HE AND SHE
BY
Rachel Crothers

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EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY THEATRE
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HE AND SHE

*He and She* represents the drama of married life in which the relations of husband and wife are modified by the rival claims of professional jealousy. It is one of the most striking of the plays which deal with the general question of woman’s rights and responsibilities, of which its author has stood for some time as a representative in drama.

Rachel Crothers was born in Bloomington, Illinois, and graduated from the State Normal School. Her father, Dr. Eli Kirk Crothers, was a friend and contemporary of Lincoln, while her mother studied medicine after she was forty years of age, and became the first woman physician in that part of Illinois. In a letter to the editor written in response to his request for biographical details, Miss Crothers says:

"My interest in the stage was entirely foreign to the deeply religious conservative traditions of my family but began when I was very small, asserting itself through the writing of plays—the first one to be produced being *Every Cloud Has a Silver Lining, or the Ruined Merchant*, all five of the characters played by myself and a friend at the age of twelve—to an invited audience of amazed and admiring friends."

After her graduation from school, Miss Crothers studied dramatic art in Boston and New York and was for three seasons on the stage. She then began seriously writing plays. Her first play to be professionally produced was a clever one-act sketch, *The Rector*, played at the Madison Square Theatre, New York, April 3, 1902, dealing with the choice of a wife by a young clergyman. Then followed *The Three of Us*, performed at the Madison Square Theatre, October, 1906; *The Coming of Mrs. Patrick*, at the same theatre, October, 1907; *Myself Bettina*, first played by Maxine Elliott at Powers Theatre, Chicago, January, 1908; *A Man’s World*, played by Mary Mannering at the Comedy Theatre, New York, Feb. 8, 1910; *The Herfords (He and She)* (1912); *Young Wisdom*, played by Mabel and Edith Talliaferro at the Criterion Theatre, New York, January, 1914; *Ourselves*, played by Grace Elliston at the Lyric Theatre, New York, November, 1913; *The Heart of Paddy Whack*, played by Chauncey Olcott at the Grand Opera House, New York, November, 1914. *Old Lady 31*, after a tryout on the road, opened at the Thirty-ninth Street Theatre, New York City, on October 30, 1916, and had a successful run. Her most recent plays were *A Little Journey*, which was first played at the Little Theatre, New York, December 26, 1918, and *39 East*, which opened at the Broadhurst Theatre, March 31, 1919.
INTRODUCTION

*He and She* was first tried out on the road during the fall of 1911. It was then renamed *The Herfords* and was first played by the cast as here given at the Plymouth Theatre in Boston, February 5, 1912.

After extensive revision, the play was revived and produced at the Little Theatre, New York, February 12, 1920, under the title *He and She*. At this revival Miss Crothers herself played the part of "Ann Herford," Mr. Cyril Keightley that of "Tom Herford" and Miss Faire Binney that of "Millicent."

The most significant of Miss Crothers' plays are those in which she deals with a problem created by some demand of woman's nature. In *The Three of Us* she shows the strong sisterly affection of a woman for her younger brother who is hardly worthy of it but who is saved by the power of her love. In *A Man's World* she attacks the basis of social and moral law which treats the woman unfairly. In *Ourselves* she shows the responsibility of good women for the so-called double standard of morality. In *He and She* she draws in a masterly way the effect which the rivalry of a wife in an artistic profession has upon the relations of her husband and herself and also upon her treatment of her daughter.

*A Man's World* has been published by Richard Badger; *The Rector, Young Wisdom* and *The Three of Us* by Samuel French. *He and She* is now printed for the first time through the courtesy of the author, from a manuscript prepared especially by her for this collection. In order to reflect the changes made in the revival of 1920, in the Revised Edition, the entire play has been reprinted from a revised manuscript furnished by Miss Crothers.
NOTE TO THIRD EDITION
In Nice People, first played at the Klaw Theatre, New York, March 2, 1921, Miss Crothers drew a strong picture of a certain form of social life which developed in this country after the Great War. It was a popular success. Every day, which was first played in Atlantic City, October 27, 1921, while an interesting study of the revolt of a young girl against the stiffing circumstances of her life in a small town, did not succeed. Mary the Third began on February 5, 1923, a long run at the Thirty-ninth Street Theatre, New York. It revealed the differences in the points of view of three generations of women toward the question of marriage. Expressing Willie, produced by the Equity Players, April 16, 1924, at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre, was a clever satire on the artificial efforts at self expression of certain social types.

Nice People was published in Contemporary American Plays, edited by A. H. Quinn, New York, 1923. Mary the Third, Old Lady 31 and A Little Journey were issued together in one volume in 1923. Expressing Willie, 39 East and Nice People were published in one volume in 1924, also by Brentano.

NOTE TO FOURTH EDITION
A Lady's Virtue, first produced in Chicago, October, 1925, dealt with the Character of the eternal courtesan, and her struggle with the claims of a wife who is not her mental equal. While not up to Miss Crothers' standard, it was a popular success. Venus, produced in December, 1927 in New York, dealt with an improbable situation and was quickly withdrawn.

The Heart of Paddy Whack and Once Upon A Time were published in 1925 by Samuel French.

NOTE TO FIFTH EDITION
In Let Us Be Gay, first produced at the Little Theatre, New York, February 21, 1929, Miss Crothers wrote one of the best plays of her career, and one of the popular successes of the season. It is a social comedy of fine quality, with brilliant dialogue, and marks the continued progress in Miss Crothers' art, since it reveals even a broader sympathy with the man's point of view in the relationship of marriage than was expressed in He and She. The play has been published by Samuel French (1929).

NOTE TO SIXTH EDITION
As Husbands Go, first produced March 5, 1931, was a striking contrast between the character of an American husband and that of an Englishman who had fallen in love with his wife. The triumph of the husband was skillfully secured
through the impression he makes upon the lover, in one of the best comedy scenes in recent years. *When Ladies Meet* (October 6, 1932), drew a corresponding conflict between a wife and a young woman writer who had fallen in love with her husband. Both women act like persons of breeding and their meeting and parting were wrought out with Miss Crothers' usual skill in dialogue. *Susan and God*, first tried out in Philadelphia on April 12, 1937, and opening in New York, much revised, on October 18, was a delicious satire upon a charming but selfish woman, who tries to make a social asset out of the so-called Oxford Movement.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
Plymouth Theatre, Boston, February 5, 1912

TOM HERFORD, a sculptor........................................Mr. Charles Waldron
ANN HERFORD, his wife...........................................Miss Viola Allen
DAISY HERFORD, his sister.......................................Miss Grace Elliston
MILLICENT, his daughter.......................................Miss Beatrice Prentice
DR. REMINGTON, his father-in-law .........................Mr. George Fawcett
KEITH MCKENZIE, his assistant.............................Mr. John Westley
RUTH CREEL, his wife’s friend..............................Miss Jessie Izette
ELLEN, a maid.....................................................Miss Emily Varian
ACT FIRST. Scene: The Herford Studio.

The room is in the basement floor of a large old fashioned house in lower New York—and shows that it has been made over and adapted to the needs of a sculptor.

At right center back are double doors opening into the workroom. At right of these doors is recess showing it has been cut in. The ceiling of the half of the room which is towards the audience is much higher than the other part— showing that the room which is on the floor above has been used to give height to this part of the studio.

The break made in the ceiling is supported by an interesting old carved column—very evidently brought from Italy—and in the overhanging part of the wall is set a very beautiful old Italian frieze in bas relief—a few faded colors showing.

At lower left is a large studio window.

At lower right side a single door leading into hall. At upper left corner, a cupboard is built in, in harmony with the construction of the room, and showing, when opened, drawers and compartments for holding sculptors' tools, etc.

Before the window, at right center, is a scaffold built to hold a section of a frieze. At its base is a revolving table, holding modeling clay, tools, etc. In front of the scaffold is a short pair of steps. At centre, is a long table holding rolls of sketches, a desk set—a book or two, pencils, compasses, several pieces of modeling.

There are a number of chairs about and a piece of rich brocade in vivid coloring thrown over the back of one.

The room is simple, dignified, beautiful, full of taste and strength. Soft afternoon sunshine streams in from the wide window.

KEITH MACKENZIE and TOM HERFORD are lifting one section of a bas relief frieze about 3 by 5—and placing it on the scaffolding.

MACKENZIE is about 35, tall, good-looking, in a pleasing, commonplace way; also wearing a sculptor's working clothes—but of a practical and not artistic sort.

TOM HERFORD is 40, a fine specimen of the vigorous American-artist type. Virile, fresh, alive and generous in nature and viewpoint. He wears the stamp of confidence and success.
TOM.
(As they lift the frieze.) Come on! There she is! Put her over—no, this way, about half a foot. That's right. There! Let's have a look. (TOM goes down to hanging switch and turns on the light. As he does so, he says:) Wait! (The lights are turned up.) (Turning to KEITH.) What do you think?

KEITH.
It's a great thing, Governor! Going to be a walk-away for you. You'll win it as sure as guns. I know it. I bet you land the $100,000.00 as sure as you're standing there, governor.

TOM.
Oh, I don't know. The biggest fellows in the country are going in for this competition.

KEITH.
Well—you're one of the biggest. I think you're the biggest—and you've turned out the best thing you've ever done in your life. (Going to stand above table.)

TOM.
That's damned nice of you, McKenzie. It does look pretty good out here. Doesn't it? (He goes up on the steps—to touch the frieze.)

KEITH.
(After a pause.) Governor.

TOM.
(Working at his frieze.) Um?

KEITH.
I want to ask you something. Not from curiosity—but because—I'd like to know for my own sake. You needn't answer of course—if you don't want to.

TOM.
Go on. Fire away.

KEITH.
Have you ever been sorry that Mrs. Herford is a sculptor—instead of just your wife?

TOM.
Not for a minute.

KEITH.
I've been thinking a lot about it all lately.
TOM.
About you and Ruth, you mean?

KEITH.
Yes. She'll marry me in the fall if I let her keep on working.

TOM.
And?

KEITH.
Well—I—Hang it all! I don’t want her to. I can take care of her now. At first it was different—when grubbing along—but since I’ve been with you, you’ve put me on my feet. I’ll never be great—I know that all right—but I can take care of her.

TOM.  
(Working at frieze.) But she wants to keep on, doesn’t she?

KEITH.
Yes, but—

TOM.
Good Heavens, boy—you’re not bitten with that bug I hope. “I want my girl by my own fireside to live for me alone.”

KEITH.
Oh—

TOM.
Why Ruth Creel’s a howling success—the way she’s climbed up in that magazine—why in the name of Christopher, do you want her to stop?

KEITH.  
(At right end of table, figuring mechanically on some papers on table.) How can she keep on at that and keep house too?

TOM.
Well they do, you know—somehow.

KEITH.
Oh, Mrs. Herford’s different. She’s working right here with you—and her time is her own. But Ruth’s tied down to office hours and it’s slavery—that’s what it is.

TOM.  
She doesn’t think so. Does she?

KEITH.
I want a home. I want children.
TOM. Of course. But that doesn't mean she'll have to give up her profession forever.

KEITH.
Oh, I'm strong for women doing anything they want to do—in general—But when it's the girl you love and want to marry, it's different.

TOM.
It ought not to be.

KEITH. When you come down to brass tacks—

ANN.
(Coming quickly in from the workroom, and stopping as she sees the frieze.) Oh Tom!

(ANN HERFORD is 38. Intensely feminine and a strong vibrating personality which radiates warmth and vitality. She wears a long linen working smock—a soft rich red in color. Her sleeves are rolled up and her general appearance shows that she is at work and has stopped only to look at TOM's frieze.)

KEITH.
Looks great out here—doesn't it, Mrs. Herford?

ANN.
Um.

KEITH.
Aren't you—more sure now than ever it will win?

ANN.
Um. (Starting to speak and checking herself.)

TOM.
What?

ANN.
Nothing. Your horses are marvelous, Tom. I wish we could see it all together—now. Don't you? The rest of the twenty sections—so we could see how much we—how much we—feel the running.

TOM.
Don't you feel it in this piece?

ANN.
Of course.

KEITH.
I do—tremendously. I think it's wonderful. (He goes into workroom.)
TOM.
Ann—what were you going to say a minute ago about the frieze?

ANN.
A—I don't know.

TOM.
Don't hedge. Several times lately you've started to say something and haven't got it out. What is it? Any suggestions?

ANN.
How do you feel about it yourself, boy? Are you satisfied?

TOM.
Does that mean you aren't?

ANN.
I asked you.

TOM.
Well—it's the best that's in me. Why? What's the matter? You don't like it after all.

ANN.
Like it? It's a strong—noble—beautiful thing.

TOM.
But—

ANN.
Dearest—is it—just exactly what your first conception of it was? Has it turned out just as you first felt it?

TOM.
Why yes—not absolutely in detail of course. It's improved a lot I think—in the working—but in the main, yes—it's just the same. Why do you say that?

ANN.
You know of course, but—

TOM.
Say it—Say it. What have you got in your mind?

ANN.
I don't know that I can—but in the beginning it had a feeling of swiftness, of rushing—swirling—as if your soul were let loose in it, Tom—too big, too free to be held in and confined. But, somehow, now that it's finished—
TOM.
Go on.

ANN.
That wild thing has gone out of it. It's crystalized into something magnificent but a little conventional.

TOM.
Good heavens, Ann, you can't call that conventional?

ANN.
Well—orthodox then. It's noble of course—but that inexplainable thing which made it great—is gone—for me. Perhaps it's just me—my imagination—because I care so much.

TOM.
It is imagination. It's much stronger than when I began.

ANN.
Is it?

TOM.
Of course. You're trying to put something fantastic into it which never was there at all. That's not me. What I've done I've got through a certain strong solid boldness. That's why I think this stands a good chance. It's the very best thing I've ever done, Ann, by all—

KEITH.
(Opening the workroom door.) Governor—will you show Guido and me about something please—Just a minute? (There is a slight pause.)

