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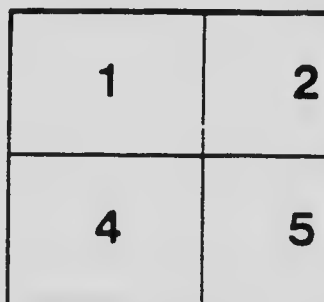
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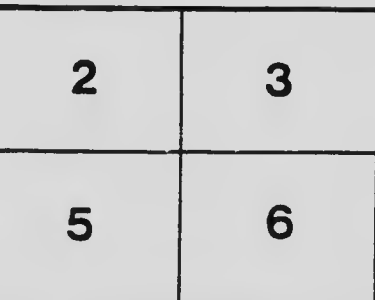
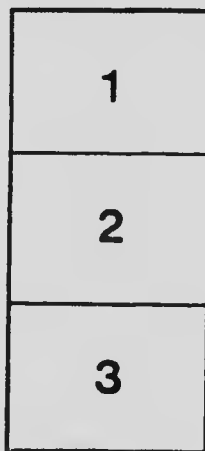
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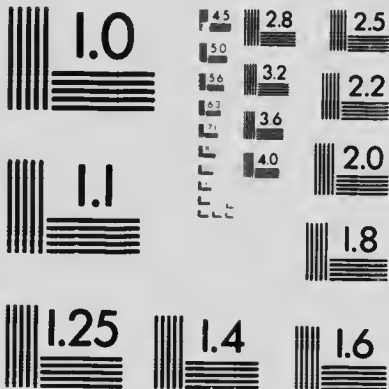
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The Tongues of Men

A Comedy in
Three Acts
by
Edward
Childs
Carpenter

GEO. H. POPHAM
Ottawa, Canada

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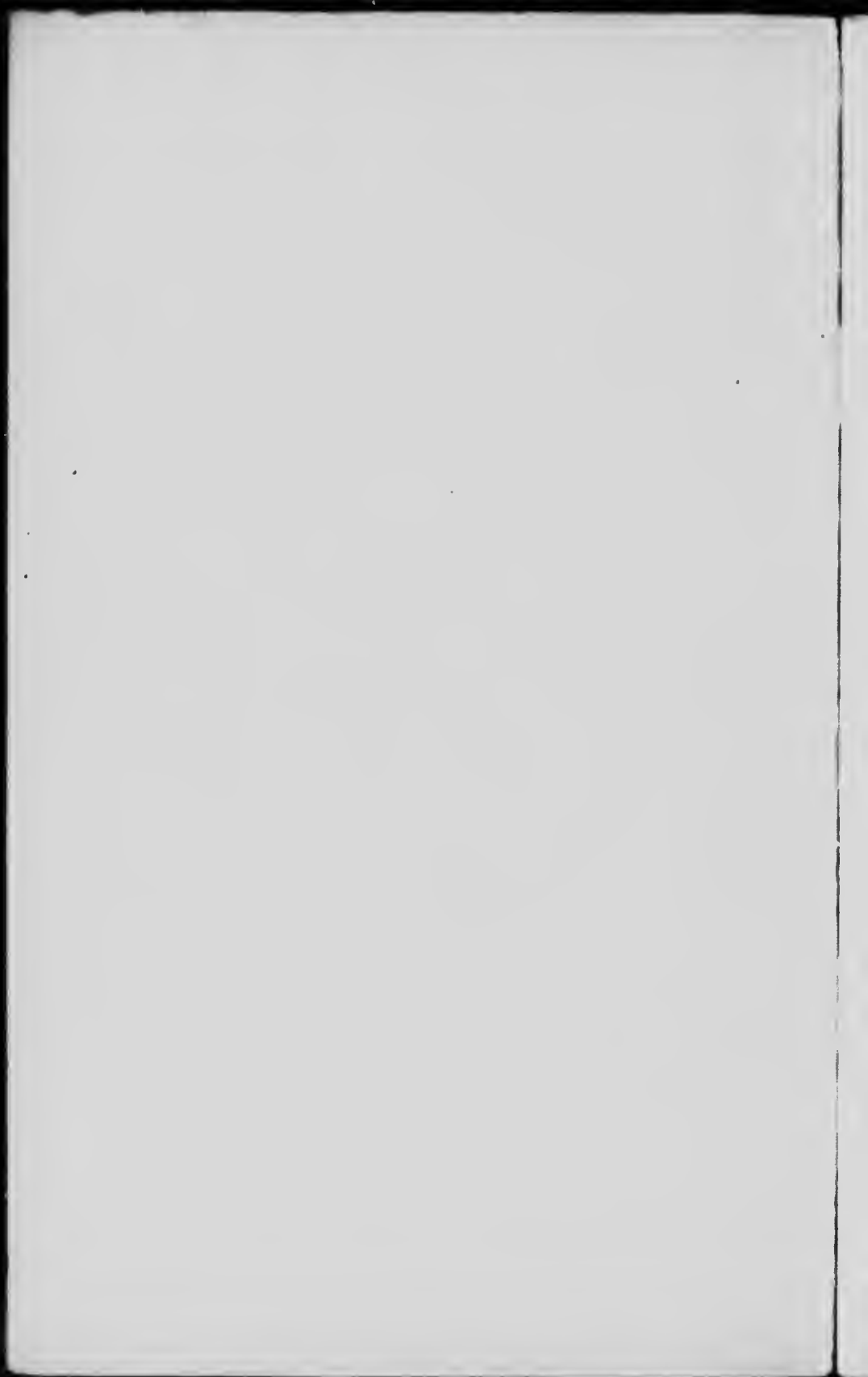


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The Tongues of Men

Characters

- REV. PENFIELD STURGIS, Rector of St. Martin's-in-the-Lane.
- REV. DR. DARIGAL, Rector emeritus of St. Martin's.
- GEORGINE DARIGAL, his daughter.
- DR. LYN FANSHAW, his cousin.
- LOUGHRAN, } Vestrymen of St. Martin's.
- GOADBY, }
- MRS. KEARSLEY, a member of St. Martin's.
- THOMAS, a choir-boy at St. Martin's.
- JANE BARTLETT, Prima Donna of the Metropolitan Opera Company.
- MADAM STERNBURG-REESE, Contralto of the Opera Company.
- WINIFRED LEEDS, in the Chorus of the Opera Company
- HERMAN GEIST, Manager of the Opera Company.
- SEPULVEDA, a young Spanish Composer.
- JULIE, Jane Bartlett's maid.
- RAPHAEL, Jane's man-servant.



Act 1

SCENE:

Vestry-room of St. Martin's-in-the-Lane, one o'clock on a winter's day. The walls of the room are panelled in walnut and the furniture is of carved walnut. A Gothic door in C. of back flat. High-backed chairs of Gothic design and upholstered in red, stand either side of the C. door. The R. and L. upper corners of the stage are occupied by walnut cupboards built in to match the wainscotting. A heavy arched door set in C. of R. flat. Below it a carved walnut chest of drawers. On the chest a pair of silver candle-sticks. Down stage R.C., a large high-backed chair. A big stained-glass window in C. of L. flat. L. of L.C., a big oblong walnut table set lengthwise up and down stage. On the table a red blotter, silver mounted; heavy glass and silver ink-stand; large, flat vestry record books; glass and silver vase of eala lillies. L. side of table another high-backed chair. Smaller Gothic chairs—one at upper end of table, two on R. side; one at R. lower corner. A large chair against L. flat down stage. All are upholstered in red. A red carpet on the floor. Sunlight through the stained-glass window.

Before the rise of the curtain an organ and voices of a boy choir heard singing a recessional, "Jerusalem the Golden." As curtain rises the last verse of the hymn is finished; then "Amen." Silence for an instant for the prayer. Another "Amen." Silence again. Murmur of many voices heard off C. to indicate the disbursement of the congregation.

R. D. opens suddenly and THOMAS, a small choir-boy in cotta and cassock, slips in, darts to table L. C., runs his hand along the under edge of table, plucks a large piece of chewing gum, thrusts it in his mouth, chewing ecstatically, and starts to R.D.

At that moment the R.D. is opened. Enter REV. DR. DARIGAL, a white-haired, softly-spoken, kindly old gentleman in vestments. He is followed by REV. PENFIELD SURGIS, the rector of the church, a sturdy young man of engaging personality and manners, full of fire, unworldly, but cock-sure of himself. He is in vestments and carries the manuscript of a sermon bound in limp black leather.

The clergymen are surprised at the sight of Thomas.

DARIGAL—(*Staring at Thomas*)—What are you doing in the vestry-room, Thomas?

THOMAS—(*Embarrassed both by detection and the chewing gum, which muddles his diction*)—N-n-nothin'!

PENFIELD—(*Eying Thomas secretly*)—Thomas, you are not telling the truth! Come! Out with it! (*Takes Thomas by the ear*).

THOMAS—(*Pulling an end of the chewing gum in a long string from his mouth*)—I was j-jins' gettin' me gum!

DARIGAL—(*with a low laugh*)—Upon my word!

PENFIELD—(*Sarcastically*)—Do you always keep your "g-n-m" in the vestry-room?

THOMAS—Sure! The fellow are scairt to come in here and pinch it!

DARIGAL—STEAL it—you mean!

PENFIELD—(*Amazed*)—Do the boys of St. Martin's steal?

THOMAS—It ain't stealin' to swipe gum.

PENFIELD—Thomas, I'm going to report this to the choir-master.

THOMAS—Oh gee! He'll fire me, an'—an' you'll be sore, cause nobody can sing the solos as good as me.

PENFIELD—I WILL have discipline. You and all the boys must understand that it is wrong to steal . . . even chewing gum!

THOMAS—But I ain't stole nothin'!

PENFIELD—But you had the temerity to use the vestry-room as a depository for your obnoxious confection!

THOMAS—I-I'll never do it again—if you won't squeal on me this time.

DARIGAL—(*To Penfield*)—That's a promise.

PENFIELD—(*To Thomas*)—Will you solemnly promise never to hide your—ch—chewing-gum in the vestry-room again?

THOMAS—Yes sir! (*Stips to the R.D. With a look of meaning at Penfield*)—It wouldn't be safe any more!

(*Thomas darts out R.D.*)

(*Darigal laughs softly*).

(*Penfield starts frowningly*).

PENFIELD—(*Crossing to table L.C. and laying his script upon it*)—I'm afraid our boys are getting out of hand, Doctor!

DARIGAL—(*Still smiling, going up to cupboard L.*)—Oh, they're just—boys!

PENFIELD—But boys who steal each other's chewing gum, must be more or less lax in their morals.

DARIGAL—(*Opening cupboard door, in the back of which is set a mirror and a rack of toilet articles*)—You never stole another boy's chewing gum? (*Takes off stole and cotta and hangs them in cupboard*).

PENFIELD—Certainly not! (*Goes up to R. cupboard*).

DARIGAL—(*Taking off cassock*)—Ah, but you must have CHEWED gum!

PENFIELD—NEVER! (*Opening R. cupboard door in back of which is set a mirror and a rack of toilet articles; looking in the mirror*).

DARIGAL—(*Hanging up cassock; he is now in his shirt-sleeves*)—Too bad! It would have been good for you!

PENFIELD—(*Taking off stole and cotta, with a little laugh*)—I never felt the need of it. I had no appetite for—(*with a grimace*)—"GUM"! (*Hangs up stole and cotta in cupboard*).

DARIGAL—(*Turning to Penfield*)—My dear Penfield, a few small vices are good for the best of us!

PENFIELD—(*Shocked*)—Why, Doctor!

DARIGAL—All natural, human desires are good for us! We must control them, but they keep us in touch with our fellow men. That's where you fail; you have no vices—you're not quite human! (*With a little laugh*) The way you pummel the poor sinner! (*Shakes his head humorously as he returns to the cupboard and takes out his clerical frock coat*).

PENFIELD—(*Unbuttoning his cassock*)—Are you thinking of my sermon?

DARIGAL—(*Slipping into his coat*)—Perhaps I was!

PENFIELD—(*Taking off his cassock*)—The best sermon I ever wrote. I FELT every word of it!—(*Hangs cassock in cupboard and takes out clerical frock coat*).

DARIGAL—Thunder, my dear lad! Effective, but thunder—all the same!

PENFIELD—(*Turning to Darigal, with the coat in his hand—warmly*)—The thunder and lightning of truth is the only thing that reaches a congregation in these days. They fall asleep, or think of the world, the minute you begin to temper the wind to the shorn lamb.

DARIGAL—(*Smiling*)—I know! Our shorn lambs protect themselves so comfortably with Persian lamb jackets

and fur overcoats that nothing short of a hurricane impresses them; but it is possible to overdo the thunder.

PENFIELD—(*Putting on his coat*)—You did'nt like the sermon?

DARIGAL—I liked your courage—it takes courage to condemn an opera from the pulpit—but you were too violent!

PENFIELD—But the opera is violent! It's a vile, a blasphemous thing. You know nothing about it. It's a story of degenerate invention! The authors have taken a disciple, Judas Iseariot, for their hero—made him fall a victim to the seductions of a harlot called Zaporah! The woman mocks his faith—and in a frenzy he kills her. Now do you think I was too violent?

DARIGAL—No—no—it's a ghastly story! But I can't help wishing you had been content to denounce the opera—that was enough.

PENFIELD—What else do you object to?

DARIGAL—Your arraignment of the singer. It wasn't kind, it wasn't charitable. She is, after all, one of God's creatures, even though she impersonates so base a character as Zaporah.

PENFIELD—I must speak the truth. I hit the nail solidly on the head.

DARIGAL—(*Crossing R.C. and laying a hand on Penfield's shoulder*)—Your errors are the inevitable errors of youth. Ten years from now, you'll be a great preacher. You have the talent, the eloquence, the magnetism, but you lack humility; you are on intimate terms with all the virtues, but you know nothing of the common, every-day temptations which assail the human heart. If you ever expect to fulfil your mission, you must remember one thing, dear lad,—give the miserable sinner out there—(*With a gesture toward C.D.*)—a fighting chance to win salvation!

(*Knock at C.D.*).

DARIGAL—Come in!

(*Enter GEORGINE DARIGAL. She is a pretty, charming, well-bred girl of twenty. She carries a set of skunk furs.*)

GEORGINE (*To Darigal*)—What a time you've been changing, father! Hello Pen! And such a lot of people waiting to see you! Do hurry!

DARIGAL—(*Getting his overcoat, cane, and silk hat from cupboard up L.*)—Coming, my dear! You'd better

bring Penfield home to dinner. (*Darigal, with his overcoat across his arm hurriedly exits C.D.*)

GEORGINE—Will you come, Pen?

PENFIELD—Gladly! But will you stay a moment—I want to talk to you.

GEORGINE—(*Smiling*)—Go ahead—if you promise not to preach.

PENFIELD—(*Closing C.D., and coming down C., smiling to her*)—I'm not going to preach, I'm going to plead—to you.

GEORGINE—Oh, Pen, I have a feeling in my solar-plexus that you are going to—propose to me!

PENFIELD—(*Standing C., looking at her solemnly*)—I am!

GEORGINE—But, my dear Pen, do you know how?

PENFIELD—I shall manage.

GEORGINE—Ah, you've had experience?

PENFIELD—No! Never!

GEORGINE—This is your debut! How thrilling! You must be careful not to bungle it!

PENFIELD—I hope I have some instinct!

GEORGINE—Instinct is not sufficient. You must have mastered the technique!

PENFIELD—Have you?

GEORGINE—I have had a lot of experience.

PENFIELD—(*Worried*)—Really?

GEORGINE—You're not a bit flattering.

PENFIELD—Honest proposals?

GEORGINE—Some! Others were just touch-and-go affairs, you know.

PENFIELD—Flirtations?

GEORGINE—Rather!

PENFIELD—I didn't think that of you!

GEORGINE—Oh, that was just by way of tuning up for the right man.

PENFIELD—Am I the right man?

GEORGINE—Pen, you haven't proposed yet.

PENFIELD—How shall I begin?

GEORGINE—I thought you were going to rely on your instinct.

PENFIELD—I think it would be safer to be guided by your experience.

GEORGINE—Very well! I'm sitting here very much bored—that is—pretending to be bored! I ought to be playing with something. Let me see! What did I have

when the last man proposed? Oh, yes! It was his bull-terrier. He was in my lap. The dog was in my lap. You haven't got a dog about you? No! Well, this will have to do! (*Takes fur from her shoulder*)—The tail of my dear little skunk! (*Frisks the tail*).

PENFIELD—(*A little crossly*)—Now that you've arranged yourself so thoroughly to your satisfaction, be good enough to tell me what I should do?

GEORGINE—Kneel—of course!

PENFIELD—I have no intention of doing so!

GEORGINE—But, Pen dear, you kneel so beautifully!

PENFIELD—(*Severely*)—Georgine, when I kneel it has a sacred significance.

GEORGINE—Charge Pen, charge! or I shall not accept you.

PENFIELD—You are going to accept me?

GEORGINE—I never accept or reject in advance of proposal!

PENFIELD—But just now you called me—"Pen dear"!

GEORGINE—Affectionately?

PENFIELD—I thought so.

GEORGINE—Hm! I must keep myself in hand. Now go on! Kneel! There's a dear!

PENFIELD—Is it the rule?

GEORGINE—Do you think I'd put you through any tactics that are not—the rule?

PENFIELD—I think you capable of asking me to stand on my head!

GEORGINE—I know heaps of men who would stand on their heads for me.

PENFIELD—(*Affectionately*)—I'm sorry, Georgine, for your sake that I'm not a gymnast; it is not in me to be so amusing, but my affection for you is sincere, and I will do my utmost to make you happy—if you will be my wife?

GEORGINE—I couldn't even reject you nicely at this distance!

PENFIELD—(*Going to her suddenly and taking her firmly by the shoulders*)—Georgine, will you marry me?

GEORGINE—You're not on your knees, Pen dear!

PENFIELD—Will you marry me?

GEORGINE—(*Looking up at him solemnly*)—Do you love me?

PENFIELD—I love you, Georgine.

GEORGINE—Are you sure you do?

PENFIELD—Ahh! I do—I do!)

GEORGINE—(*Rising, looking into his eyes, her hand on his arm*)—Pen, you're a dear thing! But you haven't asked me if I love you?

PENFIELD—(*Anxiously*)—Well, you do—don't you?

GEORGINE—You funny boy—I adore you.

PENFIELD—It's good of you to say so, Georgine.

GEORGINE—Oh you wonderful, lovable goose! Aren't you going to—to kiss me?

PENFIELD—If you don't—mind!

(*Georgine slips her arms around his neck and kisses him. Then she backs away from him a little, but still holds his hands. He is the least bit embarrassed.*)

PENFIELD—(*With an embarrassed laugh*)—Well, we're engaged now.

GEORGINE—(*Teasingly*)—Of course you haven't got a ring.

PENFIELD—(*Triumphantly*)—But I have. (*Takes a little satin box from his pocket, opens it, showing diamond ring. Offers it to her.*)

GEORGINE—(*Laughing heartily*)—Pen! Pen! where did you get it?

PENFIELD—(*Importantly*)—At one of the very best shops!

GEORGINE—But when?

PENFIELD—About a week ago.

GEORGINE—Who did you buy it for?

PENFIELD—You!

GEORGINE—(*With a burst of laughter*)—What monumental nerve!

PENFIELD—Not at all. I was preparing myself for any emergency.

GEORGINE—(*With a transition to sweetness*)—You were sure I'd accept you!

PENFIELD—I had a premonition that you would.

