they'd relax there wouldn't be times like these. That's just my point. Life is kind of beautiful if you let it come to you. (*Crossing to buffet for his target and dart.*) But the trouble is, people forget that. I know I did. I was right in the thick of it . . . fighting, and scratching and clawing. Regular jungle. One day it just kind of struck me, I wasn't having any fun. (GRANDPA, *having hung his target on cellar door, returns to table.*)

KOL. So you did what?

GRANDPA. (*Standing below the table.*) Just relaxed. Thirty-five years ago, that was. And I've been a happy man ever since. (*Throws a dart and sits.*)

ALICE. (*Emerging from kitchen.*) Good evening, Mr. Kolenkhov.

KOL. (*Crossing up to ALICE C., he bows low over her hand.*) Ah, Miss Alice! I have not seen you to present my congratulations.

ALICE. Thank you.

KOL. May you be very happy and have many children. That is my prayer for you.

ALICE. That's quite a thought. (*She exits up stairs, humming a fragment of song.*)

KOL. (*Crossing down.*) Ah, love! Love is all that is left in the world, Grandpa.

GRANDPA. Yes, but there is plenty of that.

KOL. And soon Stalin will take that away, too, I tell you, Grandpa

. . .
(*PENNY enters down stairs. She has on an artist's smock over her dress, a flowing black tie, and a large blue velvet tam-o'-shanter, worn at a rakish angle. She carries a palette and an assortment of paints and brushes.*)

PENNY. Seems so nice to get into my art things again. They still look all right, don't they, Grandpa?

GRANDPA. Yes, indeed.

KOL. You are a breath of Paris, Madame Sycamore.

(DONALD enters U.R., table cover over his arm.)

PENNY. Oh, thank you, Mr. Kolenkhov.

DONALD. I didn't know you was working for the W.P.A.

PENNY. Oh, no, Donald. You see, I used to paint all the time—

(*The outer door slams and ED comes in.*)

ED. (*In considerable excitement.*) It happened again! There was a fellow following me every place I went!

PENNY. Nonsense, Ed. It's your imagination.

ED. No, it isn't. It happens every time I go out to deliver candy.

GRANDPA. Maybe he wants a piece of candy.

ED. It's all right for you to laugh, Grandpa, but he keeps following me.

KOL. (*Somberly.*) You do not know what following is. In Russia everybody is followed. I was followed right out of Russia.

PENNY. Of course. You see, Ed—the whole thing is just imagination.

(*DE PINNA comes up from cellar, ready for posing. He is carrying Roman toga, headband and sandals. Taking off coat as he goes up to alcove.*)

ED. (*Crosses to L. of alcove.*) Well, maybe. (*Takes off coat.*)

(DONALD removes napkins and tablecloth and spreads table cover. Puts cover on U.S. chair.)

PENNY. (*PENNY'S easel, a discus, and a small platform for posing purposes and Racing Form.*) Ah, here we are!

DE PINNA. (*Crosses to D.L., places easel.*) Where do you want this?

Over there?

PENNY. (*Pulling portrait on the easel.*) Put it here, Mr. De Pinna.

(*DE PINNA strikes a pose on the model stand.*)

KOL. Ed, for tonight's lesson we use the first movement of Scheherazade.

ED. Okay.

PENNY. (*Studying DE PINNA'S figure.*) Mr. De Pinna, has something happened to your figure during these eight years?

DE PINNA. (*Pulling in his stomach.*) No, I don't think it's any different. (*With a sudden snort, GAV comes to. DE PINNA breaks pose and looks at GAV.*)

PENNY. (*Crossing to below table. Immediately alert.*) Yes, Miss Wellington? Yes? (*For answer, GAV peers first at PENNY, then at DE PINNA.*)

GAY. Wo-o-o! (And with that she goes right back to sleep.)
PENNY. (Exchanges look with DE PINNA and then returns to her painting.) Oh, dear.

(ESSIE comes tripping down stairs—very much the ballet dancer. She is in full costume—ballet skirt, tight white satin bodice, a garland of roses in her hair.)

ESSIE. (Crossing to xylophone.) Sorry, Mr. Kolenkhov. I couldn't find my slippers.

KOL. (Coming down. Having previously removed his coat, he now takes off his shirt, displaying an enormous hairy chest beneath his undershirt.) We have a hot night for it, my Pavlova, but art is only achieved through perspiration. (Back to alcove.)

PENNY. Why, that's wonderful, Mr. Kolenkhov. Did you hear that, Grandpa—art is only achieved through perspiration.

GRANDPA. (ESSIE fixes slippers during this.) Yes, but it helps if you've got a little talent with it. (He takes up a handful of feathered darts.) Only made two bull's-eyes last night. Got to do better than that. (He hurls a dart at board, then his eye travels to GAY, whose posterior offers an even easier target. Looks to PENNY for approval. Then returns to his game and hurls one more dart and sits. Reads his paper.) (ED strikes a few notes.)