(TOM looks at the frieze.)

TOM.
I don't see what you mean at all, dear girl. Thanks a lot—but I think wrong you're wrong this time. (He goes into the workroom.)

(ANN looks again at the frieze as RUTH CREEL comes in from the hall.)

ANN.
(Going quickly to RUTH.) Oh, Ruth—bless you! (She kisses her warmly).

RUTH.
I came straight from the office and I'm dirty as a pig. (ANN points to TOM'S frieze) Is that it?

(ANN nods.)
RUTH.
Well?

ANN.
Oh, Ruth—I'm sick in the bottom soul. I hope—I hope—I'm wrong. I must be wrong. Tom knows better than I do; but—I can't help it. I tell myself I'm a fool—and the more I try to persuade myself the more it comes back. Ruth, it isn't the same. It isn't. What ever it was that lifted it above good work and made it a thing of inspiration—is gone. It's gone—gone.

RUTH.
Have you—told Tom how you feel?

ANN.
Just this minute. He says I'm wrong absolutely—that it's the best thing he's ever done.

RUTH.
I hope to God you are wrong—but I bet you're not. You know. Did you—have you told him the other thing?

ANN.
Not yet. But I've finished it.

RUTH.
Absolutely?

ANN.
I worked down here last night till three o'clock this morning.

RUTH.
Well—how is it?

ANN.
Oh, I don't dare think. It can't good as it seems to me.

RUTH.
Of course it can. Why shouldn't it be? Aren't you going to offer it to him right away—before it's too late?

ANN.
How can I? It frightens me to pieces to even think of it—but, oh,—my dear, my dear—it's alive and fresh and new. It is. It is. If he only would take it—my idea—and put his wonderful work—his wonderful execution into it.

RUTH.
Perhaps he'll be fired with it—jump at it.
ANN.
I'm afraid, he won't—and I'm afraid of *this* for him. It would nearly kill him to lose. He's counting on winning. Keith and everybody are so dead sure of him.

RUTH.
Show him yours for goodness—

ANN.
Be careful. He'll be back in minute.

RUTH.
I'll skip upstairs and make myself presentable.

ANN.
Go in my room, dear.

*(RUTH goes out through hall.)*

*(TOM and KEITH come back from workroom.)*

*(ANN goes to TOM—they stand a moment—looking at the frieze. ANN slaps TOM on the back, without speaking, and goes on into the workroom.)*

KEITH.
*(After a pause.)* I agree with you in general, governor. But when it comes down to the girl you love and want to marry, it's different.

TOM.
Why is it?

KEITH.
The world has got to have homes to live in and who's going to make 'em if the women don't do it?

TOM.
*(Smiling at KEITH tolerantly.)* Oh, come—come.

KEITH.
Do you mean to say you wouldn't rather your sister Daisy was married and keeping her own house instead working here as your secretary?

TOM.
But she *isn't* married—and she won't live with Ann and me unless it's a business proposition. I respect her *tremendously* for it—tremendously.
KEITH.
Well, Daisy’s a big, plucky, independent thing anyway—but Ruth’s a little delicate fragile—

TOM.
With a mind bigger than most of the men you know.

KEITH.
Oh, mind be damned. I want a wife.

DAISY.
(Coming in from the hall.) Oh—Tom—it’s out here. How corking!

(DAISY HERFORD is twenty-eight—strong, wholesome, handsome, with the charm of health and freshness. She wears a severe serge gown and carries a pencil and stenographer’s pad.)

TOM.
Well—sis, how do you like it?

DAISY.
I adore it. I hope you haven’t any doubts now about winning.

TOM.
I’ve plenty of ‘em—but somehow today it looks as good as if it stood a pretty good chance.

DAISY.
Chance! I never was so sure of anything in my life.

KEITH.
Daisy—maybe you know just what ought to be where with this stuff.

DAISY.
I’ve been itching to get at it. Let’s put all the tools on that side.

KEITH.
I have started.

DAISY.
And throw the trash in here. (Pushing the box with her foot.)

KEITH.
Can you help me now?

DAISY.
Yes. Tom, do you want me to write to the Ward people about that marble again?
TOM.
Yes I do. Shake them up. Tell 'em if it isn't here by the first of the month I won't take it.

DAISY.
(Making a note in her note-book.) Um—um.

(MILLICENT HERFORD rushes in from the hall at left. MILLICENT is 16—pretty—eager—full of vitality and will—half child, half woman. She is charmingly dressed in an afternoon frock and picture hat and is at the moment happy and hilarated.)

MILLICENT.
Father, where's mother?

TOM.
In the work-room. But you can't go in.

(As MILLICENT starts to the workroom.)

MILLICENT.
Why not?

TOM.
She's finishing something and said not to let any one stop her.

MILLICENT.
Oh dear! I think I might. It's awfully important. Couldn't I just poke my head in the door a minute?

TOM.
Not for a second.

MILLICENT.
Sakes, I wish Mother wouldn't work in my Christmas vacation. It's an awful bore. Don't you think she might stop the little while I'm at home, Aunt Daisy?

DAISY.
None of my business. Don't ask me.

KEITH.
If you ask me—yes I think she might.

TOM.
That's nonsense. Your mother's doing about everything that can be done to make your vacation a success, isn't she?

MILLICENT.
Yes, of course.
TOM.  
Then I don't see that there's any reason why she shouldn't be allowed a little time for herself.

MILLICENT.  
But I want her now. Aren't my new pumps stemmy, Aunt Daisy?

DAISY.  
Aren't they what?

MILLICENT.  
Stemmy. Wake up, Aunt Daisy. Oh, the luncheon was gorgeous. All the girls were there and the matinee was heavenly.

KEITH.  
What play?

MILLICENT.  
"The Flame of Love." You needn't laugh, father. It's the best play in town. The leading man is a peach. Honestly, he's the best looking thing I ever saw in my life. We were all crazy about him. Belle Stevens took off her violets and threw them right at him. She makes me tired, though. I don't think seventeen is so terribly much older than sixteen, do you, Aunt Daisy?

DAISY.  
(Still at the cupboard.) It depends on whether you're sixteen or seventeen—how much older it is.

MILLICENT.  
I don't care—I wouldn't wear a ring as big as hers if I had one. Oh, Aunt Daisy, may I borrow your earrings? (Going to Daisy.)

DAISY.  
Help yourself.

MILLICENT.  
Thanks, you're a duck. I could combostulate you for that. How much longer do you think mother will be, daddie?

TOM.  
Couldn't say.

MILLICENT.  
Well, tell her I have to see her the minute she comes out. Don't forget. (She hurries off through hall).

TOM.  
She's grown up over night somehow. I can't get used to it.
KEITH.
And she went away to school few months ago just a girl. Amazing, isn't it?

DAISY.
Not a bit. What do you expect? She's free now—cut loose. Boarding school does that pretty quickly.

TOM.
I suppose so—and I suppose it's good for her. *Looking at the frieze he goes into the work-room.*

KEITH.
The Governor's darned cheerful about the frieze to-day.

DAISY.
I should think he would be. It's great.

(*KEITH and DAISY go on clearing out cupboard.*)

KEITH.
I'd give a good deal to know what Mrs. Herford actually thinks of it.

DAISY.
Why she loves it.

KEITH.
She looks at it with such a sort of a—I don't know. I can't help wondering if she is so dead certain of it as the rest of us are.

DAISY.
I hope she doesn't discourage Tom. After all he likes it and he knows more about it than anybody else. Ann's criticism is wonderful, of course, but still Tom is the artist.

KEITH.
You're just as jealous for your brother as you can be, aren't you, Daisy? All right for the missus to be clever, but you want Tom to be supreme in everything, don't you?

DAISY.
He is. (*Leaning over the box.*)

KEITH.
You're a brick. Daisy, have you ever been in love in your life?

DAISY.
What do you mean? (*Lifting her head—startled and embarrassed*)
KEITH.
I've been thinking an awful lot lately about this business of married women working. What do you think of it—now honestly?

DAISY.
What difference does it make—what I think?

KEITH.
Of course, there's no reason on earth why you shouldn't be in it. You don't care a hang for men—and—

DAISY.
You mean men don't care a hang for me.

KEITH.
No I don't. I don't mean that at all. But you're so independent men are sort of afraid of you.

DAISY.
Oh, don't apologize. You mean I'm a plain, practical girl meant to take care of myself.

KEITH.
Well—that's what you want to be, isn't it?

DAISY.
Never mind about me. Let's change the subject.

KEITH.
You needn't be so touchy. I talk awfully frankly about my affairs and you never say a word about yourself.

DAISY.
Why should I? I'm not interesting and you're not interested.

KEITH.
I am too. You're the best pal a fellow ever had. I don't know any other girl I could have worked with all this time—day in and day out and not either been dead sick of or sort of — you know sweet on, in a way.

DAISY.
You needn't rub it in.

KEITH.
Why, Daisy, old girl, what is the matter? What in the dickens are you so huffy about?

DAISY.
Just let me and my idiosyncrasies alone, please.
KEITH.
Heavens! Can't I say what I think?

DAISY.
No, you can't. I don't want to hear it. I know just what I seem like to
other people—so there's no use explaining me to myself.

KEITH.
All I meant was if you were in love would you give up your job and—

DAISY.
But I'm not in love, so stop thinking about it.

KEITH.
Gosh! I thought you had common sense, but you're just as queer as the
rest of them. What I want to know is—if a girl loves a man well enough
to marry him why in hell she can't stay at home and—

DAISY.
What's the matter?

(As KEITH cuts his finger on the tool he is holding.)

DAISY.
Did you cut your finger?

KEITH.
Not much.

DAISY.
(With a sudden tenderness.) Let me see.

KEITH.
It's nothing.

DAISY.
It is too. Hold still. I'll tie it up for you. (She ties his finger with her own
handkerchief.) Anything the—old still. Anything the matter with one of
your fingers would put you out of commission.

KEITH.
Might be a good idea. I don't think Ruth believes in me much. Doesn't
think I'll get much farther.

DAISY.
(Warmly.) I don't know why. I think you've got plenty for her to believe
in. Well—speaking of angels. How are you, Ruth?

(As RUTH comes in from hall).
KEITH.
Oh—hello, dear.

RUTH.
Hello. What’s the matter?

KEITH.
Nothing.

DAISY.
Keith was waxing emphatic about you and over emphasized a finger. (She turns back to cupboard.)

RUTH.
I’m sorry. (Touching KEITH’s hand as he comes down to her.)

KEITH.
How are you?

RUTH.
Dead. This day’s been twenty-four hours long. (Sitting at left end of table.)

KEITH.
(Coming down to RUTH.) Has anything gone wrong?

RUTH.
No—but a young author from the eloquent West has been fighting me since nine o’clock this morning.

KEITH.
What about?

RUTH.
He’s got a perfectly magnificent story—or idea for one, rather—but it’s so crudely written that it’s impossible to publish it.

DAISY.
I suppose you can re-write it for him.

RUTH.
No, he won’t let me. Wants to do it all himself. Oh he’s so stubborn and so funny and so splendid. So outlandishly conceited and so adorably boyish I wanted to slap him one minute and kiss him the next.

KEITH.
Why didn’t you do both and you’d have got what you wanted.

RUTH.
I was afraid to risk it.
KEITH.
(Nodding towards TOM's frieze.) Doesn't that hit you in the eye?

RUTH.
Awfully like Tom, isn't it? Strong and splendid.

KEITH.
What are you thinking—

RUTH.
Oh, nothing—only I wish Ann had—I wish Ann had gone in for this competition too.

KEITH.
What?

DAISY.
Why on earth should she?

RUTH.
Why shouldn't she?

DAISY.
Ruth, you're daffy about Ann. Always have been.

KEITH.
She does beautiful work for a woman—but ye gods—she's not in this class.

RUTH.
And she never will be if she's held back and told she's limited. I think she has genius and the sooner she makes a bold dash and tries for something big the better.

DAISY.
Nonsense! Tom's pushed her and believed in her always. You can't say he's held her back.

RUTH.
(To KEITH.) I've heard you say she has genius—lots of times.

KEITH.
So she has—in a way. She has more imagination than the governor, but, great Peter, when it comes to execution and the real thing she isn't in it with him. How could she be? She's a woman.
RUTH.
Don't be any more anti-deluvian or prehistoric than you can help, Keith. Don't you think Ann's more original and really innately gifted than Tom is, Daisy?

DAISY.
I do not. She's terribly good. Of course—no doubt about that—but good Lord, Tom's great—a really great artist. (DAISY starts to hall door.)

RUTH.
Why do you go, Daisy?

DAISY.
Must. I have bushels of letters to get off.

RUTH.
You look as fresh and rosy as if you were just beginning the day. How do you do it?

DAISY.
Oh, I'm not expressing my soul in my job—merely earning by bread and butter. I suppose that's why I look so husky at twilight. (DAISY goes out through hall.)

RUTH.
(Looking after DAISY.) Do you know—I don't believe Daisy likes me any more.

KEITH.
(Sitting on left end of table near RUTH.) Kiss me.

(RUTH leans her head towards KEITH. He kisses her cheek.)

RUTH.
She's so marvelously good-natured—queer she's getting snappy at me lately.

KEITH.
I'm awfully glad you came.

RUTH.
Does it hurt? (Touching his finger.)

KEITH.
Not much.

RUTH.
I wonder why she doesn't like me?
KEITH.
What are you talking about? I’m asked to stay to dinner, too.

RUTH.
That’s nice.

KEITH.
I can’t bear to see you so tired, dear.

RUTH.
I’ll be all right when I have some tea.

KEITH.
This time next year you could be in your own home—away from those damnable office hours and the drudgery—if you only would. If you only would.

RUTH.
It never seems to occur to you that I might be a little less tired but bored to death without my job.

KEITH.
If you really cared for me the way you used to—you wouldn’t be bored.

RUTH.
Oh let’s not begin that.

KEITH.
But do you love me, dear. Do you?

RUTH.
I’ve been telling you so for a pretty long time, haven’t I.

