

While they are speaking, DORETTE has seated herself once more in the fur-covered chair, facing the open door, upon which the shadows of the lightly-stirred elder leaves come and go. JEAN has gone to the Pieta and taken up his tools.

JEAN. 'Tis a fine blade, this one. Do you remember
I sold its fellow when we were in France
To buy you a ring?

DORETTE. I had forgotten.

JEAN. Turn
Your face this way. Look toward me, not the door.
What see you? There is only sun outside,
Harsh elder-drops, ripe fields and ripening hours,
Soft birth of wings among the woven shadows,
And a southward-crying thrush. Do you remember?
They built and sang what time we built this house.
I left the elder thicket for their sake,
Who also built for love.

DORETTE. Shagonas. . . Where?

JEAN. What do you say? Are you sick? You speak
so low.

DORETTE. O, sick at heart. Jean, Jean, I cannot bear
it. . . .

JEAN. If you move more, I will bind you to the chair
As the Indians bind a captive to the stake,
Lest they miss one shuddering nerve, one eyelid's droop
Before the lifting fire. . . .

Your pardon, wife.

Was I too fierce? There's fire in me to-day
Would close a burning grip on the whole world
And break it into ash.

Your face, your face.
That's beautiful. Why, almost here's the look
I crave to lend Our Lady, yet too quick
With life and dread. Will you not mend your eyes
That yet lay hold on love, and teach your lips,