GEORGINE—(*With a laugh*)—Pen, I could slap you!

PENFIELD—You have my permission. (*Offers his cheek to be slapped. Georgine makes a move to slap him, but kisses him instead.*)

GEORGINE—Put it on my finger, and I'll forgive you! (*Holds out her finger.*)

PENFIELD—(*Placing the ring on her finger*)—With this ring I betrothe thee, Georgine; and pledge myself to keep thee happy evermore.

GEORGINE—Oh, Pen, what a precious, solemn, little betrothal. (*Kisses the ring. Then, with a transition to lightness*)—What Love hath joined let no woman put asunder!

PENFIELD—(*Going to cupboard up R., and brushing his hair at the mirror set in cupboard door*)—Now, I'll go out and see these people. Then home with you to dinner. (*Takes silk hat from cupboard*).

GEORGINE—(*Crossing idly to table L.C.*)—Don't let Mrs. Kearsley snatch you away from me!

PENFIELD—(*Going toward her, stroking his silk hat*)—Mrs. Kearsley?

GEORGINE—Yes. I have a feeling that she's lying in wait for you. She's one of your pets; or you're one of her's. Which is it?

PENFIELD—She's a good sort, Georgine, but there is no petting between us. It there's one thing I dislike it's petting. (*Looking about*) Where's my sermon?

GEORGINE—(*Picking up script from table and handing it to him, mockingly*)—We must be careful nothing happens to that.

PENFIELD—(*Pausing with the script in his hand, looking at her questioningly*)—Oh, you didn't care for it?

GEORGINE—Pen, dear, don't ask me what I think of it?

PENFIELD—Why not? I'm always glad to have an honest criticism.

GEORGINE—Then, honestly, it was dreadful. (*Penfield is amazed, hurt, angry.*)

GEORGINE—I don't see you could be so narrow-minded as to call "Zaporah" the most blasphemous opera ever sung in this city, and say such awful things about a wonderful singer like Jane Bartlett. It was horrid, and ignorant and bigotted.

PENFIELD—(*Angrily*)—Horrid? Ignorant? Bigotted? Huh!

GEORGINE—It's the truth and you don't like it.

PENFIELD—I like the truth, but I don't care for perverted opinions.

GEORGINE—Oh, Pen, Pen, Pen dear! I must find some way to pry open your foolish eyes. You'd be such a stunning preacher if you would only s-e-e!

PENFIELD—For a blind man, I'm a tolerable preacher as it is; and I propose to speak—not as you—but as I

see and feel—(*Flourishing the script.*)—Nothing can budge me from the stand I've taken

GEORGINE—(*Warmly*)—Some day you are going to get a terrific bump if you go on standing there!

(*Knock at the R.D. Penfield goes to it impatiently and opens it, mussing up his silk hat as he has to handle it and the script.*)

(*Enter DR. LYN FANSHAW, a physician, age 45, still youthful in manner and figure, a debonair man of the world. He smiles, comprehending that Georgine and Penfield have been quarrelling.*)

PENFIELD—Good morning, Doctor!

FANSHAW—Look here, Pen, your choir-master is a sick man. I've prescribed for him. He ought to be in bed. I've told him so, but he won't listen to me. Now I want you to send him home and tell him to stay there.

PENFIELD—I'll see him at once! (*Places his hat and script on the chest of drawers R., and exits R.D.*)

GEORGINE—(*Wearily, holding out a hand to Fanshaw*)—Good morning, Cousin Lyn!

FANSHAW—(*Greeting her warmly*)—How is the most precious and adorable? I thought I sniffed powder in the air as I came in!

GEORGINE—I told Pen his sermon was horrid. He didn't like it.

FANSHAW—Naturally! Remember, he's the little aluminum angel of this parish! And who are you, that you should disapprove of such a shining thing as a little aluminum angel? He's not used to having his words of wisdom riddled with common sense! Do you know, it's amazing the way he holds this big congregation. There's genius in that!

GEORGINE—Yes, but he goes too far! (*She turns wearily and sits at lower end of table L.C.*)

FANSHAW—Pen's young! He's full of the unconscious cruelty of outspoken youth. He wields the mallet hammer blindly, but they—(*With a gesture indicating C. D.*)—like the noise it makes on his anvil.

GEORGINE—That's what I told him! He has no business to hit a woman the way he hit Jane Bartlett this morning!

FANSHAW—(*With a transition from his quiet manner to one of indignation*)—If my arm had been long enough I would have reached up to the pulpit and cheer-

fully wrung his neck! He needs someone to put the fear of God into HIM!

GEORGINE—(*Surprised at his vehemence*)—I never heard you speak like that, Cousin Lyn!

FANSHAW—(*With a little shrug, slipping back into his customary composure, and dropping into the big chair R.C.*)—I'm not used to hearing my friends cursed out with bell, book and candle!

GEORGINE—(*Rising in wonder and awe*)—Jane Bartlett!—a friend of yours?

FANSHAW—I knew Jane Bartlett when you were a mere mushroom in the fields of yesterday.

GEORGINE—(*Going to Fanshaw*)—Why, Cousin Lyn, she's ages younger than you are!

FANSHAW—I beg your pardon—not ages! Miss Bartlett is standing on the threshold of Indian Summer—all bronze and russet and gold—

GEORGINE—(*Clasping her hands*)—Oh, she's so gorgeous, so stunning, so wonderful—the most wonderful singer in the world—(*Awed*)—And you actually know her? (*Fanshaw nods with humorous conceit*).

GEORGINE—But then you know all the wonderful people! They send for you to look at their tongues and thump their chests, and they keep you to talk to them—because you're so sweet and cunning and clever and friendly! I'm sure that's how you met Miss Bartlett—wasn't it? She'd sneezed—or had a frog in her throat—or perhaps she had fainted when you were in the audience—and they called for a doctor—oh, how was it?—when did you meet her?

FANSHAW—I met her when she was hooking her ladder to a star. At that time she had only one of her magnificent toes on the bottom rung—but she was holding on so tightly that I could not shake her loose.

GEORGINE—(*Thrilled*)—You were in—love—with her?

FANSHAW—(*Scio-comically*)—Oh madly! I was as young as—as Pen!

GEORGINE—How perfect! Aren't you still mad about her?

FANSHAW—Bless my soul, ancients like me have lost their capacity for such divine lunacy.

GEORGINE—Where did you lose yours?

FANSHAW—Inquisitive kitten, I don't remember.

GEORGINE—Delightful liar, you do. It was away back at the bottom of her ladder, wasn't it?

FANSHAW—That's a good place to throw off excess baggage.

GEORGINE—Silly! You should have followed her up the ladder.

FANSHAW—(*Shaking his head*)—I had my own ladder to scale.

GEORGINE—And now that you're both at the tops of your old ladders, what do you think of it?

FANSHAW—The top of a ladder is an exceedingly lonely place.

GEORGINE—I don't believe her's is. It's thick with flowers and swarming with beaux; a regular fairy-land where she is queen—(*Tasing him*)—and where stuffy old doctors are warned off the grass.

FANSHAW—Not THIS stuffy old doctor! (*He preccus himself cockily*).

GEORGINE—Then you're still friends? Go on—tell me about her!—(*Wildly enthusiastic*)—Does she really use that awful perfume they've named after her? Is she really a lady? Oh—and did a Prince of India give her one of his crown jewels? Tell me—does she get two thousand dollars a night?—(*Breathlessly*)—Has she so many gowns that she keeps a card-index of them? Is she in love with Caruso? And do tell me—is she married?

FANSHAW—She would consider a husband as superfluous as a saucepan!

GEORGINE—Very well—no husband. Do tell me—have you ever been in her dressing room? Is she as beautiful off the stage as on? Does she have her breakfast in bed at four o'clock in the afternoon? Does she fly into a rage at nothing and box her maid's ears? Were her jewels really stolen from Marguerite's casket? Don't joke so—Tell me EVERYTHING!

FANSHAW—Do you think I can give you her biography in one breath? There are thirteen volumes published about her! (*Enter Penfield R.D.*)

PENFIELD—I'm sorry to have kept you waiting, but—(*Knock at C.D.*)

GEORGINE—(*To Fanshaw*)—Oh, bother! You'll have to tell me everything the next time I catch you alone!

PENFIELD—Eh?

GEORGINE—(*Rising*)—I thought everyone had gone

by this time. Do get rid of them as soon as you can, Pen. I'll go and tidy up the chancel. (*Exit Georgine R.D.*)

(*Penfield goes to C.D. and opens it. Enter MRS. KEARSLEY, a fashionably-gowned woman of forty-five, whose breeding is conspicuous by its absence. She is followed by two vestrymen of the church:—LOUGHIRAN, a tall, lean, middle-aged, puritanical type of man, dressed in sober clothes, and GOADBY, a short, stout, jelly-fish of a man. Fanshaw rises and watches the visitors with an amused expression.*)

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Grabbing Pen's hand and shaking it*)—Oh Mr. Sturgis, I couldn't wait—so I came in with your vestrymen—I hope you don't mind. I felt I must tell you how much I enjoyed your brilliant sermon!

PENFIELD—(*Beamingly*)—You're very kind, Mrs. Kearsley!

LOUGHIRAN—Capital sermon, Sturgis!

GOADBY—(*Shaking Penfield's hand*)—Yes! Capital, capital!

PENFIELD—So glad you liked it, Mr. Goadby.

GOADBY—What did you think of it, Doctor? (*Comes down L.C. by table.*)

FANSHAW—(*Standing by chair R.C.*)—I've survived!

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Leaving Penfield and Loughran up C. and going to Fanshaw L.C.*)—Oh, Dr. Fanshaw, don't you think it was a wonderful sermon? You know I've been simply raving about it!

FANSHAW—I dare say!

LOUGHIRAN—I hope, Sturgis, that we can persuade you to repeat your address before the Y.M.C.A.

GOADBY—Yes, you ought to repeat it before the Y.M.C.A.

PENFIELD—I shall be glad to, if you think it worth while.

LOUGHIRAN—Worth while! I should say so! Your sermon ought to be printed and distributed all over the country!

GOADBY—Yes, it ought to be distributed.

LOUGHIRAN—It's the only way we can suppress these indecent exhibitions. The Church—

FANSHAW—I'll venture to say that none of you have heard the opera—Zaporah!

MRS. KEARSLEY—I bought seats for Thursday night, but after what Mr. Sturgis has said, I shall certainly

destroy the tickets! (*To Penfield*)—You see what an effect your sermon has had on me—and I paid ten dollars apiece for those tickets!

FANSHAW—You'd better turn them in at the box-office—They'll refund the money.

PENFIELD—I suppose you've seen the opera, Doctor?

FANSHAW—Yes, I've seen it.

LOUGHIRAN—(*Shocked*)—I'm amazed at you, Fanshaw!

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*To Fanshaw—cagerly*)—Oh, tell me, Doctor, is—is it so fearfully wicked?

FANSHAW—(*Humorously*)—Desperately!

MRS. KEARSLEY—Oh really! And is Jane Bartlett as shocking as Mary Garden was in *Salome*?

FANSHAW—Miss Bartlett is an artist, and no artist ever shocked me, except with a poor performance!

GOADBY—That's just how I feel about it.

LOUGHIRAN—(*Turning to Goadby sharply*)—You've seen the thing?

GOADBY—(*Embarrassed*)—I—I didn't care about going myself, but Mrs. Goadby—

FANSHAW—The woman tempted me and I did eat!

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*To Goadby*)—How horrid of you to blame it on Mrs. Goadby.

GOADBY—(*Miserably*)—I—didn't—I was just going to say—(*Wiping his forehead with his handkerchief*)—since I've SEEN the opera, Loughran, I'm quite of your opinion—it ought to be suppressed.

LOUGHIRAN—It will be! Let me have your sermon, Sturgis)—*Penfield gets his sermon from the chest of drawers down R.*)

LOUGHIRAN—I'll see that the press prints it in full! It must be scattered broadcast. (*Penfield gives the Ms. to Loughran*).

FANSHAW—(*Warmly*)—It must be edited first.

PENFIELD—I prefer it to stand as it is written.

LOUGHIRAN—(*To Pen*)—It shall! (*To Fanshaw*)—You don't appreciate the importance—

FANSHAW—(*Cutting in*)—No! I don't think that Mr. Sturgis's tirade against the opera is of ANY importance; but when he condemns the personal character of the woman who sings Zaporah, he commits a grave injustice. That is important! My advice is to drop it.

GOADBY—Yes, we'd better drop it!

LOUGHIRAN—This battle for purity shall not be dropped. And any woman who so far—

PENFIELD—(*Interrupting him*)—Don't let us lose our tempers.

MRS. KEARSLEY—I feel as though it were none of my business, but—

LOUGHIRAN—(*To Mrs. Kearsley*)—It isn't! (*Mrs. Kearsley drops into chair R.C. as though she had been shot*)

LOUGHIRAN—(*To Fanshaw*)—I'm the rector's warden! This is a matter for the rector and me to decide! (*Thrusts sermon into his pocket*)—If you are coming my way, Sturgis, we'll talk it over.

PENFIELD—I'm going to Dr. Darigal's for dinner. Be good enough to wait a moment. I'll call Miss Darigal. (*Penfield exits R.D.*)

FANSHAW—Loughran, I hope that you'll cut out all reference to Miss Bartlett before you turn that manuscript over to the press.

LOUGHIRAN—(*Sarcastically*)—Evidently she's a friend of yours!

FANSHAW—(*Looking at him coolly, challengingly*)—She is!

LOUGHIRAN—Hum! I'll think it over! (*Turns to Goadby L.C.*)

GOADBY—(*To Loughran*)—I would think it over. (*He and Loughran talk in pantomime L.*)

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*To Fanshaw*)—Is Miss Bartlett really a friend of yours? What is she like? And do you think there's anything between her and that tenor—what's his name?

FANSHAW—(*Smiling down upon her*)—I reserve my powers of deduction for the benefit of my patients.

MRS. KEARSLEY—No one ever gets the first thing out of you!

FANSHAW—Except for a fee.

MRS. KEARSLEY—And you charge so outrageously!

FANSHAW—I have to. It's the high cost of gasoline!

MRS. KEARSLEY—Speaking of gasoline—I saw you dining with an expensive-looking woman at the Ritz on Wednesday night. Was that Miss Bartlett?

FANSHAW—Yes!

MRS. KEARSLEY—She's a patient of yours?

FANSHAW—Yes!

MRS. KEARSLEY—Is that the treatment your prescribe for all your patients?

FANSHAW—If they are attractive enough?

GOADBY—*(To Loughran)*—I agree with you; these singers are a loose lot! I wouldn't have anything to do with them.

LOUGHRAN—Men or women who spend their lives on the stage cannot be respectable!

(The C.D. has remained open. JANE BARTLETT, prima donna of the Metropolitan Opera Company, appears at the door. She has an air of gracious condescension, dignity, beauty, opulence—and possesses a superb presence).

JANE—*(Pausing at the door)*—I beg your pardon! I wish to see Mr. Penfield. *(Loughran turns, eyes askance in Jane's direction; Goadby looks at her in open-mouthed wonder; Mrs. Kearsley in surprised anticipation of something about to happen; Fanshaw with whimsical amazement).*

FANSHAW—*(Advances from R.C. to Jane who is C., with a bow and welcoming smile and hand)*—Good morning, Jane! What is the Persian cat doing in Daniel's den?

JANE—She came to hear that boy sing and stayed to hear that extraordinary sermon!

FANSHAW—Good Heavens!

JANE—And what is the famous doctor-man doing here?

FANSHAW—He's one of the pillars of the church!

JANE—You are versatile!

MRS. KEARSLEY—*(Unable to restrain herself, going up to Jane)*—Oh, Miss Bartlett, you don't know me, of course, but I feel as though I knew you. I've heard you so many times in all your wonderful parts—except Zaporah!

LOUGHRAN—*(Startling, glowering at Jane)*—Madam, are you the woman who sings—Zaporah? *(Jane looks Loughran up and down as though he were an impudent worm).*

FANSHAW—*(Diplomatically, introducing them)*—Miss Bartlett—Mr. Loughran!—*(Loughran glares at Jane; plants his hat firmly on his head and exits C.D.)*

JANE—Does he think I have something catching?

MRS. KEARSLEY—You musn't mind Mr. Loughran. As our dear friend Dr. Fanshaw says—he was hewn out of the Plymouth Rock.—*(During this speech Goadby signals Fanshaw to introduce him to Jane).*

FANSHAW—*(Introducing Goadby)*—Miss Bartlett—Mr. Goadby!—*(Humorously)*—One of your admirers!

GOADBY—*(Grabbing Jane's hand)*—Honored to

meet you, Miss Bartlett—(*Embarrassed*)—I—I had the pleasure of seeing you—eh—the other night in Zaporah! Most delightful—altogether delightful—

JANE—Yes, “delightful” describes ZAPORAH perfectly.

MRS. KEARSLEY—I haven’t seen the opera—yes; but I have tickets for Thursday, and I wouldn’t miss it for worlds. I’ve heard such charming things about it and your wonderful performance

JANE—So have I—in the sermon this morning.

MRS. KEARSLEY—Oh, my dear, you mustn’t take what Mr. Sturgis says seriously. He’s just what darling old Dr. Darigal calls “a thunderer.”

JANE—His bolts strike below the belt.

FANSHAW—But fashion changes your belt line so often these days that no man knows where to draw the line.

JANE—Any man with a sense of decency ought to know.

MRS. KEARSLEY—We all took Mr. Sturgis severely to task for what he said this morning. It was really outrageous.

GOADBY—Most outrageous.

JANE—Where is the thunderer? I’ve been kept waiting for him an interminable time!

FANSHAW—I’ll call him!—(*Goes to R.D. and calls quietly*)—Mr. Sturgis!

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Taking card from her handbag*)—Miss Bartlett, won’t you waive formality and let me carry you off to supper after the opera some night? I know so many of you artists and—

JANE—I should be delighted, but I go home directly after the performance.

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Giving Jane her card*)—Then I shall call on you!

JANE—You’re very kind, Mrs.(*Looking at card*).

MRS. KEARSLEY—Kearsley! You may know of my husband, Gordon Easby Kearsley—

GOADBY—(*Cutting in*)—The manufacturer of the Kearsley reversible shirt-front!

JANE—Oh! THYR Kearsley!

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Annoyed at Goadby, and speaking hastily*)—I’d bring Mr. Kearsley to call, but he’s such a fearfully busy man!

JANE—And I'm a fearfully busy woman; it's difficult to say when I shall be at home.

MRS. KEARSLEY—Oh well, if I should miss you the first time, I shan't be discouraged. (*Taking Jane's hand*) Au revoir! Charmed to have had the privilege of meeting you, Miss Bartlett!—(*To Fanshaw*)—May I give you a lift in my motor, Doctor? (*Mrs. Kearsley goes up to C.D.*)

FANSHAW—Thank you!—(*To Jane*)—Nothing I can do for you?

JANE—(*Privately to him*)—Yes, clear out and take these jelly-fish with you, or I shall commit murder!

FANSHAW—Coming, Goadby? I fancy there'll be room for you in the tonneau! (*Starts toward C.D.*)

GOADBY—Just a second!—(*Offering hand to Jane, who takes it dreadingly*)—Miss Bartlett, I want to ask you something. In "Zaporah"—eh—how do you keep your costume from slipping off your right shoulder?

JANE—(*Witheringly*)—I use adhesive plaster.