KOL. You are ready? We begin! (With a gesture he orders the music started; under KOLENKHOV's critical eye ESSIE begins the mazur of the dance. Memorable DE PINNA's free hand now holds a copy of Racing Form, the total effect being a trifle un-Grecian.) Now! Pirouette! Pirouette! (ESSIE hesitates.) Come, come! You can do that! It's eight years now! (ESSIE pirouettes.) At last! Entre chat! Entre chat! (DONALD crosses U.R. ESSIE leaps into the air, her feet twirling. KOLENKHOV turns to GRANDPA.) No, Grandpa, you cannot relax with Stalin in Russia. The Czar relaxed, and what happened to him?

GRANDPA. He was too late!

ESSIE. (Still leaning away.) Mr. Kolenkhov! Mr. Kolenkhov!
KOL. If he had not relaxed the Grand Duchess Olga Karina would not be selling baked beans today.

ESSIE. (Imploringly.) Mr. Kolenkhov!

KOL. I'm sorry. We go back to the pirouette.

PENNY. Could you pull in your stomach, Mr. De Pinna? (Door bell.) That's right.

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KOL. A little freer. A little freer with the hands. The whole body must work. Ed, help us with the music. (RHEBA enters U.R. Crosses to ball door.) The music must be free, too. (By way of guiding her, KOLENKHOV hints the music at the pace that it should go. He is even pirouetting a bit himself.) (From the front door comes the murmur of voices, not quite audible over the music. Then the stunted figure of RHEBA comes into archway, her eyes popping.)
RHEBA. (Heavy whisper.) Mrs. Sycamore . . . Mrs. Sycamore.
PENNY. What, Rheba?

(RHEBA edges over R. With a gesture that has a grim foreboding in it, motions toward the still invisible reason for her panic. There is a second's pause, and then the reason is revealed in all its horror. The KIRBYS, in full evening dress, stand in archway. All three of them, MR. and MRS. KIRBY, and TONY. DE PINNA rushes to cellar door carrying his model stand with him. KOLENKHOV runs to alcove to squirm into his shirt and coat. ESSIE makes for alcove, also. ED pushes xylophone in place and hastily dons his coat. RHEBA crosses to buffet. DONALD comes D.R. still carrying soiled dinner linen. PENNY utters a stifled gasp; she puts the painting against wall with the easel. Then removes her smock and lam. GRANDPA, alone of them all, rises to the situation. With a kind of old world grace, he puts down his newspaper and makes the guests welcome.)

TONY. Good evening.

GRANDPA. (Rising and crossing to back of table.) How do you do?

KIRBY. (Uncertainly.) How do you do?

TONY. Are we too early?

GRANDPA. No, no. Come right in. It's perfectly all right—we're glad to see you. (His eyes still on the KIRBYS, he gives DONALD a good push toward kitchen, by way of a hint.) (DONALD goes, promptly, with a quick little stunted whistle that stuns up his feelings. RHEBA looking back exits U.R.)

PENNY. Why—yes. Only—we thought it was to be tomorrow night.

MRS. KIRBY. Tomorrow night!

KIRBY. What!

GRANDPA. Now, it's perfectly all right. Just make yourselves at home. (Crossing to back of table. Placing chair.)

KIRBY. Tony, how could you possibly—

TONY. I—I don't know. I thought—

MRS. KIRBY. Really, Tony! This is most embarrassing.

GRANDPA. Not at all. Why, we weren't doing a thing.

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PENNY. No, no. Just a quiet evening at home.
GRANDPA. That's all. . . . Now don't let it bother you. This is Alice's mother, Mrs. Sycamore.

PENNY. How do you do.
GRANDPA. . . . Alice's sister, Mrs. Carmichael. . . . Mr. Carmichael. . . . Mr. Kolenkhov. (KOLENKHOV comes down, bows and discovers his shirt tail exposed. Thrusts it into his trousers. At this point DE PINNA takes an anticipatory step forward, and GRANDPA is practically compelled to perform the introduction. Crossing to DE PINNA.) And—Mr. De Pinna.

THE KIRBYS. How do you do?
DE PINNA. Don't mind my costume. I'll take it right off.
GRANDPA. Mr. De Pinna, would you tell Mr. Sycamore to come right up? Tell him that Mr. and Mrs. Kirby are here.

PENNY. (Her voice a heavy whisper.) And be sure to put his pants on.

DE PINNA. (Whispering right back.) All right. . . . Excuse me. (He vanishes—discs, Racing Form, and all—D.R.) (At this point PENNY hastily throws a couch cover over GAY. PENNY pushes GAY'S posterior with her knee. GRANDPA, crossing R., places chair.)

MRS. KIRBY. (Crossing to GRANDPA'S chair.) Thank you.
PENNY. (Crossing to arch U.R.) I'll tell Alice that you're— (She is at foot of stairs.) Alice! Alice, dear! (KIRBY comes D.L. The voice of ALICE from above, "What is it?") Alice, will you come down, dear? We've got a surprise for you. (She comes back into the room, summoning all her charm.) Well!

GRANDPA. Mrs. Kirby, may I take your wrap? (Removes it.)
MRS. KIRBY. Well—thank you. If you're perfectly sure (She turns.) that we're not— (Suddenly she sees snakes and lets out a scream.)

GRANDPA. Oh, don't be alarmed, Mrs. Kirby. They're perfectly harmless.
MRS. KIRBY. Thank you. (She sinks into a chair, weakly.)
GRANDPA. Ed, take 'em into the kitchen.