KEITH.
Are you tired of it?

RUTH.
There isn’t any reason on earth why you should think I am.

KEITH.
Well, I do think it. I worry about it all the time. I know you’re brilliant and successful—but you—after all you say you love me—and I don’t see—(He stops with a sigh.) You’re awful pretty today. Your face is like a flower.

RUTH.
Oh—

KEITH.
Yes, it is. I love you so.
RUTH.
Dear old boy! I love you.

KEITH.
Do you, Ruth? Do you?

RUTH.
I've never loved anyone else. You've filled all that side of my life and you've made it beautiful. We must hang together dear—(Putting both her hands over one of his.) And understand and give things up for each other. But it must be fifty-fifty, dearest. I can make you happy, Keith—Oh I can. And I'll be so happy and contented with you if you'll only—

(KEITH turns away impatiently.)

RUTH.
I've never had a home for a minute—in my whole life—nor a relative since I was three—of any sort or description—not a soul who belonged to me but you.

KEITH.
I want you to have the sweetest little home in the world.

RUTH.
I think of having our own little dinners and all the nice people we know at our table—ours.

KEITH.
Yes—but—how can you do it if you're away all day?

RUTH.
Oh Keith, dear boy, you—the whole trouble is you think housekeeping is making a home—and the two things aren't the same at all—at all, at all.

KEITH.
Well, they can't be separated.

RUTH.
Oh, yes, they can. Love—love makes a home—not tables and chairs. We can afford more if I work, too. We can pay some one to do the stuff you think I ought to do. And you'll go on climbing up in your work and I'll go on in mine and we'll both grow to something and be somebody and have something to give each other. It will be fair—we'll be pulling together—pals and lovers like Tom and Ann. That's why they're so ideally happy.

KEITH.
Yes, but we're different. We couldn't—
RUTH.
You're not fair, Keith.

KEITH.
Great guns, Ruth—neither are you.

RUTH.
I am. I am perfectly. (Their voices together.)

TOM.
(Coming back from the workroom.) What's the row? Hello, Ruthie Creel.

RUTH.
(Giving her hand to TOM.) Hello, you nice Tommie Herford. I always lose my heart to you in your working clothes.

TOM.
You have my heart in any kind of clothes.

RUTH.
Keith's cross with me, Tom. You're much nicer to me than he is.

KEITH.
You never spring any of your revolutionary speeches on Herford. You save all your really soothing remarks for me.

RUTH.
Tom, am I revolutionary? Aren't I just a little cooing dove?

TOM.
Absolutely.

DAISY. (Coming in from hall.) Dr. Remington's here. Millicent's bringing him down. But he says he wants to sit upstairs on the parlor sofa, not down in the cellar. Tom, will you sign these letters now?

(DAISY puts the letters on the table—TOM goes towards the table as MILLICENT comes in from the hall bringing DR. REMINGTON by the hand.)

(DR. REMINGTON is 65. He is inclined to portliness and his keen humor and kindliness are combined with an understanding and wisdom which make him a very strong and a very lovable man. His manner and speech are a little deliberate. He has a twinkling readiness to tease but the weight and dignity of a successful and important physician.)

TOM.
Hello—hello—hello.
REMINGTON.
How are you?

KEITH.
(Taking REMINGTON’s overcoat.) How are you, Dr. Remington?

(RUTH comes to the doctor to take his hat and stick.)

REMINGTON.
Hello, McKenzie. And here’s that pretty little Ruth thing—knowing so much it makes my head ache.

RUTH.
So long as it's your head and not mine I don't mind.

MILЛИCENT.
Oh, thank you for the chocolates, grandfather. They’re just the kind I adore. I could absolutely combostulate you— (Giving him a violent hug.)
Five pounds, daddie.

TOM.
You're a fine doctor!

REMINGTON.
Chocolate's about the best medicine I know of if you want a girl to love you. Where's your mother?

MILЛИCENT.
In the cave. (Pointing to workroom.)

REMINGTON.
Can’t she be excavated? Go and dig her out.

MILЛИCENT.
They won't let me. You do it.

REMINGTON.
Hasn't anybody got the courage to do it?

(KEITH starts towards the door with box.)

DAISY.
Not me.

REMINGTON.
Well, McKenzie, go and tell her to let the work go to thunder and come and see her dad.

(KEITH goes into workroom.)
REMINGTON.
Is that the thing that's going to get the hundred thousand for you?

TOM.
If—yes.

REMINGTON.
Well, go to it—boy. I hope you hit it. (Sitting in the large chair at left.)

TOM.
Thanks. I'm doing my durndest. Daisy, you've got some of these dimensions wrong. Keith will have to give them to you again.

DAISY.
Oh, I'm sorry.

REMINGTON.
It's a good thing you're working for your own brother, Daisy— nobody else would have you.

DAISY.
You're the only person in the whole world who isn't impressed with my business ability.

REMINGTON.
Stuff! I wager you say in your prayers every night—Oh, Lord, deliver me from this job and get me a good husband.

DAISY.
(Laughing with the others and going to REMINGTON.) That's a very stemmy tie you're wearing. Do you get me?

REMINGTON.
Not exactly. All I know is I'd rather be stemmy than seedy.

KEITH.
(Opening the workroom door.) Don't you want me to carry that in for you, Mrs. Herford?

ANN.
(From within.) No, no—I'd rather do it myself.

KEITH.
It's too heavy for you.

ANN.
No it isn't. (ANN comes in carrying the figure of a woman in the nude — about a foot high. The figure is in wet clay and stands on a modeling board)
TOM.
Steady there! Steady! Let me take it.

ANN.
Don't touch it!

REMINGTON.
Hello there!

ANN.
Hello, daddy! I couldn't come out until I finished my lady. Isn't she nice? She's ready to be cast now. Come and look at her, Tom. She isn't so bad?

TOM.
She looks pretty good to me.

REMINGTON.
She looks a little chilly to me. Why don't you put a full suit of clothes on one of 'em—just for a change, Ann?

ANN.
You nice, horrid, sweet, adorable, cross old thing! Why didn't you come yesterday. I don't see why I love you so when you never do anything I want you to.

REMINGTON.
If I did I wouldn't be half as irresistible. Aren't you going to stop for the day now and pay a little attention to me?

ANN.
I am.

MILLICENT.
Mother, when can I see you? Alone I mean.

ANN.
After awhile. Have you had a nice day, dear?

MILLICENT.
Gorgeous! But I have to see you about something.

ANN.
You do? (Holding MILLICENT.) Look at her—dad. Hasn't she grown?

MILLICENT.
Mother, may I stay home from school one more day?
ANN.
Gracious! Is that what you want to see me about?

MILLICENT.
That's just one thing. Can't I, mother? All the girls are staying over. Mayn't I? Please—please?

ANN.
I have to think a little. Let's wait and talk it over. Daisy, aren't we going to have some tea?

DAISY.
It will be ready in a minute.

REMINGTON.
Thank God! Then we'll go upstairs.

ANN.
No, down here—it's much nicer. You'll have to get used to it, dad.

MILLICENT.
Well—you be thinking—but you be thinking—yes—for I've just got to stay over. I've just got to. It would be perfectly ridiculous if I didn't. (She goes out through hall.)

REMINGTON.
(Nodding after MILLICENT.) Getting more like you every day, Ann.

ANN.
She's your grandchild, you know.

REMINGTON.
I like 'em that way. I'd rather she was stubborn as a mule than have a wabbly spine.

ANN.
(Taking off her smock.) But a little wabbling once in a while is rather a pleasant thing to live with. For instance, it would make me very happy indeed if you wobbled enough to admit that this is a beautiful studio and that having it in the house where we live is the most sensible thing in the world.

REMINGTON.
It would be all right if you'd stay upstairs and mind your own business. Tom, if you don't look out you'll be so mixed up you'll be upstairs keeping house and Ann will be downstairs keeping shop.

TOM.
I don't know how I'd keep house—but Ann could keep shop all right.
REMINGTON.
Is that the way you feel about it, McKenzie? When you’re married are you going to stay at home and polish up while Ruth goes on running the magazine?

KEITH.
It looks as if that’s about the way it’ll have to be.

RUTH.
(Bringing the cake down to table.) That’s a splendid suggestion, Dr. Remington. Keith thinks somebody’s got to do it for a successful marriage—and I won’t—so why not you, dear? (Pointing at KEITH.)

(KEITH looks at RUTH and turns away in hopeless disgust.)

REMINGTON.
(Winking at RUTH and lowering his voice to her.) Keep at it. He’ll come to it. (ANN laughs as she cuts the cake.)

KEITH.
I don’t see that it’s so funny.

REMINGTON.
(Going to table to get a piece of cake.) You bet it’s not funny. Daisy, would you like your husband to wash the dishes if you happened to be too much occupied to do it yourself?

DAISY.
I’d kill him if he did. (Bringing the cream and sugar to large table.)

REMINGTON.
Oh—well—with one perfectly normal woman in the room I’m much more comfortable. (He settles himself elaborately in his chair at left.)

KEITH.
I’m serious. I’d like to know if there’s anything queer or preposterous in a fellow wanting a girl to give up hard, slavish work and let him take care of her when she marries him.

RUTH.
When she wants to do the work. Don’t leave that out.

TOM.
I don’t see that you, Keith, or any other fellow has got any kick coming so long as the girl makes you happy.

KEITH.
I’d like to hear your angle on it if you don’t mind, doctor.
RUTH.
Yes. Keith loves to hear his mid-Victorian ideas well supported.

REMINSTON.
Oh, I'm not so moth-eaten as I may look. In fact, I'm a damned sight more advanced than you women are. You're still yelling about your right to do anything on land or sea you want to do. We gave you that long ago.

ANN.
So nice of you!

RUTH.
(Sitting below the table at right.) Why talk about it all then? What else is there to it?

REMINSTON.
Put this in your pipe. The more women make good—the more they come into the vital machinery of running the world, the more they complicate their own lives and the more tragedies they lay up for themselves.

RUTH.
The more they escape—you mean.

ANN.
(As she pours the tea.) There isn't a single hard thing that can happen to a woman that isn't made easier by being able to make her own living. And you know it.

REMINSTON.
Oh. It's a hopeless subject for conversation. What everybody says is true. There's the rub.

DAISY.
Two?

REMINSTON.
Three.

(KEITH gives a cup of tea to REMINSTON.)

TOM.
Go on. What were you going to say?

ANN.
Yes, go on, dad.
REMINGTON.
(To ANN.) You hang on to yourself then till I get through. The development of women hasn't changed the laws of creation.

ANN.
Oh yes it has.

(REMINGTON looks at her.)

ANN.
Sorry. Go on.

REMINGTON.
Sex is still the strongest force in the world. (He looks at ANN again.)

ANN.
(Smiling.) Go on.

REMINGTON.
And no matter how far she goes she doesn’t change the fundamental laws of her own—

TOM.
Individuality?

RUTH.
Type?

DAISY.
Character?

KEITH.
Ego.

RUTH.
Psychology.

ANN.
Species.

TOM.
Breed.

DAISY.
Spots.
REMINGTON.
No!—Mechanism—mechanism. And when the sensitive—involved—complex elements of a woman's nature become entangled in the responsibility of a man's work—and the two things fight for first place in her—she's got a hell of a mess on hand.

ANN.
But her psychological mechanism has changed.

REMINGTON.
No.

ANN.
Yes.

TOM.
Yes, I think it has.

KEITH.
It couldn't.

RUTH.
But it has. Women who are really doing things nowadays are an absolutely different breed from the one-sided domestic animals they used to be.

ANN.
But men don't realize how deeply and fiercely creative women love their work.

REMINGTON.
That's just it—Just what I'm getting at. A woman of genius puts in her work the same fierce love she puts into her child or her man. That's where her fight is—for one or the other of 'em has got to be the stronger in her. It isn't a question of her right to do things—nor her ability—God knows—plenty of 'em are beating men at their own jobs now. Why, I sometimes think she'll go so far that the great battle of the future will be between the sexes for supremacy. But I tell you—she has tragedies ahead of her—the tragedy of choice between the two sides of her own nature.

RUTH.
Well, thank you—I'll take any and all of the hard things that go with my job—but none of the ones that come from being a dub and giving it up.

REMINGTON.
How about you, Daisy? Could any man on earth make you stop typewriting and live for him alone?
DAISY.
Oh, I'm not in this class. Ann and Ruth both have men to depend on if they want them. I'm taking care of myself because I've got to—and I must say this soul tragedy of choice stuff makes me a little tired. (She starts toward hall.)

REMINSTON.
(Stopping DAISY by taking her hand.) If I were twenty or thirty years younger, I'd go in for you strong.

DAISY.
Yes, I know—I'm just the kind that older men appreciate very deeply. (She goes out.)

REMINSTON.
Poor Daisy.

ANN.
Poor Daisy. She's the happiest, most independent thing in the world. (Straightening the things on the table—)

(REMINSTON having taken the tea tray away.)

RUTH.
Much to be envied. No strings to her independence.

KEITH.
And so cocky and spunky—nobody can even ask her if she's ever been in love.

REMINSTON.
Sure sign she has been then.

TOM.
But she never has.

REMINSTON.
How do you know?

TOM.
I've been pretty close to her all my life. No blighted bud about Daisy.

REMINSTON.
She's putting up a darned good bluff, I must say.

RUTH.
Bluff? What do you mean?
ANN.
Father thinks there isn't a girl alive who wouldn't rather have a beau than a job.

REMINGTON.
I do. And Daisy looks so self-reliant she has to be cocky to keep up appearances. Under her skin, she's not half the man that little lady-like looking thing Ruth is.

RUTH.
Now, Dr. Remington, you may go upstairs.

REMINGTON.
I haven't time now. I've wasted it all down here.

RUTH.
Oh, come and look at the living room just a minute. It's too beautiful.

REMINGTON.
Has it got a carpet on it yet?

ANN.
Yes, absolutely finished.