GOADBY—What a good idea. I'll tell Mrs. Goadby. Au revoir. Honored to have had the privilege of meeting you.

(*Exit Mrs. Kearsley, Fanshaw and Goadby C.D. Jane tears up Mrs. Kearsley's card with disgust and throws it on the floor. She looks about her impatiently, turns to L.C., sits in chair by table, taps her foot, drums her fingers on the table, and generally works herself up into a high state of exasperation.*)

(*PENFIELD appears at R.D. Jane rises. They pause in silence, exchanging an appraising look of interest and antagonism. Penfield forgets GEORGINE, who is just behind him, carrying altar linen and cloths over her arm. Jane pays no attention to her for the moment.*)

JANE—(*In a purring tone*)—Mr. Sturgis, I heard your extraordinary sermon this morning. I could not go without speaking to you. (*Penfield advances to R.C. Georgine stops within the R. doorway staring at Jane, puzzled and apprehensive.*)

PENFIELD—(*Pleased*)—I'm glad you were impressed.

JANE—(*Ominously*)—I was impressed.

PENFIELD—(*Formally*)—It seems to have been very well received by the congregation. I've been asked to repeat it before the Y.M.C.A.

JANE—You must not repeat that sermon.

PENFIELD—(*Taken a-back*)—Not repeat it? Why not?

JANE—It bears false witness against your neighbor.

PENFIELD—(*Astonished*)—I don't follow you. I took it for granted that you were favorably impressed.

JANE—On the contrary, I was shocked. I've waited to tell you so. (*Georgine is wide-eyed with amazement*).

PENFIELD—(*Coldly*)—I'm not in the habit of discussing my sermons with strangers.

JANE—But you're in the habit of discussing strangers in your sermons.

GEORGINE—(*Coming down R.C. below chairs*)—Pen! It's Miss Bartlett!

PENFIELD—(*Taken a-back*)—Miss Bartlett?

JANE—Yes! We've never met before—have we?

PENFIELD—No!

JANE—But you've heard me sing—"Zaporah", of course?

PENFIELD—Do you think I could bring myself to witness such a degrading exhibition?

JANE—How do you know it's a degrading exhibition, if you haven't seen it?

PENFIELD—It is not necessary to be drunk, to steal, to be in torment, to know evil!

JANE—No. But you must study your subject before you're fit to pass an opinion.

PENFIELD—I've studied "Zaporah" through the medium of the daily press. The Morning Chronicle says that there is no denying the extremely objectionable character of the drama. It not only ascribes to Judas Iscariot the most shocking morals, but it makes a disciple the object of a woman's wanton passion!

JANE—(*Impatiently*)—Your opinion of a work of art is of no consequence whatever—I'm foolish to discuss "Zaporah" with you! But when you attack my personal character—it's of great consequence—and you've no right to do it!

PENFIELD—I must guard the morals of the community. I must wage this battle for decency and righteousness.

JANE—But, my good Mr. Sturgis, why do you drag my name into your crusade? Why do you call me a shameless creature? The newspapers didn't!

PENFIELD—No! They lacked my conviction!

JANE—They lacked your imagination! You stood

there in the sanctity of your pulpit and condemned me without knowing the first thing about me! You only knew that no one dared to get up and answer you! I've never heard anything so unjust, so cowardly—so brutal! I've never been so angry in all my life—it was all I could do to keep from rising in the church and calling you liar!

PENFIELD—(*Amazed and angry*)—I—I beg your pardon!

JANE—(*Still angry*)—Come on now! What are your facts? What do you know of me?

PENFIELD—Upon my faith, I believe that any woman who assumes the role of such a vile, wanton character as "Zaporah" must be thoroughly abandoned—herself!

JANE—(*Amazed*)—Good Lord! What drive! I can't believe that even a clergyman can be so bigotted! (*Erasperated*)—Oh, it's childish!—(*Excited*)—It's—it's idiotic—dyspeptic!! You've got softening of the brain! (*She turns and drops in chair R. of table L.C. Georgine with a sigh, sinks down in small chair R. of the large chair R.C., still holding the altar cloths.*)

PENFIELD—(*Advancing a little toward Jane, speaking strongly*)—You don't contradict me!

JANE—(*Excitedly*)—No! It's too absurd—too fantastic—too ridiculous! Wh-wh-why I'm no more Zaporah as I sit here—than you are the angel of wisdom you pretend to be out there—(*Waving her hand toward C.D.*)—in the church!

PENFIELD—I'm not an angel of wisdom; but I'd gladly use what knowledge I have to lead you to God.

JANE—You are so pitifully ignorant of the world, how could I trust you to guide me to the next?

PENFIELD—I have my guide-book in the Bible.

JANE—You should consult the Book of Life!

PENFIELD—Its pages are soiled.

JANE—And you're afraid to touch them. You hold yourself so far aloof from the world that you don't know a real sinner from a painted one!

PENFIELD—I know more than you think.

JANE—If you know LIFE, you'd be more human, more humble, more helpful—you want shaking up! Step out of your warm nest! Come out into the world and learn to know men and women!

PENFIELD—The world! Where shall I find it?

JANE—All about you. But you can't see it!

GEORGINE—Oh, Pen, if you only would!

JANE—He could, if he'd come down and make friends with these sinners he condemns.

GEORGINE—I don't think that would be practical.

JANE—(*Suddenly, impulsively, with an air of doing Penfield a great favor*)—Listen! I will help Mr. Sturgis.

PENFIELD—You're very kind, but—

GEORGINE—Mr. Sturgis wouldn't think of bothering you!

JANE—(*To Georgine*)—But, Mrs. Sturgis—

GEORGINE—(*Embarrassed*)—I—I'm Miss Darigal.

PENFIELD—We're engaged to be married.

JANE—(*To Georgine*)—Ahhh! Isn't that charming! (*To Penfield*)—How fortunate you are, Mr. Sturgis.—(*To Georgine*)—You must be very proud of him, my dear! Now listen to me. I want to introduce Mr. Sturgis to some great artists—wonderful people—I suppose he would call them sinners!

GEORGINE—I don't think father would approve of that.

PENFIELD—(*With exaltation*)—But Georgine, I might be able to convert them!

JANE—Then come with me!

GEORGINE—(*Starting up earnestly*)—Pen, I don't want you to go.

PENFIELD—Why not? You, too, say that I am ignorant, bigotted, that I need to see something of the world.

GEORGINE—(*Anxiously*)—But I'm afraid to let you go and meet all those sinners.

PENFIELD—(*Tartly*)—I can take care of myself.

GEORGINE—(*Desperately to Jane*)—Oh, why did you come here and put this dreadful idea into his head? Nothing good will come of it! I know, I know!

PENFIELD—(*Astonished at her vehemence, protesting*)—Georgine!

JANE—(*Rising, to Georgine*)—You have nothing to fear!—(*Lightly*)—Unless you are afraid I shall prove to Mr. Sturgis that I am not this shameless creature of his imagination!

PENFIELD—If I am in darkness, I shall welcome the light!—(*He looks at Jane challengingly*).

JANE—Will you come?

GEORGINE—(*Tremulously*)—Pen, I beg you not to go.

PENFIELD—I cannot ignore this challenge. It is the Church defied by the Devil!

JANE—(*Dryly*)—Thank you!

PENFIELD—(*Turning to her quickly, with a little smile and boyish air of sincere regret*)—I BEG your pardon.

JANE—Never mind! There's the making of a man in you. A true man of God! Some day you will be a gentle, wise, splendid speaker of the truth.

PENFIELD—(*Looking steadfastly into Jane's eyes, speaking simply, after a pause*)—I will come!

JANE—(*Taking card from a silver case and giving card to Penfield*)—Come to-morrow at five!

PENFIELD—Thank you!

JANE—(*To Georgine, who is on the point of tears but who controls herself*)—Good-bye, my dear. Come to see me! (*Jane starts towards C.D. Penfield holds it open for her*).

JANE—(*Offering Penfield her hand*)—Au revoir!

PENFIELD—Good-day! (*Jane exits C.D. Penfield closes it. Georgine crosses to table, drops the altar cloths on it, sinks into chair, and buries her face in the altar cloths, crying. Penfield looks at Jane's card, puts it carefully into his pocket; turns, sees Georgine crying, looks at her, throws up his hands in utter bewilderment. Then goes to her, laying a hand on her shoulder*).

PENFIELD—(*Kindly*)—Georgine, what is the matter?

GEORGINE—(*Sobbing*)—It's my fault—it's my fault!

PENFIELD—I declare, dear, I can't make you out! (*Takes neatly folded handkerchief from pocket and gives it to her*)—Here, dry your eyes, you foolish little thing! (*Cheerily*)—Come now—we shall be late for dinner! (*Penfield goes up to cupboard R. upper corner of stage, opens it, takes out his overcoat and puts it on. Georgine sits up, dries her eyes, but keeps up a convulsive dry, silent sobbing, as she takes from her muff a small vanity-box, looks at herself in the tiny mirror and powders the tip of her nose*).

CURTAIN ON ACT ONE.

Act 2

SCENE:

Ten days later. JANE BARTLETT'S apartments. It is a "studio" apartment, with a very high ceiling. The back flat represents the wooden partition of the duplex section: windows in the upper half and a door R. of C. On the R. an enormous glazed studio window, hung with old-gold curtains draped back. On the L. a fireplace C. with a long mirror on the mantle-shelf, and a door to the hall above it. The walls are covered with a bronze burlap paper, and hung with a few good prints and half a dozen canvases. Below the R. window a music cabinet; above it a Jacobin tabouret supporting a large Japanese vase filled with cherry blossoms. Down R.C. a grand piano, the keyboard facing the audience, and a piano bench. Midway up C. a Jacobin carved table, covered with writing materials, flowers in vases. A straight-backed chair back of the table, and an easy chair at the L. lower corner. A carved Jacobin settle faces the audience at the fireplace; a tea table near it; a small chair below the fireplace. A big carved chest set against the back flat L.C. All the furniture is Jacobin. A profusion of cut flowers on mantle, piano and tables. Heavy turkish rugs on the floor. At the rise of the curtain, Dr. Fanshaw and Julie, a maid, are heard without L.)

FANSHAW—(Without)—Bon jour, Julie!

JULIE—(Without)—Bon jour, Monsieur!—(FANSHAW enters L.D. followed by JULIE, a neat maid).

FANSHAW—Is Madame at home?

JULIE—(Speaking with a French accent)—To you she is at home whenever she is in.

FANSHAW—Is she in now?

JULIE—(Diplomatically)—I will see, Monsieur.

FANSHAW—Model of diplomacy, say that it is important!

JULIE—Monsieur can find the cigarettes?

FANSHAW—Monsieur can! Say to Madame that I can wait three minutes—no longer.

JULIE—Bien, Monsieur! (Julie exits R.C.D. Fanshaw goes to table C., opens a big bronze box half-full of cigarettes; selects a cigarette, lights it, and wanders over to the fireplace. There is a card tray on the mantle piece. He looks at it, then picks up a card and reads aloud: "Mr.

Penfield Sturgis!" As he is about to put it down, he sees another card, picks that up, makes a little grimace and reads: "Mr. Penfield Sturgis." Picks up a handful of cards and reads aloud: "Mr. Penfield Sturgis, Mrs. Gordon Easby Kearsley, Mr. Penfield Sturgis, Senor Jose Sepulveda, Mr. Penfield Sturgis"—Phew! Puts down cards and wanders over to piano; sits with legs crossed, on piano seat. A window up C. in the second floor of the apartment opens. JANE BARTLETT in lace breakfast cap and negligee looks out of the window).

JANE—Well, what the dence do you want in such a hurry?

FANSHAW—(*Turning and rising*)—Come down, and I'll tell you!

JANE—Tell me now—I have the advantage of you up here, I can see that little bald spot on the top of your head; you've been hiding it from me all these years!

FANSHAW—(*Patting his head*)—It wasn't there a week ago!

JANE—You can't blame me for that!

FANSHAW—I do! Come down and be scolded!

JANE—I'm not dressed.

FANSHAW—I don't care how you look.

JANE—I DO.

FANSHAW—You know better than I how becoming those webby things are to your insolent type of beauty.

JANE—Thanks! I love to be patted and spanked with the same hand!

FANSHAW—You need spanking! You've made yourself beautiful for somebody—who is it?

JANE—Myself!

FANSHAW—(*Showing that he does not believe her*)—You're very good to yourself.

JANE—I am not one of those women who are brought up to look ugly in bed, and wear their old clothes when they travel!

FANSHAW—(*Getting impatient*)—If you don't come down I'll come up!

JANE—Shall I throw you a rope-ladder and a rose?

FANSHAW—(*Jeeringly*)—Don't mistake ME for Mr. Penfield Sturgis!

JANE—(*Starting back involuntarily*)—Horrid! (*She disappears from the window*).

FANSHAW—(*With a grin*)—I thought that would fetch you! (*He goes to fireplace, picks up cards from tray*,

sorts out eight and carries them across to table C. JANE enters R.D. She has removed her cap and negligee and is wearing a handsome house gown).

JANE—(*Still ruffled*)—Now for God's sake spill it out!

FANSHAW—(*At L. side of table, dealing out card to her*)—Just read this.

JANE—(*Reading card*)—Mr. Penfield Sturgis.

FANSHAW—(*Dealing her another card*)—And that?

JANE—(*Reading card*)—Mr. Penfield Sturgis.

FANSHAW—(*Dealing another card*)—And this?

JANE—(*Reading*)—Mr. Penfield Sturgis. Is it a chorus?

FANSHAW—(*Dealing five more cards in rapid succession*)—A chorus of eight. One for every day since you bearded him in his vestry!

JANE—(*Crossing to settle by fireplace, piling up cushions and sitting*)—If you going to be serious, I'm going to be comfortable. Another cushion, Lyn!—(*Fanshaw gets cushion from big chair by table C.*)—Behind my back—behind my back!—(*Fanshaw places cushion behind her back*)—Now the footstool!—(*Fanshaw gets footstool from in front of fireplace and sets it at her feet. Jane settles herself*)—There!

FANSHAW—Is your feline majesty at ease?

JANE—Yes, yes—go on!

FANSHAW—(*Sitting beside her*)—Now, then—do you realize that this young clerical idiot is in peril of falling in love with you?

JANE—In love with me? Not he—that clerical young ICICLE!

FANSHAW—Oh, you've discovered that he is an icicle! Then you have been philandering with him! What do you mean by it.

JANE—I haven't been philandering with him any more than I have been with you—and Heaven knows—

FANSHAW—Never mind what Heaven knows. What are you up to with Sturgis?

JANE—Showing him a bit of my world.

FANSHAW—Showing him a bit of yourself, you mean. If you were a younger woman—

JANE—Oh, I'm young enough.

FANSHAW—You're not exactly a—broiler, you know!—Indian Summer has caught up with both of us!

JANE—How dare you say that? I was in my cradle when you were in your dotage—you prehistoric monster.

FANSHAW—You're not in your eradle now. Pen is! Of course, if you want to rob the erib—

JANE—Oh, shnt up! Can't you understand that Pen makes me feel like a girl? He has a way of treating me as if I were his own age—I LOVE IT!

FANSHAW—That's where his danger lies! You're such a ripping good actress that you can assume even youth and all its charms. You fool Sturgis completely—you wield the power of yonth; but I can't for the life of me see what satisfaction you get in fascinating a stubborn, unbroken colt!

JANE—(*Rising suddenly with a laugh*)—Silly old Lyn! If I'd really wanted to work my "power," as you call it, on Sturgis, I'd have had him jumping hurdles and 'playing dead' days ago! (*Snaps her fingers in Fanshaw's face and goes to piano. She sits facing the key-board*).

FANSHAW—(*Following her, leaning on piano, facing Jane and the audience*)—What did you want with him?

JANE—(*Running her fingers over the keys*)—You know I always act on impulse?

FANSHAW—We'll call it that.

JANE—I'll tell you. When he gave me that troncing in his pulpit, I couldn't resist the impulse to hit back.

FANSHAW—And having hit back, why didn't you retire from the combat?

JANE—Because he wouldn't admit that he was wrong.

FANSHAW—(*Humorously*)—So you lured him here to pick his bones.

JANE—I'm going to make him EAT HIS SERMON.

FANSHAW—Hm! You'll season it, of course?

JANE—A little dressing will make it go down more easily.

FANSHAW—Poor kid! He'll eat his sermon for the sake of the dressing. It's bound to disagree with him, Jane. This young man is going to be a mighty siek pup if you don't let him go.

JANE—Don't be such a fluff, Lyn! I'm not keeping him!

FANSHAW—You are—and it isn't straight, it isn't Eke you. He's engaged to Miss Darigal—you knew that.

JANE—Certainly I knew it! What difference does that make?

FANSHAW—In all decency you should keep hands off.

JANE—(*Rising, angrily, business of going for Fanshaw, shaking him, etc.*)—Decency! You accuse me of having no sense of decency! Did Sturgis have any sense of decency when he stood up in his pulpit and pilloried me? No, he had not! But before I'm through with him he will. I'm not little enough to meddle with his little love affair, but I'm big enough to take pains to teach him—in my own way—that I'm an artist—not the shameful creature of his imagination! I'm going to teach him that it is asinine to confuse the character of an artist with the role she sings. My only motive in asking Sturgis here has been to beat those ideas into his stupid brain, and I shall not stop until I have made him eat every word of his damned sermon! You've got to believe that!

FANSHAW—(*Hurriedly retreating to the R. end of the piano, as though he were frightened to death*)—All right! All right! Don't eat me alive—I believe you, I believe you!

JANE—(*Sinking down in chair by table, giving an impatient sigh*)—The energy I waste on idiots! This sort of thing takes more out of me than the longest part in my repertoire.

FANSHAW—(*After a pause*)—Jane, you gave a great performance last night.

JANE—You were there?

FANSHAW—Yes! So was Sturgis.

JANE—(*Ignoring his reference to Sturgis*)—You thought it a—fine performance?

FANSHAW—Superb! Your last wriggle was the poetry of perdition! It probably scared Pen into a cold perspiration!—(*Coming from behind end of piano*)—Really, in the face of all the row the thing's made, I wonder you didn't tone down your performance.

JANE—(*Angrily*)—Tone it down? Never! When I'm compelled to do that, I'll throw up the part.

FANSHAW—I wish you would. You're singing too often. You should husband your voice.

JANE—(*Belligerently*)—What's the matter with my voice?

FANSHAW—Nothing—yet. It's a marvel of velvet and rainbows—it is perfect—it can't be more beautiful, so one day it will be—less.

JANE—(*Anxiously*)—How do you know?

FANSHAW—I have had the pleasure of looking down your expensive throat too often of late. If you're wise, you'll stop singing these trying roles.

JANE—I might as well tell you to stop doctoring! Yes why don't you before your legs give out and you have to receive your patients in a wheel chair with a hot-water bottle in your lap?

FANSHAW—I might take your advice. In fact I've been thinking of it a great deal lately. I have a jolly old place in the country, with a whopping big fireplace! Some day I'm going to light up that fireplace for good and all, but I'm not going to do it ALONE!—(*Door bell rings off L.—Annoyed*)—Damn!

JANE—That must be Sturgis! This is his hour.

FANSHAW—Ah! Feeding time. The little rabbit has come to get a leaf of his sermon.