(TONY takes his father's hat to hall and returns to the room. ED at once obeys. Takes snake solarium to kitchen.)

PENNY. (Putting Japanese bowl C. of buffet.) Of course we're so used to them around the house—
MRS. KIRBY. I'm sorry to trouble you, but snakes happen to be—

KIRBY. I feel very uncomfortable about this. Tony, how could you have done such a thing?
TONY. I'm sorry, Dad. I thought it was tonight.
KIRBY. It was very careless of you. Very!

PENNY. Oh, now, anybody can get mixed up, Mr. Kirby.
GRANDPA. Penny, how about some dinner for these folks? They've come for dinner, you know.
MRS. KIRBY. Oh, please don't bother. (ED enters U.R.) We're really not hungry at all.

PENNY. (Crosses to ED.) But it's not a bit of bother. Ed!— (Her voice drops to a loud whisper.) Ed, tell Donald to run down to the A. and P. and get half a dozen bottles of beer, and—ah—some canned salmon— (Her voice comes up again.) Do you like canned salmon, Mr. Kirby?

KIRBY. (A step in to R.) Please don't trouble, Mrs. Sycamore. I have a little indigestion, anyway.
PENNY. Oh, I'm sorry. . . . How about you, Mrs. Kirby? Do you like canned salmon?

MRS. KIRBY. (You just know that she hates it.) Oh, I'm very fond of it.
PENNY. You can have frankfurters if you'd rather.

MRS. KIRBY. (Regally.) Either one will do.
PENNY. (To ED again.) Well, make it frankfurters and some canned corn, and Campbell's Soup— (ED crosses U.R. to door, PENNY following.) Got that, Ed?

ED. (Going out kitchen door U.R.) Okay!
PENNY. (Calling after him.) And tell him to hurry! (PENNY again addresses the kirbys. Comes down R.) The A. and P. is just at the corner, and frankfurters don't take any time to boil.

GRANDPA. (As PAUL comes through cellar door D.R.) And this is Alice's father, Mr. Sycamore. Mr. and Mrs. Kirby.
THE KIRBYS. How do you do?

PAUL. I hope you'll forgive my appearance.
(ALICE starts down stairs.)

PENNY. This is Mr. Sycamore's busiest time of the year. Just before the Fourth of July he always—

(And then ALICE comes down. She is a step into the room before she realizes what has happened; then she fairly freezes in her tracks.)

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ALICE. (*At arch.*) Oh!
TONY. (*Crossing up to her.*) Darling, I'm the most dull-witted person in the world. I thought it was tonight.

ALICE. (*Staggered.*) Why, Tony, I thought you—— (*To the* KIRBYs. *Coming D.L. of table.*) I'm so sorry—I can't imagine—why, I wasn't—have you all met each other?

KIRBY. Yes, indeed.

MRS. KIRBY. How do you do, Alice?

ALICE. (*Not even yet in control of herself.*) How do you do, Mrs. Kirby?

TONY. I'm afraid I'm not very—presentable.

KIRBY. (*Crossing down to ALICE.*) Darling, you look lovely.

KIRBY. (*A step toward ALICE.*) Of course she does. Don't let this upset you, my dear—we've all just met each other a night sooner, that's all.

MRS. KIRBY. Of course.

ALICE. But I was planning such a nice party tomorrow night. . . .

KIRBY. (*Being the good fellow.*) Well, we'll come again tomorrow night.

TONY. There you are, Alice. Am I forgiven?

ALICE. I guess so. It's just that I—— We'd better see about getting you some dinner.

PENNY. Oh, that's all done, Alice. (*DONALD, hat in hand, comes through kitchen door; hurries across room and out front way. He is followed into room by ED, who joins the family circle. GRANDPA crosses to back of table.*) That's all been attended to.

(*Door slams on DONALD's exit.*)

ALICE. (*Sensing that DONALD is on way to round up a meal crosses over to PENNY.*) But Mother—what did you send out for? Because Mr. Kirby suffers from indigestion—he can only eat certain things.

KIRBY. (*Crossing to L. of table.*) Oh, it's all right. It's all right.

TONY. Of course it is, darling.

PENNY. I asked him what he wanted, Alice.

ALICE. (*Doubtfully.*) Yes, but——
KIRBY. Now, now, it's not as serious as all that. Just because I have a little indigestion.

KOL. (*Coming down to R. of table.*) Perhaps it is not indigestion at all, Mr. Kirby. Perhaps you have stomach ulcers.

ALICE. Don't be absurd, Mr. Kolenkhov!

GRANDPA. You mustn't mind Mr. Kolenkhov, Mr. Kirby. He's a Russian, and Russians are inclined to look on the dark side.

KOL. All right, I am a Russian. But a friend of mine, a Russian, died from stomach ulcers.

KIRBY. Really, I——

ALICE. (*Deperately.*) Please, Mr. Kolenkhov! Mr. Kirby has indigestion and that's all. (*PAUL drifts up to R. of buffet.*)

KOL. (*With a Russian shrug.*) All right, let him wait. (*Crossing over to R.*)

GRANDPA. Do sit down, Mr. Kirby. Make yourself comfortable.