REMINGTON.
Because I don't mind saying my feet are like ice from this confounded brick floor.

RUTH.
Oh, the beautiful tiles!

REMINGTON.
I'll take a little less Italian beauty and a little more American comfort in mine.

(RUTH, REMINGTON and KEITH go out through hall.)

TOM.
(Stopping ANN as she starts with the others.) Ann—about this thing. Why in the name of heaven didn't you say you were disappointed in it long ago?

ANN.
I kept hoping each day I was mistaken; that what I missed would come back. But when I saw it out here—I'm afraid of it, Tom.

TOM.
Afraid of what? That I'll fail? Lose it?
(ANN nods.)

TOM.
Nonsense! You're tired of it. There can't be such a change in it as all that. The idea's absolutely the same and I've worked as I never—

ANN.
I know. I know! And oh, the beauty—the beauty of the work! That's the pity.

TOM.
Pity?

ANN.
I mean somebody without half your skill as an artist may have an idea—an idea that's new.

TOM.
Oh bosh! Nothing can be done, anyhow. It's too late. Besides, I don't agree with you. I honestly do not, Ann. I know you're saying this because you're trying to boost me and get the best out of me; but the thing's done, you know. Don't confuse me. I must go on now. What's the use of talking about it? It's too late.

ANN.
No, it isn't.

TOM.
It is. Of course it is. You can't expect me to begin all over again and put into it a subtle intangible something I don't even feel. Damn it? It will have to fail then.

ANN.
(Taking hold of TOM quickly.) It can't. You've got to win, Tom. You've got to. It's the most important thing you've ever done. Think of where it will put you. Think of the money.

TOM.
I have thought. I've done the best that's in me, I tell you. It is the best, the very best I've ever—

ANN.
But it isn't. It isn't. It isn't as great as your last two things—

TOM.
Oh—
ANN.
Tom—listen—you don't know how hard it is to say it. I'd rather you won this than anything that could possibly happen. You know that. Don't you?

TOM.
Of course. But this isn't getting anywhere. It will have to go in as it stands.

ANN.
Wait—I—I've wanted to talk to you about something for a long time—but I wasn't sure—and now I am.

TOM.
Well—

MILLICENT.
(Coming back through hall.) Thank goodness, mother. I can't wait any longer.

ANN.
(To MILLICENT.) Oh, just a minute, dear.

TOM.
No, that's all right. There's nothing more to be said.

ANN.
I appreciate what you mean—yes I do. But it doesn't get me. And all I can do is to go after it as I see it.

(He goes into workroom.)

(ANN stands looking at the frieze.)

MILLICENT.
(Pulling Ann toward table.) Mother—come here. Mother, please. Why—what I wanted to—sit down. (Putting ANN into a chair above the long table.) Every one of the girls are staying over tomorrow. It looks as if you were having such a slow time that you didn't have anything to do but go back to school if you don't stay. And I want—Why Fanny's going to have a party tomorrow night—just a little one, and I want to have eight of them to dinner first. (Sitting at right end of table.)

ANN.
Oh—

MILLICENT.
Only eight. You see, Fanny's brother's home, too, and—you see it's—Everybody has dinners and things you know before they go to the dance, you know, and—will you, Mother? Can't I?
ANN.
But dearest you've done so much since you've been home. You can't get back to school too soon. New York is dreadful. It really is! The sensible mothers can't compete with the idiotic ones who let girls do all these silly things.

MILLICENT.
Don't be foolish, Mother.

ANN.
And school does begin tomorrow. And they expect—

MILLICENT.
They don't expect us to be back. All the really smart girls stay over. It's only the deadly slow ones who are there on time. Please, mother—please. There'll only be eight of us; and Fanny's done so much for me I think it's as little as I could do to have her brother to dinner. Don't you?

ANN.
Is he nice?

MILLICENT.
Yes he is. He's older, you know and more fun. He got full dress clothes this Christmas—long tails, you know, and he looks perfectly—Mother, you're not listening.

(ANN's eyes have gone back to the frieze again.)

ANN.
Yes, I am dear—yes I am. Full dress clothes.

MILLICENT.
Well—May I?

ANN.
Dearest—I may be frightfully busy tomorrow. I may have to do the most important thing I've ever done in my life and if I do it would be awfully hard to have—.

MILLICENT.
Oh, now mother! Fanny's mother's had a party or something for her every single night. She took her to the Plaza to dance after the matinee today and I've never been to a hotel or any exciting place in my life. You try to keep me so young mother and, jiminy cricket, I'm sixteen.

ANN.
Positively ancient.
MILLICENT.
Well—sixteen's old enough for any thing. Will you mother—please — please. (*Kissing her mother's throat.*)

ANN.
But what would I do if I had to do this other thing?

MILLICENT.
What other thing? Can't it wait?

ANN.
No it can't. That's just it. Your father may—I may be working with him all day tomorrow.

MILLICENT.
You needn't have such a terribly elaborate dinner,—you know, but I'm crazy to do it. In fact I just have to. I've already asked most of them and they're dying to come.

ANN.
You didn't, Kitten—how could you?

MILLICENT.
But Mother, it's so important — and I don't see how I can get out of it now. You wouldn't want me to be compromised or anything, would you?

ANN.
(*Laughing and kissing MILLICENT.*) You blessed baby—you ought to be spanked.

MILLICENT.
You're an angel, mummie. You will—won't you? (*Putting her cheek against ANN's.*)

ANN.
What have you got in your ears?

MILLICENT.
Earrings of course.

ANN.
Heavens! Take them off.

MILLICENT.
Oh, mother! All the girls wear them.

ANN.
Take them off!
MILLICENT.
But they have so much style.

ANN.
Style your granny! Take them off or I'll bite 'em off.

(MILLICENT squirms and giggles as ANN bites her ears.)

MILLICENT.
Wait—wait. I will. I think you're mean to make me. You have such terribly strict ideas.

ANN.
Your ears are much prettier than those things. Can't you understand that nothing is so attractive as just being natural? Why cover up with stuff like that?

MILLICENT.
You are funny! You'll stay at home and meet everybody tomorrow night, won't you? I want them to see you. You are sweet, mummy.

ANN.
Do you love me a lot?

MILLICENT.
Of course. (Kissing ANN.)

ANN.
(Rising suddenly and going to look at the frieze.) Oh, I'm so unhappy.

MILLICENT.
Why? What's the matter? I should think you'd be tickled to death if father's going to get all that money.

TOM.
(Coming in from the workroom quickly.) You say— (He stops seeing MILLICENT.)

MILLICENT.
Aren't you coming up, now to plan it all?

ANN.
In a few—

TOM.
Go on Millicent. (MILLICENT skips out.) Why didn't you speak the minute you saw it go wrong—or thought you did?

ANN.
I was never sure, until today, dear.
**TOM.**
I don't agree with you at all but still it isn't exactly inspiring—knowing you think I'm going to fail.

**ANN.**
Tom—I'm sorry.

**TOM.**
It's all right—but you know I care more what you think than anybody in the world and—I—it's sort of a knockout.

**ANN.**
I had to tell you the truth —when I was sure. I had to. Tom—listen—since you've been working at this an idea has come to me. At first I thought the idea was too big for me—that I never could carry it out—and then I said I won't let myself be afraid—and it's grown and grown night and day. Last night I finished it—down here—

**TOM.**
The—

**ANN.**
The drawings—I want you to look at them—and if—if you like it—if you think the idea is better than yours I want you to take it—use it, instead of yours.

**TOM.**
Why Ann, you're not serious.

 *(She nods.)*

**TOM.**
Good heavens, child, you know—you know how tremendous this thing is as well as I do.

**ANN.**
Yes I do! But I tell you my idea is big. Oh, I knew you'd look like that when I told you. You can't believe it of course—but Tom—. It's there—something vital and alive—with a strange charm in it. And I offer it to you dear—if you want it.

**TOM.**
*(Taking her in his arms strongly and kissing her passionately.)* You generous darling! It's like you to do this. You dear—I love you for it.

**ANN.**
*(Responding warmly to his love)* I want you to have it. It's more than I ever dared dream I could do.
TOM.
But darling—you couldn't possibly do anything for a scheme as big as this

ANN.
Why do you take that for granted? Why do you say that—before you've even seen my sketches?

TOM.
(After a pause.) Well—where are they?

ANN.
(Taking a key out of her pocket.) In the lower drawer in my cupboard.

TOM.
(Taking the key.) No, don't come with me.

ANN.
But I—

TOM.
I don't want you to explain anything. I want it to strike me fresh. But I'm going to hit hard—right from the shoulder. If it's good—all right. If it's bad—all right. And I expect you to take it like a man.

(ANN nods.)

(TOM hurries into workroom as RUTH comes in from hall.)

RUTH.
Have you told him?

ANN.
Yes—he's gone to look at my sketches now.

RUTH.
Ann—I've been thinking. You're a fool to give away your ideas. Make your models and send them in yourself.

ANN.
What?

RUTH.
Certainly. Why not?

ANN.
Oh, Ruth—I couldn't. Some day I will. Someday.
RUTH.
Some day! You've got the biggest idea you've ever had. Do it—send it in—yourself—on your own feet.

ANN.
Tom would think I was out my—

RUTH.
You know it's good—don't you?

ANN.
Yes, I do.

RUTH.
It belongs to you—and if you don't take care of it and give it its chance, you kill something which is more important than you are. Don't forget that. You're not just the talented woman, you've got downright genius, and you ought to make everything give way to that. Everything. If you don't, you're weak.

ANN.
Wait and see what Tom says. He'll know. He's so dead right about stuff—always.

RUTH.
Oh, you lucky people! Pulling together. If Keith only had a little of it towards me. Ann, what shall I do?

ANN.
(With quick sympathy.) What, dear?

RUTH.
He's never, never, never going to know what a sacrifice it will be for me to stop just as I'm getting what I've slaved and struggled for all these years. And I can't bear to hurt him.

ANN.
Dear old Keith. He just can't see. And he loves you so.

KEITH.
(Coming in from hall.) Why did you come back down here?

RUTH.
Just to run away from—you. No, I didn't. (Going to him sweetly.) You know I didn't.

ANN.
(As DAISY comes in from hall.) Daisy, tell me the minute Tom comes out.
KEITH.
(To RUTH.) I'll be up in a minute. I've got to cover some stuff in there.

(Exit ANN and RUTH.)

KEITH.
You're a wonder, Daisy. You don't mind sitting up late to get your letters off, do you?

DAISY.
Oh, no—I'm healthy.

KEITH.
You're a peach. I'm sorry I made you huffy. All I meant was that no man would ever think he could ask you to marry him unless he had an awfully big bank-roll to offer.

(REMINGTON comes in from hall to get his hat and stick—just in time to hear Keith's last remark. DAISY rises—consciously. KEITH goes into workroom. REMINGTON goes to end of table.)

DAISY.
I suppose that speech sounded rather queer. He was talking about Ruth, of course.

REMINGTON.
Don't apologize or you'll make me suspicious.

DAISY.
Now—

REMINGTON.
It sounded very much as if he were making love to you.

DAISY.
Oh—

REMINGTON.
I wish to God he would. You'd—be a much better wife for him than the other one.

DAISY.
You—

REMINGTON.
You know you would. Why don't you go in and get him? Cut the other one out.

DAISY.
How dare you say such a thing to me?
REMINGTON.
Why shouldn't I say it?

DAISY.
Because you have no right to. I haven't the slightest interest in Keith McKenzie—not the slightest.

REMINGTON.
No. I can see that.

DAISY.
What do you mean?

REMINGTON.
(Suddenly understanding.) Why my dear girl, I didn't mean anything. I'm sorry.

DAISY.
I don't know why in the world you said such a thing to me.

REMINGTON.
Well—well—forget it.

DAISY.
You don't think from anything I've ever done or said—

REMINGTON.
I don't think anything—I don't know anything...

DAISY.
I don't see why you said it.

ANN.
(Coming from hall.) What's the matter?

(As DAISY breaks away from REMINGTON who is holding her by the wrists.)

DAISY.
Let me go, please. I'm in a hurry. (DAISY rushes out through hall.)

ANN.
What on earth are you doing to Daisy?

REMINGTON.
She's doing things to me.

ANN.
What?
REMINGTON.
Convincing me of some of my old-fashioned ideas.

(TOM rushes in from the workroom with a large roll of drawings.)

TOM.
Ann—they're wonderful.

ANN.
Oh—Tom!

TOM.
(Spreading the roll of sketches on the table—ANN helping him.)
Beautiful! Astoundingly beautiful! Well as I know you, I didn't think you had it in you.

ANN.
I can't believe it. Are you going to use it.

TOM.
Oh, my dear girl. That's different. Now don't be hurt. Why Ann—it isn't possible. You—you're mistaken—way off. I don't know what's got into you. This is imaginative and charming and graceful—full of abandon and fantasy and even vitality—but ye gods, child, it isn't in this class.

ANN.
But you could strengthen it. It will grow. You'll see more in it. Really you will. Don't make up your mind yet.

REMINGTON.
What are you talking about? What has she done?

TOM.
Drawings for a frieze—like this. And they're amazing, doctor. Positively amazing.

REMINGTON.
You don't say.

TOM.
Wait—let's see what McKenzie says. McKenzie—

ANN.
(Pounding on the workroom door.) Keith—Keith—come here—quickly.

REMINGTON.
Looks beautiful to me, daughter. When did you do all this? Do you mean to say you didn't know anything about it, Tom?
TOM.
Not a thing. She's been—.

(KEITH comes in.)

TOM.
Here McKenzie. Look at this. Here's a scheme Mrs. Herford's worked out. Begins here—See—see? Get it? What do you think?

KEITH.
Mrs. Herford?

TOM.
Yes. Do you get it?

KEITH.
Of course.

TOM.
Well? What do you say?

KEITH.
I say it's as beautiful as anything I ever saw.

TOM.
Great! And what do you think of it for a big place like mine?

KEITH.
For that?

TOM.
Yes.