(*RAPHAEL, a man-servant, enters L.D., with card on tray; presents it to Jane.*)

JANE—(*To Raphael*)—Ask Mr. Sturgis to come in. (*Raphael exits L.D.*)—(*Fanshaw is amused.*)

JANE—(*Looking at Fanshaw with an impudent smile, waving card*)—Nine!—(*She drops card on pile with the others.*)—(*PENFIELD STURGIS enters L.D.*)

PENFIELD—(*Looking at Jane as though she were a dangerous animal, the result of having seen her the night before as "Zaporah"*)—You are—at home?

JANE—To my rector and my doctor!—(*Waves hand in Fanshaw's direction.*)

PENFIELD—(*Showing relief at the sight of Fanshaw, advancing C. to meet him*)—Oh! How are you, Doctor?

FANSHAW—(*Shaking Penfield's hand*)—Hello Pen!

JANE—Aren't you going to shake hands with me?

PENFIELD—(*Shaking Jane's hand warily*)—I—I only dropped in for a moment.

JANE—I'm not going to let you go in a moment. But I can't keep the Doctor any longer!

PENFIELD—(*Earnestly, to Fanshaw*)—Don't go, Doctor.

JANE—(*To Penfield*)—We must let him go—one of his richest patients is passing away!—(*Sweetly, to Fanshaw*)—Don't let us keep you, Lyn!

FANSHAW—(*With sly humor*)—You're not keeping me! I'm going.—(*With a little bow, which includes both Penfield and Jane, Fanshaw exits L.D.*)

JANE—(*As the door closes after Fanshaw*)—You were in front last night, Mr. Sturgis.

PENFIELD—(*Surprised, backing away from her*)—How did you know?

JANE—I FELT that you were there—on the right hand side of the house, back of the boxes—were you not?

PENFIELD—Near the steam radiator—it knocked abominably—just as you came on the stage.—(*Jane goes to the settle by the fireplace and sits L. side of settle*).

JANE—I heard it; but I wasn't sure whether it was you or the radiator. Come, tell me what you thought of me. (*Penfield reluctantly sits at extreme R. of settle*).

PENFIELD—I'd rather not!

JANE—You were shocked?

PENFIELD—I—I was repelled. It was a horror!—a nauseating exhibition! It sickened me to the soul.

JANE—But shining through all the debauchery is the humanity of that story; and I defy you to express more forcibly the universal lesson that the clergy are forever dinning into our ears:—"The wages of sin are death!"

PENFIELD—I grant you it teaches that, but by such base means! I felt outraged to see a disciple subjected to the lascivious overtures of a creature like you.

JANE—(*With heat*)—You mean—Zaporah!

PENFIELD—(*Looking at her hesitatingly*)—I—I suppose I do!—(*Belongs off stage L.*)

JANE—(*Throwing up her hands in anger and impatience as she rises*)—Good Lord! You have been here every day for a week, and you still think I'm that woman. If you had seen me as Carmen, Bruhikda, Madam Butterfly, Tosca, any one, or all of them—what would you think of me then?—(*Taking the stage, gesticulating, spluttering with exasperation*)—Oh, I—I have not patience with you. Really, I—I don't know what I'll do with you.

PENFIELD—Would to God, I could get that picture of you out of my mind.—(*With a transition*)—Have patience with me!

JULIE—(*Without*)—Madam is engaged—one moment!

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Without*)—Never mind, you needn't announce me!

JULIE—(*Without, protesting*)—But Madam—do not push me like that!—(*Commotion heard without L.*)

JANE—(*Listening*)—Someone is trying to break in! (*MRS. KEARSLEY enters L.D., smiling and triumphant.*)

She is elaborately costumed. JULIE follows her, ruffled, and explaining in pantomime to Jane that she could not prevent Mrs. Kearsley from entering).

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Rattling away as she seizes Jane's hand*)—At last I've found you in! I don't know how many times I've called, my dear Miss Bartlett! I'd almost despaired—(*Jane frees her hand from Mrs. Kearsley's grasp*).

field and takes his hand)—How do you do Mr. Sturgis! I

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Without pausing, turns to Pen-*
saw you last night at the opera.—(*To Jane*)—Such a victory for you, my dear!—our rector's presence there—and here!—(*To Penfield*)—You see, we shouldn't judge these things until we've seen them—should we? And you know I—I WAS inclined—just for a moment—to agree with you—but after all—(*Breaking off and starting all over again, for an instant uncertain as to Penfield's attitude*)—You—were impressed?

JANE—(*Quickly*)—Decidedly!

PENFIELD—But—

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Interrupting*)—Naturally, or he wouldn't have stayed.

PENFIELD—*I stayed because—*

JANE—(*Cutting in*)—He didn't want to miss a note.

PENFIELD—I WAS bound to hear it to the end.

JANE—(*Interrupting*)—And he came here to-day to tell me just what he thought of it. We've had a delightful chat about it.

PENFIELD—It's very kind of you to put it that way.

JANE—No, no—it was very good of you to say such kind things about my performance.

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Who has been fretting to get in a word, and who is impressed by the belief that Penfield approves of the opera*)—How could he help himself? You were so perfectly fascinating, my dear! Such poetry, such passion! I was literally carried away! You know I thought it a shame you had to be killed, but I suppose you deserved it.

JANE—(*Laconically*)—Thank you—you're more than kind.

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Dropping into easy chair L. side of C. table*)—What a comfortable chair—(*Looking around*)—and what a lovely room!—(*Lays her muff on the table, throws furs over arm of chair and unbuttoned coat. Jane sits on end of piano bench; Penfield sits on arc of settle L.C.*)

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*To Jane*)—I wonder if you'd like to sing something for me?

JANE—I shall have to ask you to excuse me—my voice needs a rest.

MRS. KEARSLEY—Oh, well—some other day—(*To Penfield*)—You're a very lucky young man to have the entree here.

PENFIELD—I appreciate my good fortune, I assure you.

MRS. KEARSLEY—This is certainly an age of progress. Here we have the stage and the church on intimate terms—(*Penfield is visibly uncomfortable during the following*)—People may talk—but as long as Miss Durigal doesn't mind—(*To Jane*)—I hear you're showing Mr. Sturgis a bit of the world! It makes me think of one of those sight-seeing auto affairs!

JANE—Yes! I'm the creature who stands on the top of the bus with a megaphone!

MRS. KEARSLEY—With your perfectly marvelous voice singing out the points of interest—you'd have the whole city following you.

PENFIELD—Ah yes! They'd follow her—(*Bitterly*)—through the mud!—(*Jane raises her eyebrows, makes him a serio-comic bow*).

MRS. KEARSLEY—What a passionate compliment!

JANE—Oh, he's been sizzling with that sort of thing for the last hour.

MRS. KEARSLEY—Have I been hear an HOUR? I only meant to stay five minutes!—(*Picking up furs and rising*)—Anyway, I've interrupted your tete-a-tete long enough!—(*Shaking Jane's hand*)—Good-bye. So sweet of you to receive me. I'll drop in again now that I've found the way.

JANE—I never expect to be at home again.

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Laughing*)—I'm not taking that seriously. Good-bye, Mr. Sturgis. I'm sure you'll be very wise before Miss Bartlett gets through with you. (*Penfield bows to Mrs. Kearsley, who exits L.D.*)

JANE—(*Turning to Pen*)—Sensitive little woman—your friend, Mrs. Kearsley.

PENFIELD—You may jeer at her, but she's a pretty good sort after all. She represents a large part of my congregation.

JANE—And I'm sure she expresses the opinions of the sphere in which she revolves so rapidly.

PENFIELD—She defended you.

JANE—I hope you were impressed.

PENFIELD— I was.

JANE—Then why did you break out in that horrid way against me?

PENFIELD—Because I saw you in my mind piloting that vulgar, sight-seeing automobile—your thrilling voice vanishing through the streets, your person and your song alike a menace to the souls of the men who run after you in the gutters; and though they might not touch you, they would have sinned in their minds a hundred times.

JANE—That is all in your morbid fancy.

PENFIELD—No! I felt, as I watched you last night, that when you tempted Judas you tempted every man who saw you. They sinned in their minds. *(Bell rings off stage L.)*

JANE—*(Rising, distressed, wondering)*—What have I done to you? You poor, foolish boy! I was wrong to send you to that performance! I didn't realize how morbidly sensitive you are—and you're getting worse and worse! I must sweep these lunatic ideas out of your head. I will do it—I will do it! *(Julie enters and shows in SEPULVEDA, at L.D. He is a pale, thin young Spaniard whose clothes look as though he had slept in them.)*

SEPULVEDA—*(Entering impulsively, and catching hold of both of Jane's hands and kissing them)*—Ah, Señorita.—I am mad as a hat—with joy—it is come—I have captured it!

JANE—*(Seizing Sepulveda by the lapels of his coat and looking searchingly into his face)*—You look half-starved! What have you been doing to your wretched self?

SEPULVEDA—*(With a boyish laugh)*—I am starved altogether!—*(Excitedly)*—But what that matter!—*(Clapping his hands together, ecstatically)*—I have got it—the motif!—*(Sings a snatch of music)*—Lalalala! You hear it through the dance music—just before Chita makes the grand entrance! The cymbals! Zing!—*(Claps his hands like cymbals)*—She is on! The motif!—*(Singing)*—La, la hum, te, te, ta, ta! The violins take it up! The castanets—*(Imitates castanets)*—I am goin' for to make me a new instrument—I have already experiment with a file and a tin cracker-box—Oh, magnificent!—to represent the pain in the heart of the Count when he firs' look at the dancer! You like the motif? Si! Si!

JANE—*(Enthusiastically)*—Splendid! I can hear

myself singing it!—(With a transition)—Now you must have something to eat! Call Julie for me.

SEPULVEDA—(Singing)—Julie!—(A little run and a trill—then on a higher note)—Julie!—(Another run and a trill—at the top-note of his highest register)—Julie!—(Then with a swift descent to the lowest note possible)—Julie!—(He makes a grotesque bow to Jane; stops short, seeing Penfield, who has retreated to the fireplace, wonder-struck at the actions of Sepulveda).

JANE—(Introducing them)—Mr. Sturgis, this is Senor Sepulveda—he is writing an opera for me!—(The men shake hands—Julie enters R.D.)

JANE—(To Julie)—Julie, bring some lunch—on a tray for the Senor!—(Julie exits R.D.)

SEPULVEDA—(Circumciously, to Penfield)—It is a pleasure to meet a friend of the Senorita.

PENFIELD—(Politely)—The pleasure is mutual.

SEPULVEDA—You hear that motif—little bit ago?

PENFIELD—Very interesting, I'm sure.

SEPULVEDA—(Enthusiastically)—Ah! but wait—wait until you hear the whole damn score!—(Starts for piano)—

JANE—(Stopping him)—But Mr. Sturgis may not care to hear the whole "damn" score.

PENFIELD—(Smiling)—I should be most happy to hear it!

SEPULVEDA—(Resisting the temptation)—No! No! I forget!—(Laughing at himself)—I am so crazy, you know! But who would not be so? To compose a grande opera for the bella prima donna! Of course you have heard her seeng (sing), Senor?

PENFIELD—Yes, I've heard her sing!

SEPULVEDA—Well—well—WELL—then you understand—there is nothing to talk about! What an artiste—she jump into the character and turn it inside out for you! And the voice—the voice! Madre de Dios! I could drink that voice!

JANE—(Patting Sepulveda affectionately on the shoulder)—Bless his heart! I shall sing his music for him! (Enter Julie R.D. with a tray of tiny sandwiches, olives, small cakes covered with pink sugar).

SEPULVEDA—(To Penfield)—You hear that, Senor? But no matter—I want no witness—no contract—that promise is as true as the notes she seeng (sing).

JANE—(Looking at tray, then angrily to Julie)—

Take it away—he doesn't want that pink tea stuff—he must have real food—Clear out!

JULIE—(*Confused, backing away*)—Oh, Madam!

SEPULVEDA—(*Deftly picking a sandwich from the tray*)—Pardon me!

JANE—(*To Sepulveda*)—You amuse Mr. Sturgis. I'll go get you something FIT to eat—(*Shooing Julie out R.D. and following her*)—Allez-vous-en—vite, vite!

SEPULVEDA—(*Taking a bite of the sandwich, to Penfield*)—You see what she is like! Always the sam'! She pick me out of the gutter like the pup-dog, by the nip of the neck. I was jus' the little fiddle at the Cafe Rouge. She has the fine ear—same as the heart. She hear my soul speak in the fiddle. She get me the job in the beeg orchestra at the opera. Now, Dios! I am the composer! Pretty soon, mebbe, I lead that sam' orchestra—myself—with my own opera!—(*Waving sandwich, singing and imitating a conductor*).

PENFIELD—(*Sitting in easy chair L. of C. table*)—What is the theme of your opera?

SEPULVEDA—(*Sitting on the R. corner of the table*) The theme? Ah!—(*Illustrating with many gestures*)—It is this: A great Duke loses his heart to the picture of a most beautiful lady. But the picture is not enough! No! He must have the lady herself—to marry her! He say to his best friend, the Count Machemba de Raimundo—"You go get me these lady wherever she reside." The Count go to Granada—he finds the beautiful lady of the picture. She is Chita, the dancing girl. And then—what you theenk?—she falls in love with him! You should hear the passion of my music there—crescendo—the violins! The Count, he cannot resist her. She is tempestuoso! He forget the Duke, his honor, everything. They belong to each other! He is hers—she is his! Is that not original—dramatique?

PENFIELD—I suppose so; but why is it that you opera composers always choose as your heroine—women who are—eh—frail?

SEPULVEDA—(*Puzzled*)—F-frail—f-rail? What is that?

PENFIELD—Women who sin!

SEPULVEDA—Ah! That is where you get the emotion—and without emotion—what is music?

PENFIELD—Still, I should think you might find emotion in a more moral theme.

SEPULVEDA—It is plain you are not a musician.

Love is the basis of it all. See how I sound the heart: In my opera, the Duke hear that the lovers fly to Seville. He follow them. He find them singing a love duet in the garden. That is the most passionate music of all. The Duke cries: "Traitor, you have betrayed me! He draws his dagger and stabs him in the heart. Poor Chita shrieks and kills herself also, and falls on the body of her lover. The Duke falls on his knees and swear to give them a magnificent funeral.

PENFIELD—You always kill them off at the end, don't you?

SEPULVEDA—Certainly! Death—ah—that is the last grand emotion of them all! An' in opera you cannot have them die jus' because they have been making EYES at each other for three or four acts!

PENFIELD—To play a character, like your Chita, to play it well—to make it real, convincing—must not the singer have had some experience?

SEPULVEDA—*(Laughing)*—No, no, no!

PENFIELD—Then she must be HERSELF LIKE that character she portrays!

SEPULVEDA—No, no, no! The devil, if he was an artist, could play the angel—or the angel, if she was the artist, could play the devil!—*(Enter Jane R.D. with a tray bearing a generous slice of cold meat, a bowl of salad, a rack of toast, butter, pot of coffee, etc.)*

SEPULVEDA—*(Indicating Jane)*—You have saw what a magnificent devil THAT angel make!—*(Noting the tray)*—Santissima—*(Takes tray from Jane)*.

JANE—How have you two been getting on?

SEPULVEDA—*(Taking tray down to tea-table by fireplace)*—We have been having a most interesting conversation!

JANE—You must have been talking about yourself! Not another word until you have polished off the tray!

SEPULVEDA—*(Sitting on chair lower side of fireplace with back to the audience, waving napkin while Jane moves the table close to the chair)*—Angelita! I shall eat even the serviette!

PENFIELD—*(Coming down to piano, leaning against it)*—What I should like to know is—how you artists manage to turn yourselves into angels or devils without being one or the other?

SEPULVEDA—*(While he attacks his luncheon)*—Everybody has some little bit of the angel or devil in his-

self—even you, Señor! That gives us the instinct—the guide. The rest comes from what we find in life around us—picked from every sense we have got—the eye, the ear, the taste, the touch,—even the smell!

JANE—And piece it all together—illuminate it with our genius!

SEPULVEDA—Si! Si! Si!

PENFIELD—(To Sepulveda)—Has the personal character of a singer NO RELATION WHATEVER to the role she assumes?

SEPULVEDA—(Laughing)—You ARE droll!—(With a look at Jane)—Is he not?—(To Penfield)—An artist like the Señorita there—she put on and off a character like you do your coat!—(Enter RAPHAEL L.D.)

RAPHAEL—Will Madam see Madam Sternburg-Reese?

JANE—Yes, yes, yes—you imbecile! At once!—(Jane rises, goes up C. Raphael shows in at L.D. MADAM STERNBURG-REESE, a large woman, operatic contralto, type, with a rich speaking voice, and German accent).

MADAME STERNBURG-REESE—Jane, I have brought somebody to see you! You are too busy—yes?

JANE—No! No! Come in!

MADAME S-R.—(Speaking to someone without)—Come, my child—do not be afraid!—(Madame S-R enters leading by the hand WINIFRED LEEDS, a young, slender American girl, in a neat but unfashionable ready-made suit and poor furs. At the sight of her, Jane frowns).

MADAMS S-R—They have discharged her!

JANE—I should hope so! Take her away!

WINIFRED—(To Madame S-R—You see it is no use—(She starts towards L.D.)

MADAME S-R—(Stopping her)—You wait! Jane—if you just speak one word for her, they will put her back in the chorus!

JANE—I absolutely refuse!

MADAME S-R—Now Jane, be a good girl—forgive the child!

JANE—(Indignant)—Hah! Forgive her—(To Sepulveda, who is busily eating)—Do you know what that little beast did?

SEPULVEDA—(Musically)—What did she did? What did she did?

JANE—She ruined the garden scene for me on Thursday night!

SEPULVEDA—Oh! Maledito! She is the insignificant wretch who took the jewels from the casket?

JANE—(*Excitedly*)—I should say she was! I can imagine—my feelings—when I opened that casket—... and it EMPTY—How—how could I sing the “jewel-song” then? Oh—oh—I—I—

MADAME S-R—(*Soothing Jane*)—Jane, Jane, Jane! She is most sorry—she begs to be forgiven.

JANE—Never! Never!—(*To Sepulveda*)—You know she only confessed when they were on the point of dismissing the property-man. Hah, hah—she must be in love with him!

WINIFRED—(*Coldly*)—I am not in love with the property-man!

JANE—(*Angrily*)—Why—why did you do such a thing? I thought I shon'd lose my mind—God!

WINIFRED—I was jealous of you!

JANE—Jealous of me!—(*Laughing with contempt*)—You! Hah! Hah!

WINIFRED—Yes! You are so successful! I am only one of the chorus! I wanted to see you fail—just once! Oh, I was mad!

SEPULVEDA—It was her temperament! Hah, hah! She ought to be a prima donna!

JANE—(*To Sepulveda*)—Shut up!

SEPULVEDA—I am shut!—(*Eats busily*).

MADAM S-R—Jane, if you don't forgive her, you will ruin her career!

JANE—Career! THAT have a career!

MADAM S-R—She has a voice—a pretty, nice, liddle voice! Perhaps if you hear that voice—

JANE—I will not hear it.

SEPULVEDA—(*Jumping up and going to the piano*)
Let ME hear it!

JANE—(*Angrily*)—Sepulveda, sit down!

PENFIELD—(*Who has been standing by the piano, an interested listener*)—Why not hear her voice?

JANE—(*Turning on him with a flash of anger at first—then pausing with a shrug as she looks at him*)—It will do her no good—it will not influence me in the least!—(*She sails up stage and exits R.D.*)

MADAM S-R—(*To Winifred*)—Come, child! She has shut the door, but she will listen. She is more growl than she is—bite!—(*She pushes Winifred toward the piano,*

smiles at Penfield, who turns up to the table C., and drops on settle by fireplace L. Penfield leans against table C.)