KIRBY. Thank you. (*He sits L. of table.*)

PENNY. (*Sitting above table.*) Well—— (*She sighs; a pause, a general shifting.*) (*PAUL drifts U.R. ALICE joins TONY L.*)

GRANDPA. (*Coming D.S. Leading into the breach.*) Tell me, Mr. Kirby, how do you find business conditions? Are we pretty well out of the depression?

KIRBY. What? . . . Yes, I think so. Of course, it all depends.

GRANDPA. But you figure that things are going to keep on improving?

KIRBY. Broadly speaking, yes. As a matter of fact, industry is now operating at sixty-four per cent of full capacity, as against eighty-two per cent in 1925. (*GAY rises.*) Of course, in 1929——

GAY. (*She weaves unsteadily across room singing—"There was a young lady from Wheeling who had a remarkable feeling;" ALICE crosses D.L. The imposing figure of KIRBY intrigues GAY.*) WO-O-O—— (*She pinches his cheeks and with that lingers on her way up stairs.*)

PENNY. She—ah——

(*The KIRBYs, of course, are considerably astounded by this exhibition. The SYCAMORES have watched it with varying degrees of frozen horror. ALICE in particular is speechless; it is GRANDPA who comes to her rescue.*)

GRANDPA. (*Crossing to back of table.*) That may seem a little strange to you people, but she's not quite accountable for her actions. A friend of Mrs. Sycamore's. She came to dinner and was overcome by the heat. (*Sits above table.*)

PENNY. Yes, some people feel it, you know, more than others. Perhaps I'd better see if she's all right. Excuse me please? (*She goes hastily up stairs.*)

ALICE. (*Crossing to L. of table.*) It is awfully hot. (*A fractional*

ALICE. (Calling after her.) Tell him to hurry! (She turns back to the kirbys.) I'm so sorry. There'll be a little delay, but everything will be ready in just a minute. (At this moment DONALD fairly shoots out of kitchen door and across living room, beating the Olympic record for all time. SLAM on DONALD'S exit. He exits through hall door U.L. PENNY tries to ease situation with a gay little laugh. It doesn't quite come off, however.) "Woosh!"

TONY. I've certainly put you people to a lot of trouble, with my stupidity.

GRANDPA. Not at all, Tony.

PENNY. (Coming down R. of table.) Look! Why don't we all play a game of some sort while we're waiting?

TONY. Oh, that'd be fine.

ALICE. Mother, I don't think Mr. and Mrs. Kirby—

KOL. (Rising from desk chair.) I have an idea. I know a wonderful trick with a glass of water. (He reaches for a full glass that stands on desk. Crosses to kirby and holds it over kirby's head.)

ALICE. (Quickly.) No, Mr. Kolenkhov.

GRANDPA. (Rises, shaking his head.) No-o, Mr. Kolenkhov. (Sits.) (A shrug and KOLENKHOV returns desk to desk.)

PENNY. But I'm sure Mr. and Mrs. Kirby would love this game. It's perfectly harmless.

ALICE. Please, Mother . . .

KIRBY. I'm not very good at games, Mrs. Sycamore.

PENNY. (Crossing below table to the desk.) Oh, but any fool could play this game, Mr. Kirby. All you do is write your name on a piece of paper— (Getting pads and pencils.) (TONY helps KOLENKHOV and himself to pads and pencils.)

ALICE. But, mother, Mr. Kirby doesn't want—

PENNY. Oh, hell love it! (Going right on distributing pencils, pads.) Here you are, Mr. Kirby. Write your name on this piece of paper. And Mrs. Kirby, you do the same on this one. (PAUL, ESSIE and ED sit on couch. ESSIE takes pencils, ED pads.)

ALICE. Mother, what is this game?

PENNY. (Crossing back of table to L. KOLENKHOV sits at desk.) I used to play it at school. It's called Forget-Me-Not. Here you are, Grandpa. Now, I'm going to call out five words—just anything at all—and as I say each word, you're to put down the first thing that comes into your mind. Is that clear? For instance, if I say "grass," you might put down "green"—just whatever you think of, see? Or if I call out "chair," you might put down "table." It shows the re-

actions people have to different things. You see how simple it is, Mr. Kirby?

TONY. Come on, Father! Be a sport!

KIRBY. (Stiffly.) Very well. I shall be happy to play it.

PENNY. You see, Alice? He does want to play.

ALICE. (Uneasily.) Well—

PENNY. Now, then! Are we ready?

KOL. Ready!

PENNY. Now, remember—you must play fair. Put down the first thing that comes into your mind.

KIRBY. (Pencil poised.) I understand.

PENNY. Everybody ready? . . . The first word is "potatoes." (She repeats it.) "Potatoes." . . . Ready for the next one? . . . "Bathroom." (ALICE shifts rather uneasily.)

ALICE. Mother! (But seeing that no one else seems to mind, she relaxes again.)

PENNY. Bathroom!—Got that?

KOL. Go ahead.

PENNY. All ready? . . . "Lust."

ALICE. Mother, this is not exactly what you—

PENNY. Nonsense, Alice—that word's all right.

ALICE. Mother, it's not all right.