KEITH.
Oh—I—too fanciful, isn't it? Would the crowd understand it? Needs a big clear striking thing like that. Don't you think?

TOM.
Then you don't think it's as good as mine for this competition.

KEITH.
As yours? Heavens no!

ANN.
(Standing at right—facing the three men.) Then do you know what I'm going to do?

KEITH and TOM.
What?
ANN.
Make my models and send them in myself.

TOM, KEITH and REMINGTON.
What?

ANN.
Why not?

REMINGTON.
You don't mean it, daughter.

ANN.
I do. I mean it with my whole soul.

REMINGTON.
Why do you want to do anything so foolish?

ANN.
Because I made it. Because it's my work. You all say it's good. Why shouldn't I send it? I don't mind failure. I only want it to stand its little chance with the rest. I love it. It means more to me than I can possibly—why shouldn't I? I want to.

TOM.
Then do it. Why not? It's your own affair. Go ahead. *(Putting out the hand of a good pal-ship to her.)*

ANN.
Oh, Tom—thank you. You're splendid.

*(The curtain falls.)*


ACT II. TIME: Four months later—about nine the evening. The living room in the Herford house.

The room is long and wide, dignified and restful in proportions. At center back a large fireplace with a severe mantel in cream marble. A wide window covers the entire left wall, and wide doors at right lead into the library. A single door at back, left of fireplace, leads into hall. The walls are hung in a soft dull silk which throws out the strong simple lines of the woodwork. A bright wood fire is burning and soft lights throw a warm glow over the gray carpet and the furniture which is distinguished and artistic but distinctly comfortable, giving the room the air of being much lived in and used.

AT CURTAIN: The room is empty a moment. DAISY is singing in the library at right. ELLEN, a maid, middle-aged and kindly, comes from hall carrying a silver coffee service.

DAISY.
(As she comes in from library.) Here's your coffee, girls. Come in here. Put the flowers over there, Ellen.

(ELLEN moves the vase of flowers and makes room for the coffee service on table right center. RUTH comes in from the library with a book. ELLEN goes to fire and pokes it, then straightens the writing things on the desk.)

DAISY.
Ann, here's your coffee.

ANN.
(Calling from library.) I don't want any, thank you. What time is it, Daisy?

DAISY.
About nine. Why?

ANN.
Oh, the postman. I'm waiting for the last mail.

DAISY.
Well, don't. A watched pot you know. (To RUTH.) She's watched every mail for a week. I almost think Ann will be more disappointed than Tom himself if he doesn't get the commission.

(They take their coffee to the fire.)

RUTH.
I hope to goodness he does. Everybody's so dead sure of him.

DAISY.
Almost too sure. I'm beginning to be frightened myself. The time's about up.
ANN.
*(Hurrying in from the library.)* That's the postman— isn't it?

ELLEN.
No ma'am. Beggin' your pardon. It ain't— I'm listenin' too.

ANN.
Are you, Ellen? Keep on and bring it up the minute it comes.

ELLEN.
Faith I will. I've got the habit meself lately of watchin' for the mail.

ANN.
Have you?

ELLEN.
Every time I hear the whistle I drop whatever I'm doin' like it was hot—and run.

ANN.
Do you?

ELLEN.
And just before I open the door I say—The Holy Saints be praised, I hope it's come this time—whatever it is they're lookin' fer. *(She goes out through the hall.)*

ANN.
Oh, dear! It gets worse as the time grows shorter.

DAISY.
Ann, working yourself up like this won't make Tom get the commission. Stop thinking about it.

ANN.
But I can't, Daisy Dimple. He ought to hear tonight if he's ever going to.

DAISY.
Well, I'll be glad when it's all over and we know one way or the other— and can settle down to ordinary life again. It's almost given me nervous indigestion.

ANN.
Listen! There's the postman.

RUTH.
*(Jumping so that her cup and saucer almost fall.)* Oh, Ann, you're getting me so excited, I'll listen for the postman all the rest of my life.
ANN.
I know I shall. Oh, Tom must get it. He must. If he does, I'll wire Millicent. (Taking up a picture of Millicent which stands in a frame on the table.) I think I'll run up to school Sunday just to give her a good hug. I get so hungry for her!

RUTH.
Isn't it splendid the school is so really what it ought to be?

ANN.
Yes. So much that's sweet and right that one can't get in New York for a girl.

DAISY.
(Sewing on a frock which is nearly finished.) She seems pretty keen about it herself.

ANN.
Yes, rather. Easter vacation when I was working day and night to get my models off, she was perfectly contented to stay at school.

RUTH.
She's an adorable kiddie but I don't envy you your job.

ANN.
Why?

RUTH.
I think being a mother is the most gigantic, difficult, important and thankless thing in the world.

DAISY.
That's the most sensible remark I ever heard you give vent to, Ruth.

ANN.
There's something much more glorious in it than being thanked. You'll miss the most wonderful thing in the world, Ruth, if you don't have children.

RUTH.
I know. I know. But work has taken that all out of me. It does, you know. It would bore me stiff to take care of a baby.

DAISY.
That's a pleasant prospect for Keith. Do you expect him to do it?
RUTH.
(Making herself comfortable on the couch.) I'm not going to have children.

ANN.
(Going to sit at the fire.) That's perfectly fair if he knows it. No reason why you should if you don't want 'em.

DAISY.
Well, I think it's a rotten way to live.

RUTH.
Wait till you decide to marry somebody yourself, young lady, and see how you like giving up everything that interests you most.

DAISY.
Well, by Jove, if I ever do marry, I'll marry and do all the things that belong to my side of the game. No halfway business for me. You might as well be a man's mistress and be done with it.

RUTH.
(Half serious — half joking.) That's the ideal relationship for a man and woman. Each to keep his independence in absolutely every way—and live together merely because they charm each other. But somehow we don't seem to be able to make it respectable.

DAISY.
I suppose that's very clever and modern.

RUTH.
Oh, no—it's as old as the everlasting hills. The trouble is children are apt to set in and mess things up. It's hard on them.

DAISY.
So far as I can see most everything that's modern is hard on children.

ANN.
(Laughing.) How's the gown getting on, Daisy?

DAISY.
Most finished.

RUTH.
That's awfully pretty.

ANN.
Slip it on so we can see.

DAISY.
Oh, I can't.
ANN.  
(Rising and walking to DAISY.) Yes, you can—over that one—just to give us an idea.

DAISY.  
I'll look a tub and it really makes me quite respectably straight up and down.

ANN.  
You're a perfectly scrumptious size and shape. Isn't she, Ruth?

RUTH.  
Magnificent!

DAISY.  
Yes, Ruth, skinny women always enthuse over their fat friends.

RUTH.  
(Rising and goes to DAISY.) Oh, you aren't fat, Daisy. That is, not too fat. How does this go. It's terribly complicated, isn't it?

DAISY.  
No—perfectly simple. Wait—this goes over here.

ANN.  
No, it doesn't, does it?

DAISY.  
Yes, it does. Right there. Don't you see? The style of the whole gown depends on that.

RUTH.  
You must have it on wrong side before.

DAISY.  
Nonsense! Can't you see, Ann? It's as simple as can be.

ANN.  
Yes, I know dear—but does this go on the shoulder—or down on your hip? (They all talk at once for a moment on the subject of where the end of the girdle fastens.) Oh, here! I see, of course! There!

DAISY.  
Now, does it make me look big?

RUTH.  
You want to look big, don't you?
DAISY.
Well, I want to look life size. Don't you see how much better I am through here than I was last year, Ann? (Touching her hip.)

ANN.
Much. The female form divine is improving all the time anyway—gradually getting back to what it was in the beginning.

DAISY.
I don't expect to look like you in it, Ruth.

RUTH.
Oh, don't you, dear? Then why don't you have it stick out this way as much as possible so everybody will know you mean to look broad? There's everything in that, you know.

DAISY.
I think it would be awfully good on you—to fill out what you haven't got. Then everybody would know you didn't mean to look so narrow—even if you are.

ANN.
You're both delightful. Perfect specimens of your types. When I look at Ruth I think the most alluring charm a woman can have is beautiful bones without a superfluous ounce of flesh on them. And when I look at you, Daisy, I think after all, there's nothing so stunning as a big strong girl with perfectly natural lines—so natural that we know she'd be even better looking with no clothes on at all.

DAISY.
Heavens, Ann! Your sculptor's eye is a little embarrassing.

RUTH.
Evidently you think my clothes help me out a good deal. But at least I'm free and comfortable, too. Can you touch the floor, Daisy?

DAISY.
Of course. (The two women bend —touching the floor with the tips of their fingers.)

(TOM, REMINGTON and KEITH come in from the hall.)

TOM.
What's going on?

REMINGTON.
What are you trying to do, Ruth—swim or fly?
ANN.
We're just saying that the waist measure expands as we broaden in our ideas.

KEITH.
Is that the fashion now?

RUTH.
Yes—broad and free.

REMINGTON.
That's one thing you women have to acknowledge men have more sense about than you have.

ANN, RUTH, DAISY.
What?

REMINGTON.
Our figures. We've had the same shape since the Garden of Eden and you've had hundreds of absolutely different kinds.

ANN.
Turn around, Daisy, I want to try something. (She accidentally sticks a pin into DAISY's shoulder.)

DAISY.
Ouch!

ANN.
Oh, I'm sorry! You seem to be so close to your clothes.

REMINGTON.
What are you doing to her?

DAISY.
She's sticking pins into me.

ANN.
For her own good. Isn't that pretty?

TOM.
What?

ANN.
The frock.

TOM.
Is that new?
KEITH.
Which?

DAISY.
Do you mean to say you don’t realize I have on something different from what I wore at dinner?

RUTH.
No use dressing for Keith. He never sees anything.

DAISY.
I’m going to undress now. Perhaps that will interest you more.

(ANN begins to unfasten the gown.)

REMINGTON.
Much more.

ANN.
Was that the postman?

DAISY.
No, it was not.

REMINGTON.
The postman habit is getting on my nerves. You're all jumping and listening till you'll have St. Vitus dance if you don’t stop.

ANN.
How can we help it?

REMINGTON.
After all, a few other competitions have been lost and won—and people have lived through it. It's not the only thing in life.

TOM.
You'd think it was if you had $100,000 at stake.

(ELLEN comes in from hall and takes out the coffee tray.)

ANN.
Aren't we going to have some bridge? Who wants to play? I know you do, daddy.

REMINGTON.
I have to get even with you for that last rubber, Tom.

TOM.
You can't do it.
DAISY.
I want to play, with you, doctor.

REMINGTON.
Come on.

RUTH.
I'm afraid to play against you.

REMINGTON.
(Turning at the library door.) What's that?

OTHERS.
What?

REMINGTON.
The postman!

OTHERS.
Oh! (RUTH and DAISY go into library R. with REMINGTON.)

ANN.
(To TOM and KEITH.) Coming?

TOM.
You go, Keith. I want to look at the paper a minute.

KEITH.
Oh, my game's no good. You go.

ANN.
Now don't stay out here and listen and wait. If there is any mail Ellen will bring it straight up.

TOM.
I won't. I'll be with you—in two minutes.

ANN.
Anyway—tonight doesn't necessarily decide it. There may be still two or three more days. Isn't that so, Keith?

KEITH.
Yes, I think so.

REMINGTON, RUTH, DAISY.
(Calling from the library.) Come on. Come on.

ANN.
Coming. (She goes in.)
KEITH.
That's straight. I do think so—

(A pause. TOM reads.)

KEITH.
Don't you?

TOM.
I'm trying to—but these last few days of waiting have been—

KEITH.
Don't lose your nerve, Herford. I'm just as sure as I was the first day. If by any wild chance you don't get it— it will be a fluke.

TOM.
Oh, no. Oh, no, not by any means. The men judging this know. I'd trust them with anything. The fellows who lose will have no kick coming on that score.

KEITH.
Well—I don't see how you can lose.

TOM.
A man's a fool to let himself count on an uncertainty. I don't mean that I've lost sight of the fact that I might lose—not for a second—but I confess— as the time has grown shorter I've realized I want it even more than I thought I did.

KEITH.
Of course you want it. Aside from the glory—it's an awful lot of money—governor, an awful lot of money.

TOM.
It is. It would put us straight— clear up the house entirely and make it possible to do only the things a fellow wants to do. That's what I'm after. Then—No more competitions for me, thank you. Is that the 'phone? I'm as bad as Ann—jumping and listening. Damn it! I want to know—one way or the other.

KEITH.
Of course you do. The cursed waiting is enough to make you cut your throat.

ELLEN.
(Opening the hall door.) The telephone for Mr. Herford.

TOM.
Who is it?
ELLEN.
I couldn't just get the name, sir.

KEITH.
Want me to go?

TOM.
If you don't mind, old man.

(ELLEN goes out.)

KEITH.
(Starting to the door and turning.) It couldn't be—you wouldn't get word that way—would you?

TOM.
Uh?—Oh—nonsense! No—no— nonsense! I'll go—No, I—you go—old man. That's not it—of course. (TOM listens a moment—showing a tense anxiety.)

RUTH.
(Coming in from the library.) They're waiting for you, Tom. The cards are dealt. Where's Keith?

TOM.
He'll be back in a minute.

RUTH.
Aren't you going in?

TOM.
Why don't you take my place? I don't feel a bit—

RUTH.
I did offer to but Dr. Remington said he would like to play bridge this evening, not teach it. Wouldn't it be seventh heaven to speak the truth on all occasions as unconcernedly as Dr. Remington does? Imagine the sheer bliss of letting go and spitting it all out. Have you ever counted the lies you told in just one day, Tom?

TOM.
No—I've never had time. (TOM starts to go into the library and turns to see if RUTH is coming.)

RUTH.
No—I'm going to wait for Keith. (TOM goes in—Ruth reads for a moment.)

KEITH.
(Coming back from the hall.) That was—
RUTH.
What?

KEITH.
Millicent or her school or something. Such a bad connection; they're going to call again in a few minutes. Is that dress new, dear?