SEPULVEDA—(*Who has seated himself at the keyboard and now strikes a few chords*)—Now— what shall it be, *Seuorita*?

WINIFRED—You know “The Land of the Sky-Blue Water?”

SEPULVEDA—I KNOW EVERYTHING—I am a composer!—(*He plays. Winifred sings the song simply, with a sweet voice. As she sings, Jane opens R.D. slowly and stands there listening, surprised at the girl's voice. As the song finishes, Jane comes down to her quickly.*)

JANE—(*With indignation*)—It is an outrage! How dare you sing a note before you know how to produce a tone!—(*General amazement.*)

WINIFRED—(*Despondently*)—But, Madam, I—

JANE—You don't know how to sing! Your voice isn't placed! It must be trained!—(*All are amazed and puzzled.*)

WINIFRED—Trained?

JANE—Yes, imbecile—before you ruin it! Yes, yes, you have a real voice—it is there! But the way you use it! You must have taught yourself!

WINIFRED—Madam! Then you will speak a good word for me—you will help me to get my place in the chorus again?

JANE—I will not! You shall not open your mouth! You must be TAUGHT to sing! You will have to work, work, work!

WINIFRED—I cannot afford it—I have my living to make.

JANE—You have your voice to make!—(*Turning to Madam Sternburg-Reese*)—I think Ansaldi is the man for her!

MADAM S-R—Very good, very good! There is no one like him—he is the one!

SEPULVEDA—No, no, no! Ansaldi is too expensive—she should have Michel Clarke!

JANE—(*Indignantly*)—Michel Clarke! Pooh! I wouldn't let that man teach my cat!

MADAM S-R—Ansaldi is the best. His method of breath control—Ah!

JANE—He taught me!—(*To Winifred*)—You shall go to Ansaldi!

WINIFRED—But he is in London—

JANE—What of that? Don't you like London?

WINIFRED—I've never been there—and I can't afford to go—and if I could—there is my mother—I couldn't leave her alone.

JANE—Then take her with you. I will write to Ansaldo—arrange with him for your lessons—whatever you need for your expenses—

WINIFRED—Oh, thank you, Madam, but I could not accept money from you.

JANE—(*Angrily*)—You donkey! You have a fine sense of honor! You could spoil my scene—you could take those jewels from my casket—but you cannot take my money! Bah!

WINIFRED—I hoped you had forgiven me for that!

JANE—I have not!

MADAME S-R—Ah, Jane—

JANE—What! She insults me by refusing my help!

MADAM S-R—(*To Winifred*)—You could always pay her back.

JANE—I should hope so! What are the few thousands I shall advance to her now? Nothing! Nothing! In three years she will be getting her thousand dollars a night for singing Madame Butterfly!

WINIFRED—(*To Jane*)—If you really think I'll ever be able to pay you back, I'll be very grateful for your help!

JANE—That settles it!—(*Goes to table C., opens drawer, takes out check-book and sits*).

MADAM S-R—Jane, you must let me help!

JANE—(*Writing in check book*)—You! Gertrude! With your ten children!

MADAM S-R—Nine! My dear!

JANE—Well, there will probably be another in the middle of the season!

MADAM S-R—You can always have the season—but you cannot always have the children.

JANE—(*To Penfield as she tears check from her book*)—Madam has a whole opera troop of her own!

MADAM S-R—They are like so many birds.

PENFIELD—I should say that was the best kind of music.

SEPULVEDA—Especially when they are all singing at once, each in a different key—as they all do. Ah, they drive me crazy.

MADAM S-R—It is better music than you can make—you nasty little Dago!

SEPULVEDA—(*Indignantly*)—I am not a Dago! I am the purest Castilian!

JANE—(*Rising, check in hand*)—I tell you what you can do, Gertrude. See that this girl—(*Indicating Winifred*)—has what she needs in the way of clothes.—(*Hands check to Madam Sternburg-Recse*).

MADAM S-R—(*Examining Winifred's skirt waist*)—Himmel! You will die!—(*To Jane*)—She must have plenty of warm union-suits!—(*Feeling Winifred's skirt*)—and flannel petticoats—woolen stockings!

JANE—God help her!

MADAM S-R—And two nice thick tweed gowns!

JANE—Bon Dien! Don't dress her like yourself. Get her something pretty—and don't forget a pair of good corsets!—(*Studying Winifred*)—A girl with eyes like that should have a gorgeous evening gown of gold and violet—and if she must be warm, get her a fur coat.

MADAM S-R—Ach Gott, the next thing you will want me to buy for her is a limousine! I refuse! I refuse!

JANE—You'll do what I say; and pack her off directly!

WINIFRED—(*To Jane*)—Oh, how can I thank you!

JANE—Don't thank me—thank your voice. Now out with you all!—(*Sepulveda starts for the L.D. Penfield stirs himself uncertainly*).

MADAM S-R—You are a dear girl, Jane!

JANE—(*Patting her on the cheek and going with her towards L.D.*)—Give my love to all the little Sternbirds!

WINIFRED—(*To Jane*)—Oh you must let me tell you how generous, and kind—

JANE—Stop that!—(*Giving Winifred her hand*)—Good luck to you—write me sometimes!—(*Winifred emotionally seizes Jane's hand and kisses it. Jane, moved, draws Winifred suddenly into her arms; the girl cries on Jane's shoulder.—Penfield and Sepulveda shake hands*).

MADAM S-R—(*Wiping her eyes*)—Ach, that Jane! Isn't she made of gold?—(*Sharply to Winifred*)—Child! Stop your blubbering! Come on!—(*Takes Winifred away from Jane and exits with her L.D.*)

SEPULVEDA—(*To Jane, bowing over her hand*)—Gracias, Senorita! You have provide the feast for the body—also the soul. We laugh—we cry—I am so played upon I feel like a fiddle! Madre de Dios, what a woman you are! How I love you!—(*Singing, "tum, tum, tiddle, de de, ta, ta," Sepulveda exits L.D.*)

PENFIELD—(*About to go, to Jane*)—Who is that woman?

JANE—The big, mothering hen?

PENFIELD—Yes—there's something familiar about her.

JANE—That's Madam Sternburg-Reese.

PENFIELD—Who is she?

JANE—The greatest dramatic contralto in the world! You saw her last night—(*Laughing*)—She sings Chorazina—the wicked mother of Zaporah

PENFIELD—(*Thunderstruck*)—She?

JANE—(*Mimicking him*)—Yes—SHE!

PENFIELD—(*Dazed*)—But she's an awfully good sort!

JANE—(*Smiling*)—Am I any worse than she is?

PENFIELD—(*Looking at her; studying her for a moment, then in a low voice*)—I'm afraid I've been a fool—I'm afraid I've been a fool!—(*Pause*)—Yes! I have—absolutely a fool!

JANE—(*Smiling*)—Not absolutely. And one may always change.

PENFIELD—I've been worse than a fool; I've been unjust. Oh, the things I've said about you! They all come back and hammer on my brain. I can't think—I can only wonder—at your patience with me.

JANE—(*Excitedly*)—My patience! Hah! I wonder at it!—(*With a transition*)—But it's all right—you were bound to see! Don't take it so tragically!

PENFIELD—Oh, that's like you—you're so kind, so generous, so forgiving—I should have seen the angel in you!

JANE—(*With a laugh*)—I had horns and a tail an hour ago—now I've got wings—don't give me a harp!—(*She puts out her hand to him*).

PENFIELD—(*Taking her hand in both of his*)—I don't mind your laughing at me. I wish I could give you something—I wish I could do something for you!

JANE—(*Letting her hand remain in his*)—My dear, you have done something for me—you've given me your friendship! The times we've sat here together and talked of—of cabbages and kings! Your active youth summoned my youth from the past!

PENFIELD—(*Surprised*)—Your YOUTH! Why you're as young as I am!—(*Jane is enchanted*)—In fact—you're no age at all!

JANE—You're a very dear boy!—(*She gives his hand a pat and turns away from him. The L.D. is open. HERMAN GEIST, the manager of the Metropolitan Opera Co. appears at the door. He is a cultivated Hebrew of 50—well-dressed, but not loudly. There is a suspicion of accent in his voice.*)

JANE—(*Going to Geist—shaking hands with him*)—Come in, Herman!

GEIST—I do not intrude?

JANE—Oh, no!—(*To Penfield*)—Mr. Geist, my manager—Mr. Sturgis!—(*Introduces them.*)

GEIST—(*Shaking hands with Penfield*)—Mr. Sturgis? Not Mr. Penfield Sturgis of St. Martin's-in-the-Lane?

PENFIELD—(*Embarrassed*)—Why—yes!

GEIST—Ah, you don't say! Well! Well!

JANE—(*Impatiently*)—Yes, yes!

GEIST—Humhum!

PENFIELD—I've an engagement—I must be going.

GEIST—Couldn't you give me—five minutes?

PENFIELD—(*Puzzled, with a look at Jane*)—Why—yes, if you—like! ---

GEIST—May we sit down, Jane?

JANE—(*Signalling Penfield to remain; to Geist tartly*)—Have I ever forbidden you to sit down!

GEIST—No, indeed, Jane. I shan't be here long. I'll take this chair! Hm!—(*Geist sits in easy chair L. of table C.; Penfield comes down stage L. side of settle to fireplace, where he stands, puzzled; Jane sits on arm of settle facing Geist, her back to Penfield.*)

JANE—(*Impatiently, mimicking Geist*)—Well, well, Hm, hm! Hah, hah! You've got us by the ears now—what is it?

GEIST—The Mayor has closed "Zaporah."—(*Penfield starts apprehensively.*)

JANE—Closed "ZAPORAH!"

GEIST—Precisely. He notified me to that effect this morning. If you want details—you'll find them in the afternoon papers?

JANE—(*Spluttering with indignation*)—It's an outrage!

GEIST—Humhum!

JANE—I never heard of such an idiotic piece of business—this mayor's a jaekass!

GEIST—Quite so!

JANE—What possessed the blithering idiot to shut down on us like that?

GEIST—(*With a grin*)—I think it must have been—Mr. Sturgis's sermon.

JANE—(*Erasperated, to Pen*)—You knew the Mayor's intention, Mr. Sturgis?

PENFIELD—Upon my word, I did not!

JANE—Well, you've done it, with your damned sermon!

GEIST—Yes, they've published it word for word in the papers! They've got it in pamphlet form and used it as a campaign document against us. A committee visited the Mayor and stuck it under his nose. Result: "Zaporah's" head comes off. Interment private. No flowers!

JANE—(*Indignantly to Geist*)—You're not going to submit to this—are you?

GEIST—I must!

JANE—Why must you?

GEIST—Do you want to be hauled to jail and haled to court?

JANE—Could the Mayor do that?

GEIST—He could—and would!

JANE—(*Sinking down on piano seat*)—It's disgusting! Why doesn't he censor the whole repertoire? Why doesn't he suppress *Die Walkure*?

GEIST—Mr. Sturgis hasn't called his attention to it—yet!

PENFIELD—I know nothing about *Die Walkure*.

JANE—And you knew nothing about "Zaporah!"

GEIST—But the Mayor acts on his information! Hah!

PENFIELD—(*Embarrassed*)—I'm very sorry to have caused all this trouble, but—

JANE—Don't you think it is up to you to set the Mayor right?

GEIST—That's an idea!—(*To Pen*)—A word from you—

PENFIELD—What could I say?

JANE—What could you say? Why the truth! Tell him you hadn't seen the opera when you delivered your sermon—that now you have seen it, and find nothing objectionable!

PENFIELD—But I do find something objectionable in it!

JANE—(*Excited and impatient*)—For goodness sake!

I thought we had settled that! Didn't you tell me fifteen minutes ago that you'd been miserably in the wrong?

PENFIELD—Yes, about you; but not about the opera!

GEIST—Then, write and tell him you've changed your mind about her!

JANE—What good would that do? The Mayor isn't suppressing me!

GEIST—Nothing is sacred to the clergy! Well, well! We'll have to change the bill, Jane. We'll make them a concession! We'll give them some simple little love story—I have it! We'll put on Tristan and Isolde!

JANE—(*Laughing*)—Not in this pale city! No more passionate princesses for Jane! They are not appreciated. For the balance of the engagement consider me a WHITE VIOLET! I'll 'Elizabeth'! Announce "Tamhauser!"

GEIST—(*To Pen*)—See what you have done!—(*To Jane*)—Rehearsal to-morrow at eleven.—(*To Pen*)—I'll send you a pair of seats; I'd like to have your opinion on a Wagner masterpiece!—(*Geist exits L.D.—Penfield sinks down on the settle, his head in his hands.—Jane goes to him*).

JANE—(*Rather impatiently*)—What is the trouble, now?

PENFIELD—I've been thinking of what Mr. Geist said!

JANE—Oh don't let that bother you! I don't mind! I'm beginning to be rather glad that I'm going to sing 'Elizabeth!' I'll sing it for you! In a white robe and golden hair—you'll ADORE me!

PENFIELD—How could I do less—you're so kind, so generous, so forgiving!

JANE—(*Impulsively*)—You're a dear, foolish, honest boy! I don't know why—but I find it very easy to forgive you!—(*Holds out hand to him*).

PENFIELD—(*Taking her hand with a sudden feeling of happiness*)—I'm GRATEFUL to you!—(*Bell rings*).

JANE—(*Going to R.D.*)—Now I'm going to dress; I've got to go out. If you like, you may wait for me!

PENFIELD—Oh, yes! Let me wait for you.—(*Jane exits R.D. Penfield watches Jane exit; stands there in a brown study for a moment; goes slowly to the table C. sits—his head in his hands; then selects a sheet of note-paper, picks up pen, leans back in chair and thinks.—RAPHAEL enters L.D., showing in GEORGINE DARIGAL*).

RAPHIAEL—(To *Georgine*)—I will tell Madam!—
(*Exits R.D.—Penfield rises; smiles, looks happy*).

GEORGINE—(Surprised)—Oh! Pen!

PENFIELD—(Going to her eagerly, warmly)—My dear girl, what has brought you here?

GEORGINE—(Taken back a little by the warmth of his greeting)—Why—Pen—I—(Suddenly)—Have you seen the afternoon papers?

PENFIELD—(With a sigh)—No, but I know what's in them!

GEORGINE—Isn't it too bad! I hurried here to tell Miss Bartlett how sorry I am! You know it was your fault—how does she take it?

PENFIELD—Like an angel! I'm beginning to think I've been hopelessly wrong!

GEORGINE—(Surprised)—Why—Pen!—(Touching his arm with her hand)—That's splendid of you—to own up you were wrong! I love you for it!

PENFIELD—(Looking at her steadily, admiringly for a moment; then with a flash of passion)—You're beautiful today!—(He suddenly takes her in his arms and kisses her passionately.—Georgine struggles, frees herself from him, backs away a little frightened, looks at him wonderingly).

PENFIELD—(Excitedly, appealingly, making a move to follow her)—Georgine!

GEORGINE—(With a gesture of fear)—No—no—you make me feel as though I'd been kissed by a stranger.

PENFIELD—(Laughing a little)—You're a little strange to me yourself. I don't think I've ever SEEN you before; you look adorable as you stand there!

GEORGINE—(Puzzled)—Why are you looking at me like that?

PENFIELD—(Smiling)—Because you're so pretty—I suppose!—(Waits for her to reply; she is silent)—Oh, well—(with a laugh)—I won't look at you!—(He turns to piano, and sits facing keyboard).

GEORGINE—I wonder what has come over you!—(She looks up stage at the L.C.D., wondering if Jane could have been influencing him. She decides that Jane HAS).

PENFIELD—(Fingering the keys, without turning)—HAS something come over me?

GEORGINE—(With forced lightness)—It doesn't matter. I guess I'm silly. (After a moment's consideration, as she looks at the back of Pen's head—as he is

fingering the piano keys—she asks)—What—made you change your mind about—Zaporah?—(*Door-bell rings*).

PENFIELD—I haven't—but I wish I could for Miss Bartlett's sake—she has given me an understanding of her true character!

GEORGINE—(*Getting rather suspicious and consequently jealous*)—Oh, she—she's been showing you her real self.

PENFIELD—Yes!—(*Turning and rising*)—Georgine, I've made a terrible mistake, I've got to rectify it!—(*Georgine starts up in alarm.—DR. FANSHAW enters L.D.*)

FANSHAW—(*Coming down to Georgine*)—Hello Georgine! This young man of yours has been kicking up such a racket in the newspapers that I thought I'd better stop in and feel the prima donna's pulse!

GEORGINE—I think you'd better feel PEN's!—(*Sarcastically*)—He's had a change of heart!

FANSHAW—You mean a change of mind.

GEORGINE—Both!

PENFIELD—I'm convinced that I've been hideously unjust to Miss Bartlett!

FANSHAW—Very handsome of you, Pen. Of course you've apologized?

PENFIELD—I have, but I can't let it go at that.

GEORGINE—(*To Fanshaw*)—Rubbish!

FANSHAW—My dear boy, what more can you do?

PENFIELD—I can write an open letter to the Mayor!

GEORGINE—(*Impatiently*)—Pen, that's absurd!—(*Appealing to Fanshaw*)—Consin Lyn!

FANSHAW—(*Quieting her with a gesture.—To Pen*)—What will you say to the Mayor?

PENFIELD—(*As though he were dictating the letter*)—I shall tell him—that since I have had the privilege of knowing Miss Bartlett, I realize that I condemned her unjustly; that I have found her to be a woman of high moral character; that I retract every word I said against her; and that I wish my letter to be given to the press.

GEORGINE—(*Excitedly*)—Pen, that's wild—it would absolutely ruin you!

PENFIELD—It's the only honorable thing to do.

GEORGINE—Honorable!—fiddlesticks!

FANSHAW—(*Quieting her*)—Pen, that would be a fine thing to do, but an expensive one—for you; and I don't

think Miss Bartlett would let you sacrifice yourself for her.

GEORGINE—Yes! Why should you sacrifice yourself for her? It will ruin you, you'll have to resign from the church!

PENFIELD—Upon my word, you make me furious! Here you've been belaboring me for what you call my bigotry—telling me that I'm ignorant in my point of view, cruel and unjust in my denunciation of Miss Bartlett—yet now, when I discover for myself that you were right and I was wrong, you won't hear of my doing the only decent thing I can do!

GEORGINE—(*Desperately*)—There's no necessity for it! She's big enough and famous enough to take care of herself! You're just beginning; and you seem to forget that you're a CLERGYMAN!

PENFIELD—(*Furiously*)—No! I remember that I'm a clergyman. And even you can't make me a contemptible hypocrite to save my own skin!—(*Enter Jane R.D., ravishingly gowned for the street*).

JANE—How do you do, Miss Darigal.—(*To Fanshaw*)—Twice in the same day, I've, something extraordinary?

FANSHAW—It is! I gather that this boy has eaten his sermon! At least the part which referred to you—now he is determined to apologize to you in an open letter to the Mayor!

GEORGINE—He wants to put it in the newspapers!

FANSHAW—Jane, that's clerical hari-kari for him!

JANE—A man doesn't commit hari-kari when he does the fair thing.

GEORGINE—(*Belligerently*)—You think it's fair, just because it's in your interest!

JANE—Possibly.

GEORGINE—(*Hotly*)—You've taken a mean advantage of him!

PENFIELD—Look here, Georgine, you musn't speak that way!

FANSHAW—(*Restraining Penfield*)—Let them have it out!