MRS. KIRBY. (Unexpectedly.) Oh, I don't know. (To ALICE.) It seems to me that's a perfectly fair word.

PENNY. (To ALICE.) You see? Now, you musn't interrupt the game. (ALICE drifts U.S.)

KIRBY. May I have that last word again, please?

PENNY. "Lust," Mr. Kirby.

KIRBY. (Writing.) I've got it.

GRANDPA. This is quite a game, isn't it?

PENNY. Sssh, Grandpa. . . . All ready? . . . "Honey-moon."

(ESSIE snickers a little, which is all it takes to start PENNY off. Then she suddenly remembers herself.) Now, Essie! . . . All right. The last word is "Sex."

ALICE. (Under her breath.) Mother! (Crossing to buffet.)

PENNY. Everybody got "sex"? . . . All right—(She takes TONY'S and KOLENKHOV'S papers.) now give me all the papers. May I have your paper, Mr. Kirby? (Crosses back of table to R. gathering the pads.) (Three at table tear off sheets. ED hands three pads to PENNY.)

GRANDPA. What happens now?

PENNY. Oh, this is the best part. Now I read out your reactions. (Coming D.R.)

KIRBY. I see. It's really quite an interesting game.

PENNY. I knew you'd like it. I'll read your paper first, Mr. Kirby. (To the others.) I'm going to read Mr. Kirby's paper first. Listen, everybody! This is Mr. Kirby. . . . "Potatoes—steak." That's very good. See how they go together? Steak and potatoes?

KIRBY. (Moderately, but obviously pleased with himself.) I just happened to think of it. (ALICE turns front.)

PENNY. It's very good. . . . "Bathroom—toothpaste." Well! "Lust—unlawful." Isn't that nice? "Honey-moon—trip." Yes. (Giggle.) And "sex—male." Oh yes, of course . . . you are. That's really a wonderful paper, Mr. Kirby.

KIRBY. (Taking a curtain call.) Thank you. . . . It's more than just a game, you know. It's sort of an experiment in psychology, isn't it?

PENNY. Yes, it is—it shows just how your *mind* works. Now we'll see how Mrs. Kirby's mind works. . . . Ready? . . . This is Mrs. Kirby. . . . "Potatoes—stach." I know just what you mean, Mrs. Kirby. M-m—oh dear! . . . "Bathroom—Mr. Kirby."

KIRBY. What's that?

PENNY. "Bathroom—Mr. Kirby."

KIRBY. (Turning to his wife.) I don't quite follow that, my dear.

MRS. KIRBY. I don't know—I just thought of you in connection with it. After all, you *are* in there a good deal, Anthony. Bathing, and shaving—well, you *do* take a long time.

KIRBY. Indeed? I hadn't realized that I was being selfish in the matter. . . . Go on, Mrs. Sycamore.

ALICE. (Worried. Comes down to KIRBY.) I think it's a very silly game and we ought to stop it.

MRS. KIRBY. Yes.

KIRBY. No, no. Please go on, Mrs. Sycamore. (ALICE crosses up.)

PENNY. Where was I? . . . Oh, yes. . . . "Lust—human."

KIRBY. Human? (Thin-lipped.) Really! Miriam!

MRS. KIRBY. I just meant, Anthony, that lust is after all a—human emotion.

KIRBY. I don't agree with you, Miriam. Lust is *not* a human emotion. It is depraved.

MRS. KIRBY. Very well, Anthony. I'm wrong.

ALICE. (Crossing down to L. of KIRBY.) Really, it's the most pointless game. Suppose we play Twenty Questions?

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MRS. KIRBY. Yes.

KIRBY. (Raises hand. ALICE goes U.S.) No, I find *this* game rather interesting. Will you go on, Mrs. Sycamore? What was the next word?

PENNY. (Reluctantly.) Honey-moon.

KIRBY. Oh, yes. And what was Mrs. Kirby's answer?

PENNY. Ah—"Honey-moon—dull."

KIRBY. (Murderously calm.) Did you say—dull?

MRS. KIRBY. What I meant, Anthony, was that Hot Springs was not very gay that season. All those old people sitting on the porch all afternoon, and—nothing to do at night. (Realizes she has gone too far.)

KIRBY. That was not your reaction at the time, as I recall it.

TONY. (Crosses in a step.) Father, this is only a *game*.

KIRBY. A very illuminating game. Go on, Mrs. Sycamore!

PENNY. (Brightly, having taken a look ahead.) This one's all right, Mr. Kirby. "Sex—Wall Street."

KIRBY. Wall Street? What do you mean by that, Miriam?

MRS. KIRBY. (Nervously.) I don't know what I meant, Anthony. Nothing.

KIRBY. But you must have meant something, Miriam, or you wouldn't have put it down.

MRS. KIRBY. It was just the first thing that came into my head, that's all.

KIRBY. But what does it mean? Sex—Wall Street.

MRS. KIRBY. (Annoyed.) Oh, I don't know what it means, Anthony. It's just that you're always talking about Wall Street, even when— (She catches herself.) I don't know what I meant. . . . Would you mind terribly, Alice, if we didn't stay for dinner?

(Rises. GRANDPA and KOLENKOV rise. Also ESSE, ED and PAUL.) I'm afraid this game has given me a headache.