RUTH.
I've had it three years.

KEITH.
It's awfully pretty. I wish you'd wear it all the time.

RUTH.
I do.

KEITH.
Aren't we going in to play?

RUTH.
No, I don't feel like it. Come and sit down, dear. Oh, are you going to sit way over there?

KEITH.
Not 'specially. (Drawing chair near the couch—KETTH sits facing RUTH.)

RUTH.
Comfortable?

KEITH.
Not very.

RUTH.
Have you read this?

KEITH.
No. Any good.

RUTH.
Yes—Good enough. (She rises, going to the fireplace.)

KEITH.
What's the matter? I thought you wanted to talk. Where are you going?

RUTH.
No place.
**KEITH.**
You got the fidgets too?

**RUTH.**
Sort of.

**KEITH.**
Well, stop it. Herford's going to be all right. There'll be news in a day or so now.

**RUTH.**
I wasn't thinking of that. I have something to tell you.

**KEITH.**
Then why don't you come and tell it?

**RUTH.**
And if you aren't fine about it— it will be the greatest disappointment in my whole life. *(Going to KEITH and putting a hand on his shoulder.)*

**KEITH.**
You mean if I don't think just what you want me to about it. Go on. I s'pose I know, anyway.

**RUTH.**
Then if you do—but you don't. It's so wonderful you couldn't guess. And you'll just have to see it the right way, because if you don't it would mean you're what I know you're not. Down in your real soul, Keith, you're generous and fair and right.

**KEITH.**
Suppose you communicate it to me first and discuss my soul afterwards.

**RUTH.** *(Sitting on couch facing KEITH.)* Well—Oh you will be sweet won't you, Keithie?

**KEITH.**
I can see it's going to be something very pleasant for me.

**RUTH.**
It is if you. . .

**KEITH.**
It's wonderful if I'm not a fool and a pig. Yes, I know. Go on. Go on.

**RUTH.**
Now don't begin that way— please dear. Don't shut up your mind before I even tell you.
KEITH.
Suppose you do tell me.

RUTH.
Well—last week there was a row in the office over a matter concerning the policy of the magazine and I differed with all the men in my department. At last I was sent for by the Editor in Chief. He was terribly severe at first, and I was frightened to pieces—but I stuck to my guns—and bless your soul he sent for me again today and said they had had a meeting of the directors and that they decided—oh, it's too—

KEITH.
What? What?

RUTH.
They had decided to make me Editor of the Woman's Magazine (Fighting back her tears.) Isn't it funny?

KEITH.
And I suppose all this introduction means you accepted—without even asking me?

RUTH.
Why, of course. Oh, Keith don't you understand what this means to me?

KEITH.
I understand that unless it means more to you than I do—you wouldn't hesitate a minute to chuck it.

RUTH.
It's hopeless—we'll never—never see it the same way.

KEITH.
You've never made the slightest effort to see it my way.

RUTH.
What you ask of me is to cut off one half of my life and throw it away. What I ask of you is only an experiment—to let me try and see if can't make things comfortable and smooth and happy for us—and still take this big thing that has come as a result of all my years of hard work and fighting for it.

KEITH.
You'll never stop if you don't now. Once you get deeper in it you'll be swamped—eaten up by it.

RUTH.
Don't, Keith. I can't bear it. It's too unutterably selfish.
KEITH.  
(Rising and pushing his chair away.) All right—I'm selfish—but I'm human—and I'll bet my hat I'm just like every nine men out of ten. What in the name of heaven does loving a girl amount to if you don't want to take care of her from start to finish? A man's no good if he doesn't feel that way, I tell you. He's a pup—and ought to be shot.

RUTH.  
(Rising.) But what about me—and what I want and have to have—in order to be happy?

KEITH.  
That's it. That is the point. You won't be happy without it. You want the excitement of it—that hustle and bustle outside.

RUTH.  
I want it just as you want your work—and you haven't any more right to ask me to give up mine than I have to ask you to stop yours.

KEITH.  
You simply don't love me.

RUTH.  
What rot! What nonsense!

KEITH.  
You don't love me.

RUTH.  
It's hopeless. You've decided then. You won't compromise—so we'll end it.

KEITH.  
What do you mean?

RUTH.  
(Going to the hall door.) You've made your own choice. We'll end it now.

KEITH.  
(Following her.) No—Ruth— I won't give you up.

RUTH.  
You have. You have given me up.

KEITH.  
Ruth—wait.
RUTH.
It's best, Keith. Don't hate me. You'll see it's best in a little while. We'll learn to be friends. I want you happy, dear boy—I do. And I couldn't make you so. We'll end it now. It's the best for us both.

KEITH.
Ruth— (She goes out quickly, closing the door.)

(KEITH turns to the fire.)

DAISY.
(Knocking and opening the library door.) Excuse me. May I come in to get my sewing? Where's Ruth?

KEITH.
(With his back to DAISY.) Don't know.

DAISY.
Well, don't bite my head off. I can always tell when you and Ruth have been discussing the emancipation of women. (Sitting below table and taking her dress to sew.)

KEITH.
You all think you're superior beings.

DAISY.
Of course.

KEITH.
(Beginning to walk about.) Yes, you do. You're just as bad as the rest them—worse. The minute a woman makes enough to buy the clothes on her back, she thinks she and God Almighty are running the earth and men are just little insects crawling around.

(DAISY laughs.)

KEITH.
Oh, you can laugh. It's so—and you know it. Every one of you that have got the bee in your bonnet of doing something — doing something, are through with the men. Look at you. You've cut men out entirely and you think you're too smart to marry one. Now, don't you? Isn't that the reason?

DAISY.
(Threading her needle.) Don't bully-rag me. Say it all to Ruth.
KEITH.
I tell you it's all rot—business for women. It spoils every one of you. Why aren't you in a home of your own instead of hustling for your bread and butter? It's because you're too damned conceited. You think you know than any man you ever saw and think you don't need one. You wait—You'll see—some day.

(Going back to the fire.)

DAISY.
You amuse me.

KEITH.
There you are—that's about what I'm for.

DAISY.
There's a button off your coat. Looks horrid.

KEITH.
I know. I've got it. (Putting his finger in waistcoat pocket.)

DAISY.
Have you got it there?

(KEITH shows her the button.)

DAISY.
Come here, I'll do it.

KEITH.
Never mind. I'll nail it on.

DAISY.
Come here.

(KEITH goes slowly to her.)

DAISY.
You'll have to take your coat off. It's bad luck to sew anything on you.

KEITH.
Oh—

DAISY.
Go on—take it off.

(KEITH takes off his coat reluctantly and watches DAISY as she examines the coat.)
DAISY.
Good Gracious, the lining's ripped, too.

KEITH.
Yes.

DAISY.
Poor old fellow! Are these some of your stitches?

KEITH.
(Drawing the chair from C. and sitting L. before DAISY.) What's the matter with 'em?

DAISY.
Looks like carpet thread. (Snipping some threads.) See, I'll just draw this together and that'll be all right.

(Shes begins to sing an old ditty— Keith gradually hums with her, keeping time with his hands and feet and relaxing into a good humor.)

KEITH.
(Soothed for a moment.) How does it happen you're so handy with a needle? I thought you were all for business.

DAISY.
Well, I can sew a button on if you can.

KEITH.
I tell you it changes all women —business. They make a little money themselves and want luxury and won't live without it.

DAISY.
Sometimes—yes. But there are lots and lots and lots of women taking care of themselves—putting up the bluff of being independent and happy who would be so glad to live in a little flat and do their own work—just to be the nicest thing in the world to some man.

KEITH.
Wouldn't you think that Ruth would like that better than the office?

DAISY.
No—not the lamp light and the needle for Ruth. Keith, don't ask her to give up her work—don't you see, she's more clever, in her way than you are in yours. She'll go further, and if you make her stop, she'll hate you some day because she'll think you've kept her back. That's a hard thing to say—but it's the truth.

KEITH.
You mean I'm a failure.
DAISY.
(Genuinely.) No—no—I don't mean that, Keith.

KEITH.
I work—Gosh, how I work, but I'll never do anything. Why haven't I got what Mrs. Herford's got? She sent models off for this frieze that any man would be proud to send. Why couldn't I?

DAISY.
Seems kind of mixed up and unfair—doesn't it?

KEITH.
You bet it's unfair. I work like a dog and never get anywhere. If Ruth throws me over, I'll never have the home I'm working for. That's what I want—a home. I'll never have it now.

DAISY.
Oh, yes you will.

KEITH.
I'm done for.

DAISY.
No, you're not. There are too many women in the world—who—could—love you.

KEITH.
I'm no good.

DAISY.
Some woman might think that you—your—the way you work—and your honesty and loyalty are the greatest things a man can have.

KEITH.
Um!

DAISY.
Some woman might use all her cleverness and ingenuity to make the little flat beautiful—to show you what your own home—could be—to give you a better dinner than you thought you could afford.

KEITH.
(Sitting with his head in his hands.) That kind of a woman is thing of the past.
DAISY.
Oh no, they're not. They're lying around thick. The trouble is—a woman can't ask. Even if a man is—just at her hand—and she knows she could make him happy—she can't tell him—she can't open his eyes—she has to hide what might make things right for both of them. Because she's a woman.

KEITH.
Oh—love doesn't cut much ice with a woman. Women are all brain nowadays.

DAISY.
(With sudden warmth.) That's enough to use all the brains a woman's got—to make a home—to bring up children—and to keep a man's love.

KEITH.
(Raising his head slowly and looking at DAISY.) I never expected to hear you say a thing like that. There's some excuse for you being in business.

DAISY.
Yes, of course. (Rising and holding the coat.) I'm not the marrying kind.

KEITH.
(Getting into the coat.) Much obliged. Would you be willing to give up work and marry a man on a small salary—if you loved him?

DAISY.
You make me laugh.

KEITH.
What's the matter, Daisy?

DAISY.
Nothing.

KEITH.
I never saw tears in your eyes before. Women are funny things.

DAISY.
Yes, we're funny. There's only one thing on earth funnier.

KEITH.
What?

DAISY.
Men.

REMINGTON.
(Coming in from the library.) Did I leave my other glasses in here?
DAISY.
(Beginning to look for them.) I haven't seen them.

REMINGTON.
I've lost one game because I didn't have 'em and I don't propose to give 'em another.

DAISY.
What a shame! Help look for them, Keith.

REMINGTON.
I'm pretty blind—but thank God not quite as bad as you, Keith.

KEITH.
What? There's nothing the matter with my eyes.

REMINGTON.
(Looking insinuatingly at DAISY.) Don't you think there is, Daisy?

DAISY.
(Trying to look unconscious.) Are you sure you left those glasses in here?

REMINGTON.
It's as bad a case of short sightedness as I ever saw.

DAISY.
Oh—

(The doctor holds her and turns her, pushing her toward KEITH.)

REMINGTON.
Daisy, don't you see that queer blind look in his eyes?

DAISY.
No—I don't.

KEITH.
What do you mean?

(REMINGTON laughs.)

KEITH.
Do you see the joke, Daisy?

REMINGTON.
It's no joke—is it Daisy?
DAISY.
I don't know what on earth you're talking about. I'm going to get those glasses. (Going to hall door.) You probably left them in your hat in the call. I mean in your hall in the coat—I mean—

REMITNGON.
That's all right, Daisy—we know what you mean. At least I do.

DAISY.
Oh you—

(ELLEN comes in hall.)

DAISY.
What is it, Ellen?

ELLEN.
The telephone, Miss Herford.

DAISY.
For me?

ELLEN.
They said any one of the family.

DAISY.
I'll go.

(Shes goes out followed by ELLEN.)

REMITNGON.
There's a woman who knows how to take care of a man.

KEITH.
I'm afraid that's not her object in life. They all have something else to do.

REMITNGON.
What's the matter with you?

KEITH.
I'm done for.

REMITNGON.
Ruth, you mean?

KEITH.
She won't marry me unless she goes on working.
REMINGTON.
She’s right, too.

KEITH.
What?

REMINGTON.
Of course. You haven’t any more right to ask that clever little woman to throw away half her life and to be the tail to your kite than you have to ask her to cut her throat. Open your eyes and look around. There are always other women.

KEITH.
*Never.* Never in the world for me.

REMINGTON.
I give you about three months.

KEITH.
Do you think I could ever—

REMINGTON.
Certainly I do. Look at Daisy, for instance. A fine, sweet wholesome girl with no kinks and no abnormal ambitions.

KEITH.
Daisy?

REMINGTON.
Don’t blow you brains out for a couple days. Talk it over with her. She thinks you’re about the finest thing going.

KEITH.
*What?*

REMINGTON.
Fact! Don’t try to hold on to the woman who’s getting away from you, but take the one who is coming your way.

KEITH.
You’re crazy. Mad as a hatter. What are you giving me?

REMINGTON.
Just a little professional advice—*free.* She’s head over heels in love with you, I tell you.

DAISY.
*(Coming in from hall in great excitement. She has a case for glasses in her hand.)* Dr. Remington, that was long distance. They telephoned from school that Millicent has gone.
KEITH.
Gone?

REMINGTON.
Gone where?

DAISY.
Left school suddenly tonight without saying a word to anyone.

REMINGTON AND KEITH.
What?

DAISY.
As soon as they knew—they 'phoned the station, and found she had taken the train for New York.

REMINGTON.
What train?

DAISY.
The one that gets here at nine o’clock.

KEITH.
(Looking at his watch.) It’s 9:15 now.

DAISY.
Shall I tell Ann?

REMINGTON.
No—no—wait. We'll give her fifteen minutes more to get to the house. No use frightening Ann.

KEITH.
Do you think she is coming home?

DAISY.
Why do you say that, Keith? What put such an idea into your head?

KEITH.
Why wouldn't she say so—wire or write or something?

DAISY.
Oh, it's too horrible. Doctor, oughtn't we to tell them now?