PENFIELD—But I tell you—

JANE—(*Quieting him*)—P-l-e-a-s-e, Mr. Sturgis!—(*To Georgine*)—Yes, I've taken every advantage I could lay my hand to.

PENFIELD—(*Warmly*)—That isn't so.

JANE—(*Amiably*)—But I have persuaded you.

PENFIELD—You've appealed to my intelligence, my sense of—

GEORGINE—(*Cutting in*)—You mean your senses!

PENFIELD—(*Furiously*)—Georgine!

FANSHAW—(*To Georgine*)—You're cutting it a little too thick, my dear.

GEORGINE—She doesn't deny it!

JANE—Not at all!

PENFIELD—(*Gasping*)—What?

JANE—I have appealed to you in every way that I know.

GEORGINE—And we all know you're an expert!

JANE—Yes, as you say, I'm an expert and proud of it. I'm schooled as every woman in this world must be who succeeds in what she undertakes. I've learned how to please these simple creatures—men, learned how to engage their friendship, their sympathy, their confidence; how to appeal to their hearts, their chivalry, their intellects. And I've applied my expert knowledge to upset Mr. Sturgis's violent prejudices against me, to convert an enemy into a friend, an ally! Well, it seems that I have been unrighteously successful! I've had my little triumph! And like all my triumphs, it has made me humble in my heart!—(*Turning to Penfield*)—Mr. Sturgis, I don't want you to write that letter to the Mayor.

PENFIELD—(*Moved*)—I must write it—more now than ever.

FANSHAW—But Miss Bartlett has asked you not to.

PENFIELD—That's because she's so splendid—so much bigger and so much finer than the rest of us!

FANSHAW—And that's why she doesn't want you to sacrifice yourself.

PENFIELD—(*Angrily*)—Yes, but you want me to sacrifice HER! I won't do it! That's final!—(*Goes determinedly to upper side of table and selects paper and pen to write*).

JANE—(*Confronting him R. side of table*)—You must not do this for ME!

PENFIELD—(*Looking her in the eyes, slowly*)—Then I shall do it for myself!

GEORGINE—(*Angrily, coming to L. side of table*)—Pen, if you write that letter—

FANSHAW—(*Trying to restrain her*)—Let him do what he thinks is right.

GEORGINE—(*Rebelligiously*)—I won't have it! (*Penfield sits at table and prepares to write*).

GEORGINE—(*Ominously*)—Pen, if you write that letter, I—I shall break our engagement!

PENFIELD—(*Starting up*)—I'm sorry you feel like that, Georgine, but this letter is going to be written.—(*Georgine starts back from him, ripping off her left glove*).

JANE—You donkeys! Oh! I never heard of anything so ridiculous! You're acting like children!—(*To Georgine*)—Break your engagement! Pooh!—(*To Penfield*)—Write your letter? Bah! Both of you ought to be spanked and put in your cradles! Ahahahah! The first thing you know, this will become serious!

PENFIELD—(*On his feet, warmly*)—It is serious!—(*Angrily*)—You've all stirred up the depths of me, and this—(*Striking the letter paper*)—this is what comes to the top. My honest conviction that I've been horribly wrong, and that this is the only way to square myself. The rest of you can shilly-shally and coeree and threaten—(*Georgine tears ring from her left hand and places it on table*)—but you can't move me!—(*He drops into chair, picks up pen, straightens paper, speaks quietly*)—I'll be obliged to all of you if you will clear out and leave me alone.—(*He begins to write. Fanshaw takes Georgine by the arm to lead her to L.D.*)

JANE—(*Picking up the ring from the table and offering it to Georgine*)—Here! You unreasonable little goose—take this with you!

GEORGINE—(*In tearful anger*)—Keep it yourself!

JANE—(*Looks at Georgine in amazement, then at the ring, then at Georgine again—dryly*)—Hah! You lit' niny! You throw this in the fire today—(*Weights ring the palm of her hand*)—You'll be pawing for it in the ash to-morrow!

CURTAIN ON ACT TWO.

Act 3

SCENE:

(*Jane Bartlett's apartments as in Act II. Eleven o'clock the next morning. The curtains are drawn across the big window R. so that the stage is in dim daylight. As the CURTAIN rises, the clock on the mantle-shelf strikes eleven.*)

(*JULIE, the maid, enters R.D. and closes it after her with the least noise possible. She tiptoes to the R. window and draws the curtains open a little way to admit a shaft of light, which strikes the centre of the partition up stage and envelopes the window in the second floor of the mezzanine.*)

The door bell rings. Julie dashes: alarm to the L.D. and exits. Noise of unlocking door outside.

JULIE—(Without)—Go away, I tell you. No! No! No! Madam will not see the reporters.

SEPULVEDA—(Without, excitedly)—Santissima! I am not a reporter!

JULIE—(Without)—But that is one who hides himself behind your coat-tail.

SEPULVEDA—(Without, excitedly)—That is TWO! Madre de Dios! You cannot ride in on my back! No—not at all. Queeek, Julie!—(Noise of door being shut violently without. SEPULVEDA with overcoat and hat on, enters L.D. A newspaper sticks out of the pocket of his overcoat. He is followed by JULIE, who is greatly worried).

SEPULVEDA—Hah! They are like leeches—those reporters.

JULIE—They have ring, ring, ring—all the morning. I send them away by the dozen.

SEPULVEDA—(Excitedly, raising his voice)—I am here now! I will keep them out. Tell the Senorita I am arrive.

JULIE—(Commandingly)—Ssssh! Madam is a-sleep.

SEPULVEDA—(Excitedly)—She must get up all the same.

JULIE—If you wake her, she will bite our heads off.

SEPULVEDA—It will be somebody else head she will bite off when she hear the news.—(Peeling off his overcoat and throwing it on the chest up stage L.D. with his hat)—Will you wake her?

JULIE—Non, non! I must not!

SEPULVEDA—So! Then permit me!—(*Flings himself at the piano and tosses open the case.*)

JULIE—(*In comic despair*)—Mon Dieu!—(*Sepulveda with the loud pedal on, plays the "Ride of the Valkyries."* Julie wrings her hands and starts towards R.D. The voice of JANE is heard from above off stage in a tone of great anger, calling: "Julie! Julie!") Julie hurries out R.D. Sepulveda goes on playing with increasing energy. In a moment Julie appears at the window of the second floor of the apartment).

JULIE—(*Calling, angrily*)—Monsieur! If you do not cease—go away—Madam will come down!

SEPULVEDA—(*Singing as he plays*)—I hope she will—I hope she will!

JULIE—(*Withdrawing her head from window, speaking within*)—He will not go!

SEPULVEDA—(*Singing as he plays*)—He will not go—he will not go!

JANE—(*Without, excited, angry*)—Julie! Julie!

JULIE—(*At window*)—Madam is coming!—(*Julie disappears from the window. Sepulveda continues to play.*)

JANE—(*Heard approaching R.D., without, angry*)—Julie, who is that hmatie! Heavens above!—(*JANE enters suddenly R.D. She wears a "mob" cap, set at a rakish angle on an untidy coiffure, a gorgeous East Indian robe over a very fluffy night dress, a pair of blue satin "mules" trimmed with white fur.*)

JANE—(*Furiously, coming down toward Sepulveda*)—Stop that—instantly! You don't know how to play Wagner—it takes a German! You disgusting little Spaniard, how dare you wake me in the middle of the night?

SEPULVEDA—(*Stops playing*)—Because— it is the middle of the day.

JANE—How dare you wake me at all?

SEPULVEDA—I bring you the news—most important.

JANE—(*Angrily*)—Nothing is so important as my sleep! Yet you think no more of waking me up than if I were a house-maid with nothing to do but take in the milk! You're impossible! If you come here again, I shall tell Raphael to turn you out!—(*With a transition*)—What is your news? What is your news?

SEPULVEDA—You think I will tell you that news after I get such a scold?

JANE—(*Seizing him by the shoulders and shaking him*)—Indeed, you will!

SEPULVEDA—How—can—I—if you shake the breath out of me?

JANE—(*Shaking him*)—Sepulveda, you pig!

SEPULVEDA—Ah, that is better. When I am called "pig" I know that you adore me.

JANE—Tell me what you came for, or out you go!

SEPULVEDA—But it is not good that you hear. No!—not at all! You will go crazy!

JANE—I shall go crazy if you don't tell me what it is.

SEPULVEDA—I also am crazy already as soon as I see it in the newspaper.

JANE—Ah!h!h! It's in the newspapers.—(*With a laugh*)—Don't tell me they have revived my three children at Buda Pesth? Or this time—perhaps—they've given me two husbands in St. Petersburg?

SEPULVEDA—They have revive the children—yes! But not yet the husbands. Also there is more which is worse.

JANE—These newspapers! They are not fit to be read. Go—get me all of them!

SEPULVEDA—If I go, the reporters will devour me.

JANE—Reporters?

SEPULVEDA—There is a pack of them by the door.

JANE—(*Excitedly*)—Good lord! You get me all worked up—and never bring me a newspaper!

SEPULVEDA—Ah, I DO!—(*Feels in his pockets*)—It was in my pocket! Ah, my overcoat!—(*Grabs up his overcoat from the chest up C. and takes newspaper from pocket*).

JANE—Give it to me!

SEPULVEDA—(*Backing away from her*)—No, no! I think it is not good that you should see. It will make you ill!

JANE—(*Snatching paper from him*)—You pest!—(*Opening paper; looking at it rather pleased*)—I'm all over the front page!—(*Goes to piano and spreads newspaper on top of it*).

SEPULVEDA—(*Following her*)—Also the little clergyman—pigstures of you both. They have given you a black eye!

JANE—Beasts! Is that what you meant?

SEPULVEDA—No, no! You read!

JANE—(*Reading*)—"Clergyman Apologizes to Prima

Donna. Penfield Sturgis retracts his violent denouncement of Jane Bartlett in open letter to Mayor. Pays tribute to singer's high moral character."—(*Looking up*)—What's the matter with that?

SEPULVEDA—That is just the big words at the top. The bad is in the little words at the bottom.

JANE—(*Looking at paper again, running her finger down a column*)—Hum—hum! Ah, his marvellous letter to the Mayor! Now I have a halo! Presently I shall come to the harp! What a precious idiot he was to write it! I should never permitted him to do it! Hum, hum, hum!—(*Erasperated*)—Where is the rest of it?

SEPULVEDA—(*Beside her, R. side, leaning over the piano and turning pages*)—Over in the back of the inside.—No, no. It is beside the advertisement of "How to get Fat."

JANE—Impatiently, taking paper away from him)—For heaven's sake, give it to me. Let's have some light!—(*Sepulveda draws wide the curtains at R. window*).

JANE—(*Reading*)—"Sturgis has change of heart."

SEPULVEDA—That is it!—(*Returns to piano*).

JANE—(*Reading*)—"Since Mr. Sturgis made his scathing attack upon the personal character of the great soprano, he has been made to see the error of his ways. His conversion was accomplished by the singer herself, who believes in the time honored maxim of a kiss for a blow!"—(*With a little laugh*)—Isn't that perfectly killing!

SEPULVEDA—(*Excitedly*)—You like that the paper say you kiss him?

JANE—Why shouldn't I kiss him? He's a nice, clean boy, isn't he?—(*Looking at paper; then laughing*)—Ooooh! HERE are the children!

SEPULVEDA—Go on past the children!

JANE—(*Reading*)—"Mr. Sturgis has been a daily visitor at the singer's apartments, and his attentions to her have been the source of much anxiety to his friends and the members of his congregation."—(*She bursts out laughing*).

SEPULVEDA—(*Staring at her in amazement*)—You—you laugh? It is an insult! His friends should feel complimented that you permit those attentions. You are a great artist—he—he is a—a nobody!

JANE—(*Seriously*)—You think it insults me! It doesn't! I'm only sorry for little Sturgis—terribly sorry—it's bound to compromise him.

SEPULVEDA—(*With a jeer*)—Compromise HIM!

Hah! Senorita, you will have to marry him to preserve his honor!—(*Door bell rings off L.*)

JANE—(*With a laugh*)—I would just as soon think of marrying you to preserve your humor? See who that is! (*Goes toward R.D., while Sepulveda goes to L.D.*)

SEPULVEDA—(*As he goes up L.*)—Are you at home?

JANE—If it is Dr. Fanshaw, I am—at breakfast. Ask him to wait. To anyone else, I am out.

SEPULVEDA—But at this hour—no one will believe.

JANE—(*Retreating within R.D.*)—Then invent something!—(*She pauses within R.D., listening. Sepulveda opens L.D. to the extent of an inch or two. Raphael's face appears at the crack*)

SEPULVEDA—Raphael, say that the Senorita is out!

GEIST—(*Without*)—Hah! Out? Nonsense!—(*The face of Geist replaces Raphael's at the L.D.*)

SEPULVEDA—(*Keeping Geist out*)—It is so—she—she has gone to Buda Pesth to visit her three little children!—(*Jane laughs*).

GEIST—Then permit me to see the lady who laughs high C.

SEPULVEDA—Senor, I must object!

JANE—(*Coming from R.D., shouting*)—What do you mean by keeping him out? Come in, Herman!—(*Hand to her throat*)—Oh, my voice! I shan't be able to sing to-night!

GEIST—(*Entering*)—How are the little children at Buda Pesth, Jane? •

JANE—(*Laughing*)—They were resurrected this morning. Have you seen the papers?

GEIST—Twenty columns, if a line! It is magnificent! (*Rubbing his hands*)—And there is more to come. I have just seen the Mayor. He may permit us to repeat "Zaporah."

JANE—You must send him a box.—(*Comes down R.C. and sits on piano bench*).

GEIST—Impossible! We will be sold out! Jane, you are not only a great artist, but you are also a great press agent! What a story! That clergyman was a stroke of genius! They will keep it up for weeks if you remain silent. (*Comes down L. and sits on arm of settle by fireplace. Sepulveda sits in chair back of table up C.*)

JANE—Silent?

GEIST—You must not see the newspaper men. Leave them to me!

SEPULVEDA—They have try to get in by my coat-tail.

GEIST—You've not seen them, Jan.?

JANE—No, but why shouldn't I?

GEIST—Because if you speak, they will have a fact; and nothing kills a story so surely as a fact. If they do not have a fact, they will speculate; and the story will grow prodigiously.

SEPULVEDA—They water it with their imagination.

JANE—But the facts in this case are plain enough.

GEIST—Plain? For example, what do they know of your true relations with your young clergyman?

JANE—My relations?—(*Getting angry*)—Ahhh! Do I need a scandal like that to fill your rat-hole of an opera house? With its filthy stage—I—I ruin my Brmhilda dress—because you are too mean to have the floor scrubbed! Ahhhhh!

GEIST—The News says you have compromised Sturgis; but that is not a patch on some of the other—the yellow ones!

JANE—(*Screecching*)—I won't hear another word—Ohhhhh!—(*Takes the stage*).

GEIST—(*Rising, alarmed*)—Don't screech, Jane. You'll hurt your voice.

JANE—(*Stroking her throat, sotto voce*)—What do they say?—(*Making a face*)—Something nasty?

GEIST—(*Hastily*)—Oh, no—oh, no! Rather a—a romance as it were—the little minister denouncing the siren one day and falling a victim to her charms the next. They say he will be pitched out of his pulpit.

JANE—(*Saying, her voice worried*)—Oh, I hope not!

SEPULVEDA—It is not so funny any more.

JANE—Oh, shut up! Run away!

SEPULVEDA—(*Rising*)—But I came to have breakfast with you.

JANE—(*Going up stage toward R.D.*)—Take breakfast with him!—(*Indicating Geist*).

GEIST—I've had my breakfast.

SEPULVEDA—Then let us have dejeuner together. It is all the same to me.

JANE—Yes! Take him away with you, Herman! Stuff him—it's the only meal he'll get for a week; but don't give him buckwheat cakes and sausage—they always make him sick.

GEIST—I'll feed the little brute!—(*Going toward L.*

D.)—Now you'll do nothing, Jane, to spoil the story?—
(*Scpulveda picks up his hat and coat from the chest up C.*)

JANE—I'll do what I please!

GEIST—My dear Jane, it can't hurt you.

JANE—But it can hurt him. I won't have it! I won't have it!

GEIST—Hah! You are in love with him!

JANE—(*Stroking her throat*)—I won't sing tonight. You can put that skinny Podesta into the part—she never hit a true high note in her life.

GEIST—(*Hastily*)—I was mistaken. You're NOT in love with him. You'll sing to-night, Jane—that's a good girl! Come along, Scppy, I'll stand for the luncheon.

SEPULVEDA—If you will give me a small advance on my opera, I will pay for both of us.—(*Links his arm in Geist's and they start toward L.D.—Raphael enters L.D.*)

RAPHAEL—Madam, your sister!—(*MRS. KEARSLEY enters L.D. briskly with a bow to Geist and Sepulveda, and goes directly to Jane, who stares at her in amazement. Geist and Sepulveda look at Mrs. Kearsley in comic surprise and exit L.D., followed by Raphael.*)

MRS. KEARSLEY—Your man wasn't going to let me in—so I told him I was your sister! Open sesame! You'll pardon the liberty, won't you, but, I felt it my duty to come and get the truth from your own lips.

JANE—(*Coldly*)—The truth about what?

MRS. KEARSLEY—Oh, you must know! The papers are full of it—your four children at Buda Pesth—the—ch—attentions of Mr. Sturgis! I've just come from a meeting of the Doreas Society. Everybody thinks the Vestry ought to ask Mr. Sturgis to resign, but—I—

JANE—(*Irritated*)—Why should the Vestry ask Mr. Sturgis to resign?

MRS. KEARSLEY—That's just it! WHY?—(*Flops herself down on the piano seat*)—That's why I'm here, as a friend of yours and a friend of Mr. Sturgis.—(*Jane takes a turn down stage L., faces about and looks at Mrs. Kearsley ominously.*)

MRS. KEARSLEY—I'm sure it can all be explained, but you know the newspapers! They've thrown out hints, and people will talk, and of course the Vestry can't ignore—

JANE—(*Breaking out warmly*)—I don't care one iota what the newspapers say, what a pack of gossiping hags hash over, or what your drivelling old vestrymen can't ignore!

MRS. KEARSLEY—That's because you are innocent.

(*Jane stare sat her in blank amazement.*)—I know that you and Mr. Sturgis are incapable of doing anything—eh—out of the way, but—

JANE—(*Angrily*)—Out of the way? Good Lord!—(*Then with a transition to genuine amusement, laughs*)—Oh, you religious people—what jolly imaginations, you have!—(*Subsiding, with a smile*)—What do you all suppose I've been doing with your precious little rector?

MRS. KEARSLEY—It's not that I suppose anything, but THEY do—the women of the society—they all say—a man doesn't call every day on a prima donna—for nothing!

JANE—God! I can see your nasty, evil-minded friends as they said it! I know them and all their kind. You're a beastly, contemptible, vicious tribe of social Apaches. You haven't the courage to commit any natural sin yourselves, but you're forever hoping to catch somebody else at it; and heaven help the man, woman or child who gives you an exense to bear false witness against them. That's what your herd of female swine are doing—bearing false witness against Mr. Sturgis and me. That doesn't hurt me in the least; but it damns him! Damns him—his character—his career! I tell you, I won't stand for it—not if I have to go to the Bishop myself.—(*Hand to her throat*)—Aaaaah!

MRS. KEARSLEY—Oh, you're going to the Bishop?—(*Rises*).