ALICE. (Quietly.) I understand, Mrs. Kirby.

KIRBY. (Rises. Clearing his throat.) Yes, possibly we'd better postpone the dinner, if you don't mind. (KOLENKOV drifts U.C.)

PENNY. But you're coming tomorrow night, aren't you?

MRS. KIRBY. (Quickly.) I'm afraid we have an engagement tomorrow night. (Wraps up half on shoulders.)

KIRBY. Perhaps we'd better postpone the whole affair a little while. The hot weather and—ah—

TONY. (Smoldering.) I think we're being very ungracious, Father. Of course we'll stay to dinner—tonight.

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END PD

ACT III

The following day, RHEBA is in the midst of setting table for dinner, pausing occasionally in her labors to listen to the Edwin C. Hill of the moment—DONALD. With intense interest and concentration, he is reading aloud from a newspaper.

DONALD. . . . for appearance in the West Side Court this morning. After spending the night in jail, the defendants, thirteen in all, were brought before Judge Callahan and given suspended sentences for manufacturing fireworks without a permit."

RHEBA. (*Puts plate down.*) Yah. Kept me in the same cell with a strip teaser from a burlesque show.

DONALD. I was in the cell with Mr. Kirby. My, he was mad!

RHEBA. (*Sets knife and fork.*) Mrs. Kirby and the strip teaser—they were fighting all night.

DONALD. Whole lot about Mr. Kirby here. (*RHEBA places napkins. Reading again.*) "Anthony W. Kirby, head of Kirby & Co., 62 Wall Street, who was among those apprehended, declared he was in no way interested in the manufacture of fireworks, but refused to state why he was on the premises at the time of the raid. Mr. Kirby is a member of the Union Club, the Racquet Club, the Harvard Club, and the National Geographic Society." My, he certainly is a joiner!

RHEBA. (*Pushes in chair above table.*) All them rich men are Elks or something.

DONALD. (*Looking up from his paper.*) I suppose, after all this, Mr. Tony ain't ever going to marry Miss Alice, huh?

RHEBA. No, suh, and it's too bad, too. Miss Alice sure loves that boy.

DONALD. Ever notice how white folks always getting themselves in trouble?

RHEBA. Yassuh, I'm 'zjad I'm colored.

DONALD. Me, too.

RHEBA. (*She sighs heavily. Turns chair r. in.*) I don't know what I'm going to do with all that food out in the kitchen. Ain't going to be no party tonight, that's sure.

DONALD. Ain't we going to eat it anyhow?

RHEBA. (*Gets salad plates from buffet.*) Well, I'm cooking it, but I don't think anybody going to have an appetite.

DONALD. I'm hungry.

RHEBA. (*Setting salad forks.*) Well, they ain't. They're all so broke up about Miss Alice.

DONALD. What's she want to go 'way for? Where's she going?

RHEBA. (*Puts half of salad plates D.S. of table.*) I don't know—mountains some place. And she's going, all right, no matter what they say. I know Miss Alice when she gets that look in her eye.

DONALD. Too bad, ain't it?

RHEBA. Sure is.

(*DE PINNA comes up from cellar, bearing earmarks of the previous day's catastrophe. There is a small bandage around his head and over one eye, and another around his r. hand. He also limps slightly.*)

DE PINNA. Not even a balloon left. Look. (*Pointing to exploded freetracker he is holding.*)

RHEBA. How's your hand, Mr. De Pinna? Better?

DE PINNA. Yes, it's better. (*A step toward kitchen.*) Is there some more olive oil out there?

RHEBA. (*Nods.*) It's in the salad bowl.

DE PINNA. Thanks. (*Crosses to r. He goes out kitchen door as PENNY comes down stairs. It is a new and rather subdued PENNY.*)

DONALD rises. RHEBA turns to her.)

PENNY. (*With a sigh.*) Well, she's going. Nothing anybody said could change her.

RHEBA. She ain't going to stay away long, is she, Mrs. Sycamore?

PENNY. I don't know, Rheba. She won't say.

RHEBA. My, going to be lonesome around here without her. (*She goes into kitchen U.R.*)

DONALD. How you feel, Mrs. Sycamore?

PENNY. Oh, I'm all right, Donald. Just kind of upset. (*She is at her desk.*) Perhaps if I do some work maybe I'll feel better. (*Sits at her desk.*)

DONALD. Well, I won't bother you then, Mrs. Sycamore. (*He goes into kitchen U.R.*) (*PENNY leans back and sits staring straight ahead. PAUL comes slowly down stairs; stands surveying room a moment; sighs.*)

PAUL. (*Coming D.S.*) She's going, Penny.

PENNY. Yes. (*She is quiet for a moment; then she starts to weep, softly.*)

KOL. Good evening, everybody!

PENNY. Why, Mr. Kolenkhov!

GRANDPA. Hello, Kolenkhov.

KOL. Forgive me. The door was open.

GRANDPA. Come on in.

KOL. (Comes into room.) You will excuse my coming today. I realize you are—upset.

PENNY. That's all right, Mr. Kolenkhov.

ESSIE. I don't think I can take a lesson, Mr. Kolenkhov. I don't feel up to it.