REMINGTON.
No—no—

DAISY.
But we're wasting time. What if she shouldn't come?
KEITH.
I think I'll dash down to the station anyway. The train might be late.

REMINGTON.
No—no. They'd ask where you'd gone. Wait fifteen minutes—I think she'll be here. I don't want to frighten—

(ANN comes in from the library.)

ANN.
Well, I never saw people so wildly keen about playing as you are. What's the matter with you?

REMINGTON.
I've been waiting all this time—for my glasses. Come on Daisy. (Taking the glasses from DAISY, he goes into library.)

ANN.
You look worried, Daisy.

DAISY. No—I'm only—

ELLEN.
(Coming in from hall with eight letters on a small tray.) The mail, Mrs. Herford.

ANN.
Oh! (She snatches the letters, taking off the three top ones.) . It's come! Tom's letter.

KEITH AND DAISY.
What?

(ELLEN goes out through hall L. C.)

ANN.
It is! It is—as true as I live.

KEITH.
Great Scott!

DAISY.
Then he's got it. He's got it.

ANN.
Sh! Ask him to come here.

DAISY.
It's too good to be true. It's too good! (DAISY goes into the library.)
KEITH.
I can't tell you how glad I am, Mrs. Herford. I can't tell you.

ANN.
(Scarcely able to speak.) Ask him to come here.

KEITH.
(Going into library.) Mrs. Herford wants you, Governor.

TOM.
(Within.) Come and play, Ann.

ANN.
(Throwing the other letters on the table.) Come here just a minute, Tom, please.

TOM.
(Coming to door.) What is it?

ANN.
Shut the door. It's come. (Showing the letter. Tom opens and reads it. A look of sickening disappointment comes into his face.) No? Oh, Tom!

TOM.
I was their second choice!

ANN.
Oh, Tom, don't take it like that. What difference does it make after all? You know you did a big thing. It's all luck—anyway.

TOM.
I'll pull up in a minute. Well, it means taking hold of something else pretty quick. Going at it again.

ANN.
Yes, keeping at it—that's it. What a TERRIBLE lot chance has to do with it.

TOM.
Oh no, that isn't it.

ANN.
Yes, it is, too.

TOM.
No—I failed. I didn't get it, that's all.

ANN.
You'll do something greater—next time—because of this.
TOM.  
(Taking her hand.) You're a brick! Now, see here, don't you be cut up about this. It's not the end of everything, you know. Stop that! You're not crying, I hope?

ANN.  
No, I'm not. Of course, I'm not. (With passionate tenderness.) Oh, my boy. I never loved you so much—never believed in you as I do now. This is only a little hard place that will make you all the stronger.

TOM.  
Dear old girl! What would I do without you? I'll tell the others and get it over. (Rising, he stops, staring at one of the letters on the table.) Ann!

ANN.  
Um?

TOM.  
(Taking up a letter.) Ann—here's one for you, too.

ANN.  
What? (She tears open the letter.) Tom! They've given the commission to me! Look! Read it! Is that what it says? Is it? Now aren't you glad you let me do it? You haven't lost! We've got it. Say you're glad. Say you're proud of me, dear. That's the best part of it all.

TOM.  
Of course, I am, dear, of course I am.

ANN.  
Oh, Tom, I wanted you to get it more than I ever wanted anything in my life, but this is SOMETHING to be thankful for. Doesn't this almost make it right?

TOM.  
Yes, dear, yes. Don't think of me. That's over—that part of it. Tell the others now.

ANN.  
Wait!

TOM.  
Aren't you going to?

ANN.  
I only want to be sure that you're just as happy that I won, as I would have been if YOU had.
TOM.
Of course, I am. You know that. (Kissing her.)

ANN.
Tell the others, then, Tom—I can't.

TOM.
(Opening the library doors.) What do you think has happened?

DAISY.
(Rushing in.) Tom got it. Didn't you, Tom? You did. You did! Oh, I'm so glad. (She kisses him.)

KEITH.
(Following DAISY in.) Well—governor—what did I tell you?

REMINGTON.
(In, doorway.) Pretty fine—isn't it?

ANN.
You tell them, Tom.

TOM.
Ann got it!

DAISY.
What?

TOM.
Isn't it great?

ANN.
You won't believe it. But you can see the letter. Now, father, don't you think getting that is better than being nursemaid and housekeeper? Now, don't you, honestly?

REMINGTON.
I do not.

ANN.
What?

REMINGTON.
I do not.

ANN.
Oh, I can laugh at your theories now. You haven't a leg to stand on. Has he, Tom? Be a dear father and say you're glad.
REMINGTON.
I'm not. I'd rather you'd failed a thousand times over—for your own
good. What are you going to do with Millicent while you're making this
thing?

ANN.
How can you be so hard and narrow, Father?

REMINGTON.
What if you did win? You've got something far greater than making
statues to do.

TOM.
Doctor, you're excited.

REMINGTON.
Not a bit. I'm only telling the truth. This is your business you know—and
it would have been far better for both of you if you'd won the thing.

TOM.
I don't see the argument. Ann got it because she sent in a better model
than I did. I don't see that anything else has anything to do with the
case.

(Tom goes out through hall.)

ANN.
(Turning to sit on the couch.) At least Tom's glad I got it.

REMINGTON.
He's stung to the quick. You've humiliated him in his own eyes. (He
goes to the fireplace.)

ANN.
I can't understand why you feel this way about it, father.

DAISY.
Oh, it's natural enough.

ANN.
(Turning to DAISY in amazement.) Aren't you glad for me—Daisy?

DAISY.
Yes, but—I'm awfully sorry for Tom. (She goes out through hall.)

ANN.
What's the matter with them all, Keith?
KEITH.
Oh—as Daisy says—it’s natural, Mrs. Herford. (He goes out after DAISY.)

REMINGTON.
(Coming down to ANN.) Daughter, I’m afraid I was a little too stiff just now. I didn’t mean to be unkind.

ANN.
(Rising and starting to hall door.) Oh, it doesn’t matter.

REMINGTON.
(Stopping her.) Yes, it does matter. I wouldn’t hurt you for the world.

ANN.
But you’ve always fought me, Father. You’ve never thought I had any right to work—never believed in my ability, now that I’ve proved I have some—Why can’t you acknowledge it?

REMINGTON.
Ann, this is a dangerous moment in your life. Tom’s beaten—humiliated—knocked out. You did it—he can’t stand it.

ANN.
What have I done? Tom has a big nature. He’s not little and petty enough to be hurt because I won.

REMINGTON.
You’re blind. He’s had a blow tonight that no man on earth could stand.

ANN.
Not Tom. I won’t believe it.

REMINGTON.
Yes, I say. I know what I’m talking about. Ann, be careful how you move now. Use your woman’s tact, your love. Make Tom know that he is the greatest thing in the world to you—that you’d even give up all this work idea—if—he wanted—you to.

ANN.
What? Tom wouldn’t let me.

REMINGTON.
Ask him. Ask him. See what he’d say.

ANN.
Why, I wouldn’t insult him. He’d think I thought he was—

(TOM comes in from the hall—ANN checks herself and turns away quickly to fire.)
TOM.
(After a pause.) What's the matter?

REMINGTON.
Nothing—nothing. Ann and I were just having a little argument as usual. I'll be back in a few minutes.

(Looking at his watch he goes into hall.)

TOM.
(Going slowly to ANN.) I hope you're not still fighting about the—your frieze?

ANN.
They're all so funny, Tom—the way they act about it. It hurts. But so long as you're glad, it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks. Say you're glad, dear. I want you to be as happy as I would be if you had won.

TOM.
You know I am, dear. You know that.

ANN.
(With a sigh of relief ANN sits at left of fire.) Think how I'll have to work. I can't even go to the country in the summer.

TOM.
(Sitting opposite ANN at the fire.) And what will you do with Millicent this summer?

ANN.
Oh, there are lots of nice things for her to do. The money! Think what it will mean to you!

TOM.
Let me tell you one thing, Ann, in the beginning. I'll never touch a penny of the money.

ANN.
What?

TOM.
Not a cent of it.

ANN.
What are you talking about?
TOM.
That's your money. Put it away for yourself.

ANN.
I never heard you say anything so absolutely unreasonable before in my life.

TOM.
If you think I'm unreasonable, all right. But that's understood about the money. We won't discuss it.

ANN.
Well, we will discuss it. Why shouldn't you use my money as well as I yours?

TOM.
That's about as different as day and night.

ANN.
Why is it?

TOM.
Because I'm taking care of you. It's all right if you never do another day's work in your life. You're doing it because you want to, I'm doing it because I've got to. If you were alone it would be a different thing. But I'm here, and so long as I am I'll make what keeps us going.

ANN.
But I'll help you.

TOM.
No, you won't.

ANN.
I will. I'm going on just as far as I have ability to go, and if you refuse to take any money I may make—if you refuse to use it for our mutual good, you're unjust and taking an unfair advan—Oh, Tom! What are we saying? We're out of our senses—both of us. You didn't mean what you said. Did you? It would—I simply couldn't bear it if you did. You didn't—did you?

TOM.
I did—of course.

ANN.
Tom—after all these years of pulling together, now that I've done something, why do you suddenly balk?
TOM. (Rising.) Good Heavens! Do you think I'm going to use your money? Don't try to run my end of it. It's the same old story—when you come down to it, a woman can't mix up in a man's business. (He moves away.)

ANN. Mix up in it? Isn't it a good thing for you that I got this commission?

TOM. No. I don't know that it's a good thing from any standpoint to have it known that I failed, but my wife succeeded.

ANN. I thought you said you were glad—proud of me.

TOM. It's too—distracting—too—takes you away from more important things.

ANN. What things?

TOM. Millicent and me.

ANN. Oh, Tom—don't. You know that you and Millicent come before everything on earth to me.

TOM. No.

ANN. You do.

TOM. We don't—now. Your ambition comes first.

ANN. (She rises, going to him.) Tom, I worship you. You know that, don't you?

TOM. I'm beginning to hate this work and everything in connection with it.

ANN. But you taught me—helped me—pushed me on. What's changed you?
TOM.
I let you do it in the first place because I thought it was right. I wanted you to do the thing you wanted to do.

ANN.
Well?

TOM.
I was a fool. I didn't see what it would lead to. It's taking you away from everything else—and there'll be no end to it. Your ambition will carry you away till the home and Millicent and I are nothing to you!

ANN.
Tom—look at me. Be honest. Are you sorry—— sorry I got this commission?

TOM.
I'm sorry it's the most important thing in the world to you.

ANN.
Oh! Why do you say that to me? How can you?

TOM.
Haven't I just seen it? You're getting rid of Millicent now because you don't want her to interfere with your work.

ANN.
No!

TOM.
You're pushing her out of your life.

ANN.
No!

TOM.
You said just now you were going to send her away alone in the summer. I don't like that. She's got to be with you—I want you to keep her with you.

ANN.
But that's impossible. You know that. If I stop work now I might as well give up the frieze entirely.

TOM.
Then give it up.

ANN.
What?
TOM.
Give up the whole thing—forever. Why shouldn't you?

ANN.
Do you mean that?

TOM.
Yes.

ANN.
Tom—I love you. Don't ask this sacrifice of me to prove my love.

TOM.
Could you make it? Could you?

ANN.
Don't ask it! Don't ask it for your own sake. I want to keep on loving you. I want to believe you're what I thought you were. Don't make me think you're just like every other man.

TOM.
I am a man—and you're my wife and Millicent's our daughter. Unless you come back to the things a woman's always had to do—and always will— we can't go on. We can't go on.

ANN.
(Following him around the table.) Tom—if you're just a little hurt—just a little jealous because I won——

TOM.
Oh——

ANN.
That's natural—I can understand that.

TOM.
Oh—don't——

ANN.
But, oh, Tom, the other—— to ask me to give it all up. I could never forgive that. Take it back, Tom—take it back.

TOM.
Good God, Ann, can't you see? You're a woman and I'm a man. You're not free in the same way. If you won't stop because I ask it—I say you must.

ANN.
You can't say that to me. You can't.
TOM.
I do say it.

ANN.
No!

TOM.
I say it because I know it's right.

ANN.
It isn't.

TOM.
I can't make you see it.

ANN.
It isn't.

TOM.
I don't know how—but everything in me tells me it's right.

ANN.
Tom—listen to me.

TOM.
If you won't do it because I ask you—I demand it. I say you've got to.

ANN.
Tom—you can kill our love by just what you do now.

TOM.
Then this work is the biggest thing in the world to you?

ANN.
What is more important to us both—to our happiness than just that?

MILLICENT.
(Calling outside door L. C.) Mother!

(A startled pause as ANN and TOM turn towards hall door.)

MILLICENT.
Mother! I'm home, where are you? (MILLICENT opens the hall door and rushes into the room.)

ANN.
Millicent! What are you doing here?

MILLICENT.
I came home, mother.
ANN.
Why?

MILLICENT.
Because I had to.

ANN.
Are you ill, dear?

MILLICENT.
No. No.

TOM.
Is anything wrong at school?

MILLICENT.
No, but I won't go back.

TOM.
But why won't you? What's the trouble?

MILLICENT.
I won't go back.

TOM.
But you can't do a thing like this. I won't allow it.

MILLICENT.
You wouldn't let me come home when I wanted to and now I can't go back. I won't—— everything's different now. I won't go back and you can't make me.

(She turns and rushes out of the room and TOM and ANN stare at each other as the curtain falls.)
ACT III. TIME: Half an hour later. SCENE: Same as Act II.

RUTH is writing at the desk. DAISY opens the hall door and stops, listening back into the hall.

RUTH.
(Quickly.) What's the matter?

DAISY.
Nothing. I was looking to see who went up the stairs. It's Dr. Remington.

RUTH.
How's Millicent now?

DAISY.
Ann's with her—getting her to bed.

RUTH.
Do you know yet why she came home?

DAISY.
I don't know whether Ann's got it out of her yet or not.

RUTH.
What do you think? Why on earth didn't she tell them at school?