JANE—(*In a husky whisper, with hand to her throat*)—Yes! Yes! Yes! Go, spread the news while it's hot! (*Urges her to L.D.*).

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Going up L.*)—Oh, I'm not such a chatter-box as that! By the way, I've been admiring your wrapper. It's heavenly, my dear. Where did you get it?

JANE—It was a present from one of the Princes of India. Of course you know the Princes of India—charming people—perfectly good family—live in red and blue palaces on the banks of the Ganges—drive around in little gold hansoms with six highly upholstered camels.

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Near L.D.*)—How fearfully interesting. You must have had quite an affair with the Prince.

JANE—(*Wearily*)—Oh, passionate!

MRS. KEARSLEY—I'll come around some day soon and get you to tell me all the exciting details; for you know, my dear Miss Bartlett, all this scandal about you and poor

Mr. Sturgis, makes not the slightest difference in my regard for you.

JANE—(*Tartly*)—I hoped it would!—(*Trying her voice*)—La, la, la, la!—(*Hand to her throat*)—Oh, I won't be able to sing to-night! Good-bye! Good-bye!

MRS. KEARSLEY—(*Hand on the door-knob*)—Don't forget—it makes no difference to me what—

JANE—(*Furiously, but saving her voice, in a fierce whisper*)—Go—get out, or I'll throw the piano at you!—(*Mrs. Kearsley exits quickly L.D.*)

JANE—(*To the L.D., imitating a cat*)—Haaaaaaah!—(*Shuts the door violently, goes up stage, pushes button; bell rings loudly off stage. Jane turns to table C., stands there in thought a moment, look at clock, goes up L., picks up telephone.—Enter Raphael L.D.*)

JANE—(*Shaking her fist at him*)—If you ever let that women in here again, I'll—I'll—have you shot at dawn!

RAPHAEL—Very good, Madam!—(*Raphael exits L.D.*)

JANE—(*To the telephone*)—Give me the Episcopal Hospital, please—I forget the number!—(*Furiously*)—What? Hello! Hello! Hello! Give me information—the manager—God, what service! Ah, 3904 Broad. . . . The Episcopal Hospital? . . . Is Dr. Faushaw there?—(*Impatiently*)—Well, get him—get him. . . . Oh, my voice!! Sturani must keep down the brasses tonight! . . . Miss Bartlett . . . Bartlett—(*Resigns herself to waiting*)—I must remember to tell Herman to bring that fool to my dressing room—(*Starting—to the telephone*)—Hello, I want to speak to Doctor . . . Damn this wire!—(*Sweetly*)—Oh, is that you, Lyn? I've had a terrific time getting you! . . . Well, Jane wants you to come to her right away. . . —(*Sharply*)—Why not!—(*Anxiously*)—Operation—(*Sympathetically*)—Oh, isn't that dreadful! . . . (*Insistently*)—When can you come? . . . Just as soon as you can, PLEASE!—(*Smiling, sweetly*)—That's charming of you, but really I don't care a rap for my own sake—(*Emphatically*)—Those two young idiots have got to make it up? . . . (*Louder*)—Make it up! . . . Miss Darigal and Sturgis—their engagement! . . . Decidedly!—(*Smiling*)—Good-bye!—*She hangs up telephone and opens telephone directory*—Main 203! (*Picks up telephone*)—Main 203! No—no—2-0-3!—(*Furiously, to herself*)—I'm going out of my mind. I'm losing my voice! . . . —(*Starting, to phone*) Hello! Is Mr. Sturgis in?—(*Pleasantly*)—Oh, good morn-

ing, Mr. Sturgis! . . . Very well, thank you . . . Can you come down here immediately . . . Oh, you were coming? . . . UPSET? Not in the least . . . Good-bye!—

Hangs up receiver. Picks up telephone wearily—D-Dnr— I must tell Orsino not to eat garlic! . . . Darigal! South 1171-A.—*(Takes up telephone)*—South 1171-A.—*(Shouting)*—A—A—A—! You need an ear trumpet!—*(Waits)*— Is that Miss Darigal?—*(With the air of a grande dame)*— This is Miss Bartlett! I'd like very much to see you, Miss Darigal . . . That's very kind, but I sing to-night. I must rest— take care of my voice . . . Can't you run down to see me for a few minutes? . . . No, it isn't that! I'm in trouble— great trouble. You're the only one I know who can help me . . . Yes, you can; yes, you can.—*(Door bell rings off stage)*— There's no reason why you should. I haven't the slightest claim upon you. . . . Yes, I do NEED you!— *Julie enters L.D. Jane signals her to wait.*—*To the telephone*—You WILL come? . . . Thank you. Within the next half hour. Yes! Good-bye!—*(With an exhausted sigh of relief hangs up receiver)*—Ahhhh!

JULIE—Madam is at home?

JANE—Say you'll see!—*(Jane retreats to R.D., opens it and stands within the doorway, where she may hear without being seen. Julie takes a salver from table, opens L.D., discovering LOUGHRAN and GOADBY).*

LOUGHRAN—Well, is Miss Bartlett in?

GOADBY—*(As though in the more correct manner)*— Is she at home?

JULIE—I'll see! Who shall I say?

GOADBY—*(Producing a card and placing it on salver)*—My card!—*(Loughran fumbles in a large wallet and produces a card).*

GOADBY—*(Protesting)*—Not your business card— she'll think you've come to sell her a fur.

LOUGHRAN—It's all I've got with me. It's good enough for her!—*(Drops card on salver, Julie picks it up and sits in comfortable chair L. of C. table. Loughran sits on settle L. Julie goes to R.D., which Jane is a half door open, passes within doorway and presents cards to Jane, who looks at them with a puzzled smile).*

GOADBY—*(To Loughran)*—These actresses treat themselves pretty well don't they?—*(Re-entering to the room).*

LOUGHRAN—Somebody else usually does the treating.

GOADBY—I guess that's so; and they're expensive luxuries—very expensive from what I hear.

LOUGHRAN—A man in your position has no right to let his mind dwell on such subjects.—*(Jane gives a push with her fingers at her "mob" cap, and with the cards in her hand, comes down R. of table).*

JANE—*With suppressed anger.*—Mr. Goadby!—*(Goadby bounces out of his chair, Loughran rises stiffly, staring at Jane disapprovingly).*

JANE—*(To Goadby)*—I can only give you five minutes. I have to have my massage—my massage; I must go over my part—*(softly)*

GOADBY—*(Planting)*—Oh, Miss Bartlett—you remember me?

JANE—I know your gentleman—*(Looks at card)*—Mr. Godfrey Sturgis, Loughran & Peters, 121 Water and Stearns Streets, New York—Furnaces, Stoves, Pipes, and fittings, Etc.—and a plumber!

LOUGHRAN—*(Edging)*—I'm a vestryman of St. Martin's-in-the-Lane.

GOADBY—I see, he's a vestryman of St. Martin's.

JANE—That must be a great help to him in his business—*(To Loughran)*—I suppose you get all the fashionable people in the parish.

LOUGHRAN—I haven't come here to discuss my business.

JANE—What have you come here to do?

GOADBY—The fact is—eh—Miss Bartlett—

LOUGHRAN—*(Sharply to Goadby)*—You speak for you.

GOADBY—Oh, you—you, of course!

JANE—*With a grand manner.*—You have my permission to sit down.—*(Jane sits on piano bench facing L., Goadby in the chair L. of table; Loughran on settle L.)*

LOUGHRAN—*(Addressing himself to Jane)*—We have come to you as representatives of the vestry of St. Martin's-in-the-Lane. You must be fully aware of this whirlpool of notoriety—

GOADBY—'Whirlpool' is very good, Loughran—

LOUGHRAN—This whirlpool of notoriety into which the rector, Mr. Penfield Sturgis, has been drawn. The newspapers have informed the community of the extraordinary—not to say monstrous—

GOADBY—'Extraordinary' is the safer word!

LOUGHIRAN—(*Ignoring Goadby*)—the monstrous infinnce which you have exerted over Mr. Sturgis, and the scandal—

JANE—(*Tapping her foot impatiently*)—Yes, I know all about that—(*Looking at clock*)—You've got three minutes left!

LOUGHIRAN—If I had my way, we would ignore you entirely in this matter, and dismiss Mr. Sturgis at once—

JANE—(*impatiently*)—Well, well—what are you going to do? Pay him his salary for the season—his fare home—and an inside cabin?

GOADBY—Not at all! Not at all! The vestry has split on the question of dismissal. We are at a deadlock—until the Bishop—(*Goadby catches a freezing look from Loughran and his speech dries up*)—*ch—ch—*

LOUGHIRAN—(*To Goadby, severely*)—The Bishop's name should not be dragged into this conversation.

GOADBY—That's because he over-ruled you!

JANE—(*Impatiently*)—You've got the Bishop in now—let him stay. I've a feeling that he's a man of common sense.

GOADBY—The Bishop is what you might call a 'man of the world.'

LOUGHIRAN—I object to your calling the Bishop a 'man of the world.' It implies a looseness of morals which no churchman, however politic—

GOADBY—Perhaps you're right. I didn't mean anything.

LOUGHIRAN—(*To Goadby, severely*)—Must I remind you again, that before we came here, it was definitely settled that I was to do the talking?

GOADBY—Quite so—quite so; but I think you might let me put in a word now and then.

LOUGHIRAN—Don't interrupt!

GOADBY—I was only—

JANE—(*Impatiently*)—It's decided that the Bishop is not a 'man of the world.' Go on, Mr. Loughran—You've only got two minutes now!

LOUGHIRAN—Even though I do not agree with the Bishop in this instance, I have great respect for his opinion. He deplors the notoriety which has attended the publication of Mr. Sturgis's letter to the Mayor—

GOADBY—All the same he says that Sturgis was

right to acknowledge himself wrong as to the character of Miss Bartlett, and I stand by the Bishop.

LOUGHRAN—You shifted. He couldn't move ME.

GOADBY—(To Jane)—It's the Bishop's notion—*(He stops abruptly, meeting Loughran's freezing glance—uncertainly)*—I guess you'd better—

LOUGHRAN—The point the Bishop makes is this: It is better for the sake of the church, to ignore this episode entirely and retain the services of Mr. Sturgis, provided he discontinues his attentions to you, and announces his engagement to Miss Darigal.

JANE—(Nerved)—Why serve me with the Bishop's ultimatum? You should communicate with Mr. Sturgis.

GOADBY—We have seen Mr. Sturgis.

LOUGHRAN—And he actually refuses to comply with the Bishop's demands.

GOADBY—What's a sight worse, Sturgis loses his temper and hands the vestry his resignation.

JANE—Oh!

LOUGHRAN—If I had my way, we'd accept his resignation.

GOADBY—But the Bishop won't hear of it. We got him on the 'phone. He insists that we patch the matter up somehow.

JANE—I'm afraid you don't know how to handle Mr. Sturgis.

GOADBY—That's the point—we don't.

LOUGHRAN—Since reason failed to move him, we decided—after consultation—to come to you for the purpose of enlisting your influence.

JANE—With Mr. Sturgis?

LOUGHRAN—Yes! We want you to influence him to withdraw his resignation and comply with the Bishop's demands.

JANE—What an enormous compliment you pay me!

LOUGHRAN—You are at liberty to take it that way if you like; but we feel, since the responsibility is really yours—

JANE—(Starting)—The responsibility MINE.

LOUGHRAN—Certainly! You must understand that you are fundamentally to blame.

JANE—(Beginning to get angry)—I understand nothing of the kind!

GOADBY—What Mr. Loughran means is that you started the trouble!

JANE—(*Controlling herself with difficulty*)—Oh! I started it!

LOUGHIRAN—You made the first overtures to Mr. Sturgis at his church.

JANE—(*With suppressed anger*)—I called upon him to protest against the way he slandered me in his pulpit.

LOUGHIRAN—We'll not discuss that point; but you can't deny that you induced him to visit you here!

GOADBY—No, you can't deny that!

JANE—(*Angrily*)—Why in Heaven's name should I deny it!—Yes—I invited him here—to drum a little sense into his head!

LOUGHIRAN—I'm not going to question your motives, but judging from results—you drummed what little sense he had OUT of his head!

GOADBY—I'd say that Sturgis just up and LOST his head!

LOUGHIRAN—(*Insinuatingly*)—And no man loses his head for nothing!

GOADBY—That's rather rough, Loughran. Miss Bartlett is a charming woman. Sturgis is a young man, and—well—charms are charms!—(*To Jane*)—I hope you don't mind my saying so!

JANE—(*Ominously*)—Oh, no—oh, no! Go on!

LOUGHIRAN—I don't pretend to know as much as Mr. Goadby does about your sex, but it's plain to me that a woman with your experience—you have—four or five children, I believe, at Buda Pesth—

JANE—(*Ominously*)—And three husbands in St. Petersburg!

LOUGHIRAN—I know nothing of your various husbands, but I do know that a woman of your type finds no difficulty in making a young man like Sturgis take orders from you—and in view of the way you've led him from the path of rectitude, the least you can do now, is to use your influence to restore him to his church!

JANE—(*Rising and confronting Loughran, her anger making her almost inarticulate*)—You—you—

LOUGHIRAN—(*Rising, astonished*)—Eh?

JANE—You—contemptible—cad!—(*Goadby staggers to his feet, gaping*).

LOUGHIRAN—(*Backing away from Jane's vehemence*)—Hey? Why—what?—(*Goadby backs up L.*)

JANE—(*Breaking out*)—You contemptible cad! You nasty, filthy ARE! You—you have the impertinence to ask

me a tremendous favor, and you have not the decency to put your request in terms of ordinary politeness—every word you have uttered has been an insult—you ascribe to me all the intriguing powers of a common hussy, and then demand that I use those same powers for the good of your confounded church! Go back to your vestry and tell them, with my unholy compliments—that they can all—go to the devil!—(*Jane turns her back on them—calling*)—Julie! Raphael! Where is my breakfast?

LOUGHIRAN—(*Backing away L.*)—Needless to say.

GOADBY—You've said enough, Loughran. You put your foot in it. You should have left it to me.

JANE—(*Turning around on Goadby*)—Yes, to your soft-pawed hypoerisy—you grotesque little mongrel! To think that I should have had to endure your odious jibberings!—and before breakfast!

GOADBY—(*Near the L.D., turning on Jane nastily*)—If I'm a mongrel, you're a cat—a great big, vicious striped cat that ought to be kept in a Zoo! Oh you don't fool me with your high and mightiness. You're after young Sturgis—that's what you are;—(*Loughran opens the L.D.*)

—But I'll see that you don't get him! Three husbands in St. Petersburg! I'll put detectives on you! I'll dig up your whole rotten past! That's what I'll do, dig up your whole rotten past!—(*PENFIELD STURGIS appears at the L.D.*)

LOUGHIRAN—(*Startled*)—Mr. Sturgis! — (*Goadby turns, taken a-back at the sight of Penfield.*)

PENFIELD—(*Entering, puzzled, angry*)—What are you two doing here?

LOUGHIRAN—We'll put that question to you?

PENFIELD—If you're so anxious to know, I'll tell you—I am here to ask Miss Bartlett to marry me!—(*General astonishment.*)

GOADBY—(*Spluttering with astonishment and rage*)—You're a fool—a fool!

LOUGHIRAN—(*Horror-stricken*)—Marry that woman?

GOADBY—THAT woman!

JANE—(*Furiously*)—Yes! Yes! Yes! He has asked "that woman" to marry him! Marry him! Go look it up in the dictionary—it means to wed, to espouse, to join in matrimony! That's what he's proposed, and I—I have accepted him! "That woman" is engaged, plighted,

affianced, betrothed to him. Go—publish the banns, tell everybody that Jane Bartlett is going to marry the Rev. Penfield Sturgis! Do you hear? Have you got that stupendous idea through your paralytic brains? Don't dare to answer me—don't speak to me! Get out of my sight—you eads, you fawning, double-faced pair of paranoiacs, or I'll throw you both out of the window!—(*Goodby throws up his hands in horror and exits promptly with Loughran L.D. Penfield closes door. Jane leans against table C., her back to audience, in a state of physical and mental exhaustion.*)

PENFIELD—(*Approaching her*)—I'm so sorry—that blundering pair has been annoying you.

JANE—They've harrassed—insulted—brow-beaten me—until every nerve in my body is standing on end!—(*Hand to throat—whispering*)—And—I've got no voice left!

PENFIELD—It's all my fault. I've brought you nothing but unhappiness. You poor thing!

JANE—(*Vehemently*)—For God's sake don't say anything kind to me! Don't! Don't!

PENFIELD—Is there nothing I can do for you?

JANE—No—No! When I get like this, I want to be let alone.

PENFIELD—(*Throwing his hands up in the air*)—Perhaps I had better go.

JANE—I don't care what you do; but, for Heaven's sake, put your hands in your pockets.

PENFIELD—(*Rather crossly—putting his hands in his pockets*)—All right! All right!

JANE—(*Wearily, crasperated*)—Don't take THAT tone! Do have some sense—consider me! I've got to SING tonight! You have nothing to do but be peevish!

PENFIELD—I've been a bit stirred up myself this morning!

JANE—But you've had your breakfast!

PENFIELD—(*With concern*)—Haven't you?

JANE—Not a mouthful! It's just been one damn thing after another, until I—(*Hand to throat*)—Ah my voice! No breakfast—no bath—no massage!—(*To Penfield*)—Look at me! No, don't! I must look as if the dog had played with me—(*Starts up to R.D.*)

PENFIELD—We have a great deal to talk over—plan! If you don't mind I'll wait.

JANE—(*Wearily*)—O Lord, yes stay! I don't care what you do!—(*Calling*)—Julie! Julie! Julie!—(*Jane*

crits L.D. Penfield turns slowly and comes down L. in solemn thought, perplexity and growing worry; sinks down on settle. After a moment, he slips his fingers in vest-pocket and takes out Georgine's engagement ring. He looks at it solemnly. Gives a sigh, then a shrug, as though to say, "That's all over," and puts the ring in his pocket. Door bell rings off stage L. Penfield rises, straightens himself up, with an air of determination to make the best of it. Goes to fireplace, leans against the mantel).

GEORGINE—(Without L.)—Tell Miss Bartlett that Miss Darigal is here.—(Penfield starts at the sound of her voice).

RAPHIAEL—(Without L.)—I do not know if Madame expects you.

GEORGINE—(Without L.)—She sent for me—telephoned me to come.

RAPHIAEL—(Without L.)—Entrez, Mademoiselle—(Raphael shows Georgine in L.D. She pauses up L. seeing Penfield. She is indignant at finding him there. He is embarrassed. Raphael closes L.D. and exits R.D.)

GEORGINE—(Coldly to Penfield)—Did Miss Bartlett know that you were going to be here when she 'phoned me?

PENFIELD—(Lamely)—I—I don't know.

GEORGINE—(Coming down R.C.)—I wouldn't have come at all if I'd known you were going to be here.

PENFIELD—I'll go, if you like.—(Makes a move to go up L.)

GEORGINE—I don't care what you do.

PENFIELD—Then I'll stay.—(Turns back to fireplace L.)

GEORGINE—(Sitting on piano bench, throwing open her coat)—I didn't come to see you.

PENFIELD—I know that Miss Bartlett sent for you, but why?

GEORGINE—You're so intimate with her you ought to know better than I do. If you don't, it's because she told you some tara-diddle.

PENFIELD—Miss Bartlett is incapable of falsehood.

GEORGINE—Rubbish? She'd lie as quickly as—I would.

PENFIELD—I'm not comparing you with her.