KOL. (Uncertainly.) Well, I—ah—

PENNY. Oh, but do stay to dinner, Mr. Kolenkhov. We've got all that food out there, and somebody's got to eat it.

KOL. I will be happy to, Madame Sycamore.

PENNY. Fine.

KOL. Thank you. . . . Now, I wonder if I know you well enough to ask of you a great favor.

PENNY. Why, of course, Mr. Kolenkhov. What is it?

KOL. (Comes d.s.) You have heard me talk about my friend, the Grand Duchess Olga Katrina.

PENNY. Yes?

KOL. She is a great woman, the Grand Duchess. (To group.) Her cousin was the Czar of Russia, and today she is a waitress in Childs' Restaurant, Times Square.

PENNY. Yes, I know. If there's anything at all that we can do, Mr. Kolenkhov. . . .

KOL. I tell you. The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina has not had a good meal since before the Revolution.

GRANDPA. She must be hungry.

KOL. And today the Grand Duchess not only has her day off—Thursday—but it is also the anniversary of Peter the Great. A remarkable man!

PENNY. (Rises.) Mr. Kolenkhov, if you mean you'd like the Grand Duchess to come to dinner, why, we'd be honored.

ESSIE. (Rises.) Oh, yes!

KOL. (With a bow.) In the name of the Grand Duchess, I thank you. (Starts for door.)

PENNY. I can hardly wait to meet her. Where is she now?

KOL. She is outside in the street, waiting. I bring her in. (And he goes out u.l. DE PINNA rushes to the cellar door for his coat off stage.)



(Suddenly KOLENKHOV appears in the arch u.l.)

KOL. Good evening, everybody!

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PENNY. (I feverishly.) Ed, straighten your tie. Essie, your dress. How do I look? All right?

(KOLENKHOV appears in hallway and stands at rigid attention.)

GRANDPA. You know, if this keeps on I want to live to be a hundred and fifty.

KOL. (His voice booming.) The Grand Duchess Olga Katrina! (And GRAND DUCHESS OLGA KATRINA, what takes and maple syrup out of her life for the day, sweeps into the room. She wears a dinner gown that has seen better days, and the whole is summomated by an extremely lanky-looking evening wrap, trimmed with bits of ancient and moth-eaten fur. But once a Grand Duchess, always a Grand Duchess. She rises above everything—Childs, evening wrap, and all.) Your Highness, permit me to present Madame Sycamore—(PENNY, having seen a movie or two in her time, knows just what to do. She curtsies right to the floor, and catches hold of a chair just in time.) Madame Carmichael—(ESSIE does a curtsy that begins where all others leave off. Starting on her toes, she merges "The Dying Swan" with an extremely elaborate genuflection.) Grandpa

GRANDPA. (With a little bow.) Madame.

KOL. Mr. Carmichael, Mr. Sycamore, and Mr. De Pinna.

(PAUL and ED content themselves with courteous little bows, but not so the social-minded DE PINNA. He curtsies to the floor—and stays there for a moment.)

GRANDPA. All right now, Mr. De Pinna.

(DE PINNA gets to his feet again. ESSIE crosses down to chair 1. of table.)

PENNY. Will you be seated, Your Highness?

GRAND DUCHESS. (Sits 1. of table.) Thank you. You are most kind. (GRANDPA sits.)

PENNY. (ESSIE sits above table.) We are honored to receive you, Your Highness. (Backing away.)

GRAND DUCHESS. I am most happy to be here. How soon is dinner? (To PENNY.)

PENNY. (A little startled.) Oh, it'll be quite soon, Your Highness—very soon.

GRAND DUCHESS. I do not mean to be rude, but I must be back at the restaurant by eight o'clock. I am substituting for another waitress.

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KOL. I will make sure you are on time, Your Highness.

GRAND DUCHESS. Thank you, Kolenkhov.

DE PINNA. You know, Highness, I think you waited on me in Childs' once. The Seventy-second Street place?

GRAND DUCHESS. No, no. That was my sister.

KOL. The Grand Duchess Natasha.

GRAND DUCHESS. I work in Times Square.

DE PINNA. Oh!

GRANDPA. Quite a lot of your folks living over here now, aren't there?

GRAND DUCHESS. (To GRANDPA.) Oh, yes—many. (From.) My uncle, the Grand Duke Sergei—he is an elevator man at Macy's. A very nice man. (To GRANDPA.) Then there is my cousin, Prince Alexis. He will not speak to the rest of us because he works at Hattie Carnegie. He is in ladies' underwear.

KOL. When he was selling hot dogs at Coney Island he was willing to talk to you.

GRAND DUCHESS. Ah, Kolenkhov, our time is coming. My sister, Natasha, is studying to be a manicurist, Uncle Sergei they have promised to make floorwalker, and next month I get transferred to the Fifth Avenue Childs'. From there it is only a step to Schraff's, and (To GRANDPA.) then we will see what Prince Alexis says!

GRANDPA. (Nodding.) I think you've got him.

GRAND DUCHESS. You are telling me? (She laughs in a triumphant Russian laugh, in which KOLENKHOV joins.)

PENNY. Your Highness—did you know the Czar? Personally, I mean.