GEORGINE—That's lucky for me. If you did, I should be the one to suffer. I'm no great big, flashy, middle-aged Calypso.

PENFIELD—Neither is Miss Bartlett.

GEORGINE—Oh, you think she's a regular stained-glass angel.

PENFIELD—Well, I'd rather you didn't throw bricks through her.

GEORGINE—Stand up for her! Stand up for her! It's nothing to me—now you've made up your mind that our engagement is broken; but I'm sorry that you've let that woman compromise you so!

PENFIELD—I haven't! The shoe's on the other foot. I've compromised HER.

GEORGINE—You can't compromise a woman with seven children in Buda Pesth.

PENFIELD—(Indignantly)—Seven children in Buda Pesth! She hasn't even one!

GEORGINE—Then she probably has them some other place; and even if she hasn't, you can't hurt her reputation.

PENFIELD—I HAVE. I've compromised her! But I'm going to do the honorable thing.

GEORGINE—(Startled, alarmed)—What are you going to do?

PENFIELD—Marry her!—(This is a solar-plexus blow to Georgine. She sits there staring at Penfield for a moment).

GEORGINE—(Weakly)—Marry—her?

PENFIELD—Yes!—(JANE appears at R.D. She is freshened up, wears a handsome, loose, filmy, flowing boudoir gown. She pauses there, listening).

GEORGINE—(To Penfield, warmly, excitedly)—I knew I was right to break our engagement. From the first I felt that something like this would happen. Why, the very day you asked me to marry you, you began to fall in love with that—that man-eater!—(Working herself up)—W-w-why, she's—she's old enough to b-b-be your mother! (Starting to go)—I wish you happiness!—(JANE enters. She is followed by Julie carrying a pair of embroidered pillows, and Raphael bearing a tray daintily laid with a glass and silver breakfast service, toast in a rack, omelette under a silver cover, etc., a grape fruit embedded in shaved ice, etc.)

JANE—My dear Miss Darigal—It was good of you to come. I didn't want to keep you waiting—so here I am. We'll have breakfast together!—(Raphael places a tray on C. table. Julie places a cushion on chair back of table. The servants stand at attention—Raphael R. side and Julie L. side of table).

GEORGINE—(*Coldly*)—No—thank you. I—I must go.

JANE—But you musn't run away!

GEORGINE—Please let me go.

JANE—No—no—my dear. I won't hear of it! Sit down, child; sit down!—(*Georgine reluctantly returns to piano bench and sits. Penfield leans against mantel-shelf, nervously twisting his watch chain.*)

JANE—You won't mind if I go ahead. I'm . . . and we can chat.—(*Jane sits in chair back of C—Raphael pushes her up to table, while Julie places the second pillow under Jane's feet.*)

JANE—(*Preparing to eat the grape fruit*)—Ah, that looks very nice.—(*Tastes it*)—Ugh! Raphael, do you want to poison me?—(*To Georgine*)—You know it's almost impossible to get ANYTHING fit to eat.—(*To Raphael, who stands R. side of table*)—I wouldn't give that to my dog—if I had one! Take it away—take it away!—(*Raphael takes grape fruit from tray. Jane sinks back in chair*)—You've spoilt my breakfast. Now I can eat nothing—absolutely nothing. And how am I to have the strength to sing tonight if I have nothing to eat?

RAPHAEL—I'm very sorry, Madam. Would you like an orange?

JANE—An orange? An orange?—a nasty little orange? No—I tell you, I'll have nothing. Take it away!

JULIE—But Madam must eat just a bite. There is an omelette.

JANE—(*Sarcastically, as though she never got anything*)—Oh, I'll have an omelette. Thank God I have something.—(*Raphael with a flourish uncovers the omelette and begins to serve it.*)

JANE—Don't mess it about that way. Get out—get out—get out!—(*Raphael hastens out R.D. with a despairing shrug.*)

JULIE—Shall I serve the coffee, Madam?

JANE—Oh, I have coffee, have I? Probably stone cold by this time.

JULIE—(*Serving coffee*)—No, Madam, it is quite hot.

JANE—That will do—that will do. Don't slop it in the sameer.—(*To Georgine and Penfield*)—I simply wear my voice out—shouting at imbeciles.—(*Julie starts to cry*)—There she goes—blubbering into my coffee!—(*Commandingly*)—Julie!—(*Affectionately*)—Julie, my child! There!

there! Stop it instantly. You shall have my mauve gown, do you hear!

JULIE—(*Overcome with gratitude*)—Oh, Madam!

JANE—Yes, yes, it is yours. Now run along—run along.—(*Julie starts towards L.D. in tears and smiles*).

JANE—Where's the butter? Where's the butter?

JULIE—(*Turning back*)—On the toast, Madam.

JANE—On the toast! And you know I always butter my own toast.

JULIE—But yesterday, Madam insisted—

JANE—(*Exasperated*)—Will you go—and let me have some p-e-a-c-e!—(*Julie exits R.D. with a sigh*).

JANE—(*With a complete transition to even, conversational tones as she attacks omelette and coffee*)—Now—where were we? What—what were you saying? Oh yes: when you got me on the 'phone this morning, Miss Darigal, I was—quite out of my head. But then—something happened—What was it? Oh, yes—Mr. Sturgis came!

PENFIELD—(*Much upset*)—I was explaining to Miss Darigal—

JANE—(*To Georgine*)—Ah, then you know EVERYTHING!

GEORGINE—I—I know that Mr. Sturgis—pro-proposed to you.

JANE—(*Annoyed, looking over tray*)—There's never any sugar—

GEORGINE—But—but he didn't tell me whether—you—you had accepted him.

JANE—(*Having found the sugar, now poisoning a lump in her fingers*)—Let me see—what DID I do?

PENFIELD—You accepted me.

JANE—So I did—so I did!—(*Drops sugar lump into coffee. To Georgine*)—I never seem to have my wits about me before breakfast. Luckily, Pen had had HIS breakfast, or I should have told him to think it over. He's so chivalrous, so impetuous, so romantic!

PENFIELD—(*Perishly*)—I beg your pardon, I'm not romantic.—(*Sinks into chair by tea-table down L.*)

JANE—Ah, but you are impetuous—chivalrous—you know you are.—(*To Georgine*)—I never see anything like him. He s-w-e-p-t me off my feet. Left me dazed, you know. Even now I don't seem to remember how it happened. How DID it happen, Pen?

PENFIELD—(*Glumly*)—I came in as Mr. Goadby and Loughran were leaving.

JANE—THAT was it—they had been behaving outrageously to me—insulting me—it was something terrific! And—you—know Pen! He couldn't stand by and see a woman bullied by a pair of jackanapes! He turned on them superbly—asked me to marry him—all in a flash—and just as quickly, impulsively—I said, "Yes!"—(To Penfield—You were determined to silence all this scandal. Weren't you, Pen?

PENFIELD—That's—that's how I felt about it.

JANE—(To Georgine)—He would have done it at any cost. Isn't that so, Pen?

PENFIELD—Y—yes!

JANE—(To Georgine)—It was the only thing for him to do.—(To Pen)—Am I right?

PENFIELD—I—I suppose so!

GEORGINE—(Starting, to Jane)—Oh, you—you think THAT's the reason he asked you—to—to marry him?

JANE—(Sweetly)—I think that was why he asked me THEN. But if I were not sure that he loved me, I'd break MY engagement with him as quickly as YOU broke yours, my dear.

GEORGINE—(Stealthily)—But if he only asked you to marry him because—

PENFIELD—Georgine, I'd rather you didn't try to explain me. I am betrothed to Miss Bartlett. So long as she honors me with her—affection, I shall consider myself the—most fortunate of men.

JANE—Thank you, Pen. After that passionate declaration, I hope Miss Darigal is satisfied.—(Rising)—Now, I'm going to ask you to excuse me—I have a thousand things to do—IF WE'RE TO BE MARRIED TO-MORROW.—(Enter DR. FANSHAW L.D. Georgine starts apprehensively).

PENFIELD—(Rising in alarm)—Married tomorrow?

JANE—Why not? Why not?—(Coming down R. of table toward piano)—I'm tired of everything. I want diversion—I'll throw up my contracts—we'll go to Paris, Vienna, Buda Pesth! . . . Hello, Lyn!

GEORGINE—(Darting across to Fanshaw, up stage L.C. and seizing his hands)—She's going to marry him to-morrow!

FANSHAW—Well, well, little cousin—why not? Why not?

GEORGINE—I—I don't think she—she ought to—to hurry him this way—

JANE—(At piano)—What's that to you—or anybody

else? This is to be MY wedding—MY honeymoon! Good lord, can't I acquire a husband without everybody going mad?

PENFIELD—(*Standing L., below settle*)—But don't you think we might—

FANSHAW—No buts about it, Pen, my boy—the woman always sets the day.

JANE—(*To Penfield*)—And what's the matter with tomorrow, anyway? Oh, it's Friday! You don't like Friday—superstitious? Then Saturday it is! No, I have a matinee! Never mind, we'll be married AFTER the matinee. Lyn can give me away—he'd like that!

PENFIELD—I—I should like to have u—a day or two longer before—

GEORGINE—(*Going C. in front of the table*)—Before he sacrifices himself. Oh, can't you both see—(*Appealing first to Fanshaw and then to Jane*)—that if he cared anything for you he'd never hesitate like that?

JANE—My dear, you must be deaf—deaf as a bass drum. You heard him say just now that he loved me passionately, didn't you?

GEORGINE—You said it! HE didn't!—(*Coming down from C. to L.C., to Penfield, pleadingly*)—Oh, you don't love her. Do you Pen?

JANE—(*R.C.*)—How dare you put such a question to him? Didn't you fail him when he needed you most? (*Georgine hesitates*).

JANE—(*Insistently*)—Didn't you?

GEORGINE—Y—yes!

JANE—Didn't you throw him over in the most brutal way. Didn't you?

GEORGINE—(*Groggy*)—Y—yes, but—

JANE—Didn't you tell me to keep his ring? Where is that ring, anyway?—(*Penfield's hand goes guiltily to the pocket where the ring is*).—You THREW it at him—threw it at him; and now that you realize you've lost him FOREVER, you devil the life out of him. I won't have it—you—you shan't treat him in this beastly way. Hahahaha! It's clear to me you never cared THAT—(*Snaps her fingers*)—for him!

GEORGINE—(*Hotly, turning on Jane*)—I love him as you don't know how to love anyone but yourself!—(*With a little sob she crosses to piano bench and sinks down on it. Jane goes up C. Penfield crosses to Georgine*).

PENFIELD—(*Surprised, speaking affectionately*)—Georgine!

GEORGINE—You musn't speak to me in that—that loving way unless you—you love me.—(*Fanshaw comes down L. of settle to fireplace*).

JANE—(*Coming down L.C. to Georgine*)—You're not crying because your heart is hurt—it's because your silly pride—your bad temper. Go on—go on—ery till your nose is red—you can't move me.

FANSHAW—Oh, come now, Jane, dear old girl, be magnanimous—give him up!

JANE—Never! Think of the life we'd have together!

FANSHAW—But you have your ART—you don't need a husband.

JANE—Ah, but he needs me—I'd keep him waked up! What could she do for him?—the sentimental little idiot!

FANSHAW—But he may have a weakness for sentimental idiots—he may love this one—effervescently.

JANE—Impossible—incredible—he couldn't—But—(*With a transition*)—I'll show you the kind of woman I am. IF he DOES love her—well—I'll hand him over to her.

PENFIELD—(*Exasperated*)—I won't be passed back and forth this way—like—

FANSHAW—A loving cup at a banquet.

JANE—(*To Fanshaw*)—What did I tell you. You see now, there's no shaking Pen's affection for me. What does it matter if Miss Darigal does eat her heart out for him? It doesn't affect him in the least. She's not the kind of a girl to appeal to him. She's too—too much of a clinging vine—too feminine. Oh—her eyes are too big—her hair's too curly! He never did love her—he never could.

PENFIELD—(*Suddenly, protesting warmly*)—That's not true—not true! I—I admire, I respect you—(*Desperately*)—But—oh, I can't help it, I've got to say it—I—I worship the very ground she walks on!

JANE—(*With a cheerful explosion*)—Then, for God's sake—take her in your arms—and clear out!—(*Penfield and Georgine look at Jane in utter astonishment; then at each other. Georgine suddenly flings herself into Penfield's arms*).

FANSHAW—Pax vobiscum!

PENFIELD—(*Over Georgine's shoulder to Jane*)—I—I believe you've been chaffing me.

JANE—(*L.C. by settle*)—Ah, a light breaks in upon

him! You dear, delightful donkey! You haven't been sitting on my chest all these days for nothing—have you?

PENFIELD—(*With a sheeping grin*)—You're right about the donkey—but if you're satisfied, I am.

JANE—Satisfied? Haven't I had the satisfaction of feeding you your confounded sermon leaf by leaf?—(*Excitedly, explaining to him*)—Well, didn't you swallow it? Oh, you swallowed it like a man.—(*With a transition*)—Bless your heart—you've taken back every word you said against me, fought for me, offered yourself to me!—and—almost married me!—(*With a transition*)—Oh, it's been good for me, good for that little cry-baby there—(*Indicating Georgine*)—good for you; and I hope to God it will be good for the poor sinners who sit in your church.

PENFIELD—I feel as though I should ask all the sinners of the world to forgive me!

JANE—(*With comic transition*)—For heaven's sake, don't do it here!—(*Hustles Georgine and Penfield toward L.D.*)

GEORGINE—(*Impetuously embracing Jane*)—You wonderful darling!

PENFIELD—(*Laying a hand on Jane's arm*)—I shall never forget you!

JANE—(*Breaking out*)—You ungrateful wretches.—Do you think that I am going to stand here all day—be mauled by you when I'm dying for my massage? No! Out you go—both of you—into the night!—(*Jane puts Georgine and Penfield out L.D. and shuts it on them. She turns wearily to C.*)

FANSHAW—(*Standing by fireplace, laughing*)—Jane, you ought to establish a bureau for lost, strayed and stolen lovers!

JANE—(*Coming down to R. side of settle, looking at him whimsically, meaningly, pausing before speaking*)—Yes—I ought!

FANSHAW—Bless my soul, Jane—WOULD you take the trouble to find ME now?

JANE—I would not! You're no lover—you never were. Only a sort of property, papier mache affair. Why didn't you make real love to me—years ago—when I was strapped, helpless in my perambulator?

FANSHAW—You were much too fond of your rattle then—too fascinated by the noise you made. For years you've been filling the world with your marvellous squawk-

ing. Now the time has come for you to stop a bit and listen to me. You're not so young as you were!

JANE—Hah!—(*Tartly*)—You like to rub that into me—don't you? You had the impudence to tell me yesterday that I was no broiler!

FANSHAW—Why should you want to be an impotent, puerile, fledgeling? Thank the Lord, you're full-feathered.

JANE—Full-feathered! Hah! That's just another way of saying that I'm getting old and tough. If it's as bad as that I might as well curl up and die under the piano.

FANSHAW—(*Protesting*)—My dear girl, I—

JANE—(*Pacing stage between settle and piano*)—Oh, you can be as ancient as you like, you self-satisfied old pig. I won't be!

FANSHAW—(*Romantically*)—As a matter of fact, Jane, we're both standing on the threshold of Indian Summer—that glorious season—

JANE—Don't talk SEASONS to me. I'm sick of them. Oh, the life of an artist. It's killing me—I tell you. You've no conception of what I go through—travel, study, rehearsal, performance—one after the other—a continuous nightmare—wrecking body, brain, nerve—and always there is the horror, the unspeakable horror of something happening to my voice.—(*Touching the side of her throat*)—There's something hurting me there now. There. See, right there! (*Highly excited*)—I don't know whether I'll be able to sing to-night. I'm sure I haven't a note left. I've been screeching my head off all day—expending my energy on a pack of jackasses—no rest—no food—no bath—no massage! I shall lose my voice entirely—I know I shall!—(*Touches her voice*)—Tra-la-lira-lira-lira!—(*With a transition*)—That's right!—(*Sinks down on settle with sigh of relief*).

FANSHAW—But it's not all right. You've got to drop it—now, for good and all. . . . You're going to marry ME to-morrow afternoon at 3 o'clock sharp.

JANE—But, Lyn, my angel, what will you do with me when we're married?

FANSHAW—By Jove, I hadn't thought of that. I wonder. . . . I think I'll drag you off and bury you in the wilds of Connecticut.

JANE—(*Sitting up straight, suddenly*)—Hah! The wilds of Connecticut—nobody to sing for except the cows, the pigs and the HENS! No, no, no—not for Jane!

FANSHAW—You could sing while you're doing—little things around the house!

JANE—Play chamber-maid in your nasty, God-forsaken country-house! Drivel! Do you think THAT could fill my soul with joy? Do you think that dusting your dirty, filthy drawing room would compensate an artist for turning over her roles to a fat, waddling cat—with a voice like a penny whistle?

FANSHAW—But, Jane, my dear—a moment ago you were damning the life of an artist.

JANE—What of that? So would you if you had to endure what I do!—Yes, yes, I ought to drop it all, as you say—I will—I will—I'll drop all the roles I don't like! (*Curts herself up comfortably on the settle and counts off on her fingers*)—I'll never sing Carmen again! No—not Carmen—none of those hand-organ parts—Nor Aida—nor Violetta. No! I'll sing what appeals to me—Louise, Tosca, Isolda, and oh—everything you like! You must hear me to-night. I'll sing like a miracle!

FANSHAW—Don't sing to-night, Jane. I'll phone Geist that you've got an attack of laryngitis. I want you to myself.

JANE—(*Affectionately, rising*)—Oh, Lyn, I would love an evening of peace and quiet and petting with you—but I can't disappoint my audience—(*Strougly*)—not for man, devil, god, or lover! When I'm billed sing—I sing! (*Starts up stage to R.C., then faces about, with a transition, her hand to her throat*)—Oh, my voice!—my voice!

FANSHAW—Let me look at your throat!—(*Goes up to table C. and picks up a spoon*).

JANE—No—no!—(*Comes down C.*)—You're going to find something the matter with it!—(*Backs away as he comes down to her*).

FANSHAW—(*Commandingly*) — Let—me—look—at your—throat!—(*They are now down C. He facing L., she facing R. He lays his left hand on her shoulder, pointing spoon in other hand*).

FANSHAW—Open!—(*Jane opens her mouth; Fanshaw places spoon in her mouth*)—Say, Ah!

JANE—Ah!

FANSHAW—(*Keeping left hand on her shoulder, taking spoon from her mouth; speaking professionally*)—Hum!

JANE—How is it?—(*Fanshaw kisses her full on the mouth. Jane slips her arms about him; then slowly withdraws from his embrace, but still keeps a hand on his shoulder*).

JANE—(*Looking into his face, speaking affectionately in a low, mellow tone*)—Oh, Lyn, Lyn, you precious, patient, wise, old dear—(*Stronger*)—What a fool—(*Higher in scale*)—What an idiot—(*Lower in scale, stronger*)—What a jackass—I've been!—(*Looking toward audience, her hand still on his shoulder*)—I have thought that my voice was the most important thing in life. It's not, my old one—the most important thing is *LOVING* someone.—(*Directly to him*)—You've known that all these years, and I've just learned it. What a goose I've been. But it's not too late. If you'll let me, Lyn, I'll make the rest of our life one long Indian Summer! If you really want this goose, she'll clip her wings for you!—(*Fanshaw takes both her outstretched hands in his and kisses them*).

CURTAIN.

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