GRAND DUCHESS. Of course—he was my cousin. It was terrible, what happened, but perhaps it was for the best. Where could he get a job now?

KOL. Pravda, Pravda. That is true.

GRAND DUCHESS. (Philosophically.) And poor relations are poor relations. It is the same in every family. My cousin, the King of Sweden—he was very nice to us for about ten years. Every once in a while he would send a money order. But then he said, (To GRANDPA.) I just cannot go on. I am not doing so well myself. I do not blame him.

PENNY. No, of course not. . . . Would you excuse me for just a moment? (She goes to foot of stairs and stands peering up anxiously, hoping for news of ALICE.)

DE PINNA. *(The historian at heart. Crosses in a step.)* Tell me, Grand Duchess, is it true what they say about Rasputin?

GRAND DUCHESS. Everyone wants to know about Rasputin. . . . Yes, my dear sir, it is true. And how.

DE PINNA. You don't say?

KOL. Your Highness, we have to watch the time.

GRAND DUCHESS. Yes, I must not be late. The manager does not like me. He is a Communist. *(To PENNY.)*

PENNY. We'll hurry things up. Essie, why don't you go out in the kitchen and see if you can help Rheba? *(DE PINNA crossing D.R. PAUL drifts U.S.)*

GRAND DUCHESS. *(Ringing. ESSIE and GRANDPA also rise, ED backs U.S.)* I will help, too. I am a very good cook.

PENNY. Oh, but Your Highness! Not on your day off!

GRAND DUCHESS. I do not mind. *(Front turn.)* Where is your kitchen? *(KOLENKHOV takes her wrap to hatrack.)*

ESSIE. Right through here, but you're the guest of honor, Your Highness.

GRAND DUCHESS. But I love to cook! Come, Kolenkhov! *(Beckons to KOLENKHOV.)* If they have got sour cream and pot-cheese I will make you some blintzes! *(And sweeps through kitchen door.)*

KOL. Ah! Blintzes! . . . Come, Pavlowa! We show you something! *(With ESSIE, he goes into the kitchen.)*

DE PINNA. Say! The Duchess is all right, isn't she? Hey, Duchess! Can I help? *(And into the kitchen.)*

~~ED. Gee! she's got a wonderful tact for a mask, hasn't she?~~

PENNY. Really, she's a very nice woman, you know. Considering she's a Grand Duchess.

GRANDPA. Wonderful what some people go through, isn't it? And still keep kind of gay, too.

PENNY. M-m. She made me forget about everything for a minute.

(She returns to stairs and stands listening.)

PAUL. I'd better call that cab, I suppose.

PENNY. No, wait, Paul. Here they are. Maybe Tony has—— *(She stops as ALICE'S step is heard on stair. She enters—dressed for traveling, TONY looms up behind her.)*

ALICE. *(Crossing to above table.)* Ed, will you go up and bring my bag down?

TONY. *(Quickly.)* Don't you do it, Ed! *(ED beritates, uncertain.)*

ALICE. Ed, please!

TONY. *(A moment's pause; then he gives up.)* All right, Ed. Bring

it down. *(ED goes up stairs.)* Do you know that you've got the stubbornest daughter in all forty-eight states? *(The doorbell rings.)*

ALICE. That must be the cab. *(She goes to door.)* *(TONY crosses to U.C. PAUL crosses to R.)*

GRANDPA. If it is, it's certainly wonderful service.

(To the considerable surprise of everyone, the voice of KIRBY is heard at the front door. GRANDPA rises, goes to back of his chair.)

KIRBY. Is Tony here, Alice?

ALICE. *(Ar. of arch.)* Yes. Yes, he is. Come in, Mr. Kirby. *(KIRBY comes in.)*

GRANDPA. How do you do?

KIRBY. *(Uncomfortably.)* Ah—good evening.

PENNY. Good evening.

KIRBY. Forgive my intruding. . . . Tony, I want you to come home with me. Your mother is very upset.

TONY. *(He looks at ALICE.)* Very well, Father. . . . Good-bye, Alice.

ALICE. *(Very low.)* Good-bye, Tony.

KIRBY. *(Trying to ease the situation.)* I need hardly say that this is as painful to Mrs. Kirby and myself as it is to you people. I—I'm sorry, but I'm sure you understand.

GRANDPA. *(Coming down to table.)* Well, yes—and in a way, no. Now, I'm not the kind of person tries to run other people's lives, but the fact is, Mr. Kirby, I don't think these two young people have got as much sense as—ah—you and I have.

ALICE. *(Tense.)* Grandpa, will you please not do this?

GRANDPA. *(Disarmingly.)* I'm just talking to Mr. Kirby. A cat can look at a king, can't he? *(ALICE, with no further words, takes up phone and dials. There is finality in her every movement.)*

PENNY. You—you want me to do that for you, Alice?

ALICE. No, thanks, Mother.

PAUL. *(Looks at PENNY.)* You've got quite a while before the train goes, Alice.

ALICE. *(Into phone.)* Will you send a cab to 761 Claremont, right away, please? . . . That's right. Thank you. *(She hangs up. Starts R.)*

PAUL. Alice!

ALICE. *(Embrace.)* Father!

KIRBY. Are you ready, Tony?