DAISY.
I haven't the dimmest—but she didn't do it without some good reason. I'll bet anything on that. Millicent's a pretty level-headed youngster.

RUTH.
She's a self-willed one. Ann will send her right back of course.

DAISY.
I don't know whether she will or not. Millicent's got some rather decided ideas of her own on that.

RUTH.
But she'll have to go. Why shouldn't she? Ann will make her.

DAISY.
Tom will have something to say about it.

RUTH.
It's for Ann to decide surely.
DAISY.
Not at all. I don't see why. She is Tom's child, too, you know, and this is his house and he pays the bills at school and if he doesn't want her to go back you can bet she jolly well won't go. I only hope Millicent tells the whole business whatever it is. Ann is so excited over the frieze I don't know whether she'll have the patience to handle Millicent right or not. She's not easy.

RUTH.
It's awful for Ann to be upset now—of all times—when she has to begin this gigantic work.

DAISY.
Oh—I wish the damned frieze were in Guinea and that Ann had nothing to do but take care of Tom and Millicent—like any other woman. I'd give anything if she hadn't won the competition.

RUTH.
Daisy!

DAISY.
Oh, I would. I have a ghastly feeling that something horrible is going to come of it—if it hasn't already come.

RUTH.
What do you mean?

DAISY.
I tell you it is not possible for a man and woman to love each other and live together and be happy—unless the man is—it.

RUTH.
Speaking of the dark ages! You ought to live in a harem. How any girl who makes her own bread and butter can be so old fashioned as you are—I can't see.

DAISY.
You've got so used to your own ideas you forget that I am the average normal woman the world is full of.

RUTH.
Nonsense! You're almost extinct. I'm the average normal woman the world is full of—and it's going to be fuller and fuller.

DAISY.
I'll bet on plenty of us—left—(Indicating herself) on Judgment day.

RUTH.
I want to laugh when I think how mistaken we've been calling you a bachelor girl. Why you'd make the best wife of anybody I know.
DAISY.
I s'pose you mean that as an insult.

RUTH.
But you seem so self-reliant men are sort of afraid of you—

REMINGTON.
(Coming in from hall and feeling a certain restraint in the two girls.) Am I in the wrong camp.

RUTH AND DAISY.
No, no. Come in.

REMINGTON.
I have to stay some place. I'm going to hang around till Millicent quiets down—and then I'll clear out.

DAISY.
Is she ill?

REMINGTON.
Oh, no. Just a little worked up and excited.

RUTH.
Why do you think she came Dr. Remington?

REMINGTON.
I don't know what to think—unless she has "boy" in the head.

DAISY.
Goodness no! Not yet!

REMINGTON.
She's sixteen. You can't choke it off to save your life.

RUTH.
Oh, she's a baby!

REMINGTON.
Don't fool yourself. She won't wait as long as you two have to sit by her own fireside with children on her knee.

RUTH.
Oh—

REMINGTON.
That's the only thing in the game that's worth a cent—anyway.
(As KEITH comes in from the hall.)

REMINGTON.
Isn’t that so, Keith?

KEITH.
What’s that?

REMINGTON.
I've just been telling these two that love and children are the greatest things on earth. Ruth doesn't agree with me—but Daisy—

RUTH.
I must go.

DAISY.
I must go up to Ann.

(RUTH goes out.)

REMINGTON.
Let me go. They both seem terribly anxious to get out when you come in, Keith. Or maybe I’m in the way. I’ll go.

DAISY.
Don’t be silly. I really must see if I can do anything for Ann.

REMINGTON.
No, you mustn’t. She’s waiting for me to see Millicent. By the way, Keith—tomorrow’s Sunday. I always take a run into the country in the motor on Sunday. Come along and bring either Ruth or Daisy. Take your choice. I know which one I’d take. (He goes into the hall.)

DAISY.
Isn't he a goose.

KEITH.
Would it bore you to go, Daisy?

DAISY.
Nonsense! Ruth will.

KEITH.
It would be awfully good of you. Tomorrow's going to be a hard day for me to get through. Ruth told me tonight that she—I'm afraid it's all over.

DAISY.
Why don't you compromise?
KEITH.
There's nothing to compromise about. She's all wrong. Don't you think so?

DAISY.
Oh, don't ask me. I don't know anything about it.

KEITH.
Wait a minute. I—won't you go tomorrow, Daisy.

DAISY.
Ask Ruth. It will be a good chance to make up.

KEITH.
You're so practical and like such different things—maybe you'd think flying along through the country and lunching at some nice little out-of-the-way place was too frivolous—

DAISY.
Oh yes, I don't like anything but being shut up in the house all day, pounding at my typewriter and splitting my head to get the bills straight. To actually go off with a man—for a whole day—and have a little fun—like any other woman—would be too unheard of. Of course, I couldn't do anything as silly as that.

KEITH.
Oh—

DAISY.
I wouldn't be amusing anyway. Dr. Remington—well, he's sixty, and you'd be thinking of Ruth and I'd sit there like a stick—the sensible, practical woman who couldn't possibly be interesting and fascinating because no man would take the trouble to find out how devilish and alluring and altogether exciting I could be if I had the chance. *(She throws open the door and goes out.)*

*(KEITH stares after her.)*

TOM.
*(Coming in from library after a moment.)* I thought you'd gone, McKenzie.

KEITH.
No, but I'm going.

REMINSTON.
*(Coming back from hall.)* Good night, McKenzie. I'll dig you up in the morning, ten o'clock. Sharp, mind. And I'll call for Daisy first.
KEITH.
(At hall door.) All right. Much obliged, Doctor. (Turning back.) How'd you know it was Daisy?

REMINSTON.
I didn't—but I do now.

KEITH.
Good night. (He goes out.)

TOM.
Well—how is she? How is Millicent?

REMINSTON.
Oh, she's not ill—but the child's nervous as a witch—all strung up. She's worried about something—got something on her mind and naturally her head aches and she has a little fever—but that won't hurt her.

TOM.
Got something on her mind? What?

REMINSTON.
She didn't confide in me.

TOM.
What could she have on her mind?

REMINSTON.
I don't think she's committed murder—but she's got a mind, you know—There's no reason why she shouldn't have something on it.

TOM.
Well, I don't know what to do with her.

REMINSTON.
If you think she ought not to go back to school, say so. Tell Ann those are your orders.

TOM.
I don't give orders to Ann.

REMINSTON.
The devil you don't. She'd like it. A woman—a dog and a walnut tree—the more you beat 'em, the better they be.

TOM.
The walnut tree business doesn't work with Ann. I made a fool of myself tonight by telling her I wouldn't touch the money she gets out of this thing. She doesn't understand. I've made her think I'm jealous because she won.
REMINGTON.
Well, aren't you?

TOM.
No! I tell you it's something else. Something sort of gave way under feet when I opened her letter.

REMINGTON.
I know. I know.

TOM.
Doctor, for the Lord's sake, don't think I'm mean. I don't want to drag her back—but she seems gone somehow—she doesn't need me anymore. That's what hurts.

REMINGTON.
Of course, it hurts.

TOM.
Much as I've loved to have her with me—working away at my elbow—wonderful as it all was—sometimes I've wished I hadn't seen her all day—that I had her to go home to—fresh and rested—waiting for me and that I was running the machine alone for her. She'll never understand. I've acted like a skunk.

REMINGTON.
Y-e-s—I guess you have—so have I—unjust—pig-headed. No more right to say the things I've said to her than I have to spank her—except that she's—the most precious thing in the world to me—and I'd rather see her happy—as a woman—than the greatest artist in the world.

TOM.
That's it. I want her here—mine. But I s'pose that's rotten and wrong.

REMINGTON.
Yes—I s'pose it is. But you're despising yourself for something that's been in your bones—boy—since the beginning of time. Men and women will go through hell over this before it shakes down into shape. You're right and she's right and you're tearing each other like mad dogs over it because you love each other.

TOM.
That's it. If another man had got it I'd take my licking without whining. What's the matter with me? Why can't I be that way to her?

REMINGTON.
(Shaking his head with a wistful smile.) Male and female created He them. I don't take back any of the stuff I said to her before she went into
this. She's fighting you now for her rights—but she laid her genius at your feet once and she'd do it again if—

ANN.
*(Coming in from the hall and speaking after a pause.)* Well, father—what do you say about Millicent?

REMINSTON.
My advice is that you let her stay at home for a while.

ANN.
This is only a caprice—and it would be the worst thing in the world to give in to her. Unless you say as a physician—that she's too ill to—

REMINSTON.
I don't say she's too ill—physically. You must decide for yourself. I'll go up and see her again and if she isn't asleep then I'll give her a mild sleeping powder. Ann, I put her in your arms first—and the look that came into your eyes then was as near divinity as we ever get. Oh, my daughter—don't let the new restlessness and strife of the world about you blind you to the old things—the real things. *(He goes out.)*

ANN.
*(After pause.)* You agree with me, don't you, that it's better for her to go back.

TOM.
Do whatever you think best.

ANN.
But what do you think?

TOM.
It doesn't matter what I think, does it?

MILLICENT.
*(Opening the door.)* Mother, aren't you coming back? *(Millicent wears a soft robe over her night gown. Her hair is down her back.)*

ANN.
Millicent—why did you get out of bed?

MILLICENT.
I couldn't sleep. *(Running and jumping into the middle of the couch.)*

ANN.
Run back—quickly.

MILLICENT.
In a minute. It's so quiet upstairs I couldn't sleep. I'm used to the girls.
ANN.
You'll catch cold.

MILLICENT.
Goodness, mother, I'm roasting.

ANN.
Mmillie—what shall I do with you.

MILLICENT.
Is that what you and dad were talking about? What did Grandfather say? I don't care what he says. I'm not going back to school. You're on my side—are you, Dad?

TOM.
Whatever your mother thinks is right, of course.

MILLICENT.
Is it true—what Daisy told me—that you got the contract for a big frieze and not father? Is it? Is it, father? (Looking from one to the other.)

TOM.
Yes. It's quite true.

ANN.
Mmillie, go to bed.

MILLICENT.
I think that's perfectly horrid, mother. Why should they give it you? I think father ought to have it—he's the man. Don't you think people will think it's funny that you didn't get it? I should think it would make them lose confidence in you.

(A pause. Tom stalks out—closing the door.)

MILLICENT.
Is father hurt because you got it? I should think he would be.

ANN.
Mmillie, I've had quite enough of this. Go up to bed at once.

MILLICENT.
Will you come up and sleep with me?

ANN.
Of course not. (Walking about restlessly.)

MILLICENT.
Why not?
ANN.
Neither one of us would sleep a wink.

MILLICENT.
That wouldn't matter. I don't want to be alone.

ANN.
Come now—I won't speak to you again.

MILLICENT.
What have you decided about school?

ANN.
I'll tell you in the morning.

MILLICENT.
I won't go up till you tell me.

ANN.
Millicent—you will go at once, I say.

MILLICENT.
Oh, Mother, don't be cross. Sit down and talk a minute.

ANN.
It's late, dear. You must—

MILLICENT.
That's nothing. We girls often talk till twelve.

ANN.
Till twelve? Do the teachers know it.

MILLICENT.
Oh, mother, you're lovely! Don't you suppose they know that they don't know everything that's going on? Come and sit down, Mummie.

ANN.
No! You must go to bed.

MILLICENT.
But I won't go back to school.

ANN.
(Going to MILLICENT, who is still on the couch.) You make it terribly hard for me, Millicent. You don't know what's good for you, of course. I don't expect you to—but I do expect you to be obedient.
MILLICENT.
But, Mother, I tell you I—

ANN.
Don't be so rebellious. Now come upstairs, please dear, and—

MILLICENT.
But I won't go back to school, mother, dear. I won't.

ANN.
You say I treat you like a child. You force me to. If you don't want me to punish you—go upstairs at once and don't say another word.

MILLICENT.
I won't go back.

ANN.
Stop, I say!

MILLICENT.
I know what I want to do. I'm sixteen.

ANN.
(Their voices rising together.) You're my child. You will obey me.

MILLICENT.
But I won't. You don't understand. I can't mother, I can't—I can't.

ANN.
Why? Why can't you?

MILLICENT.
Because I—I'm going to be married.

ANN.
You silly child!

MILLICENT.
It's the truth, Mother. I am.

ANN.
Don't say a thing like that, even in fun.

MILLICENT.
It's the truth, I tell you. I'm going to be married.

ANN.
Some time you are, of course—you mean..
MILLICENT.
No—now—soon. That's why I left. That's why I'm not going back.

ANN.
(After drawing a chair to the couch and sitting before MILLICENT.) What do you mean?

MILLICENT.
I—he—we—we're engaged.

ANN.
He—who?

MILLICENT.
You—You don't know him.

ANN.
Who?

MILLICENT.
He's—he's perfectly wonderful.

ANN.
Who is he?

MILLICENT.
Now, Mother, wait. He—he isn't rich—

ANN.
Well—

MILLICENT.
He's poor—but he's perfectly wonderful—he works and he's so noble about it.

ANN.
What does he do?

MILLICENT. He—he—Oh, mother, it's hard to explain, because he's so different.

ANN.
What does he do?

MILLICENT.
Well—just now he—he drives the motor at school—because you see he's so proud he—

ANN.
Drives the motor—a chauffeur, you mean?
MILLICENT.
People call him that, of course—but he isn’t—

(ANN rises.)

MILLICENT.
Mother—

(ANN goes to the door and locks it—going back to MILLICENT, who had risen.)

MILLICENT.
Now, Mother, don’t look like that.

ANN.
Sit down.

MILLICENT.
Don’t look like that. Let me tell you about it.

ANN.
(Sitting again.) Yes, tell me about it.

MILLICENT.
Oh, I—hardly know how to begin.

ANN.
He drives the motor—the school motor, you say?

MILLICENT.
Yes—to the trains, you know—and into town and to church.

ANN.
Who is his father?

MILLICENT.
Why—I—I don’t know who he is. I’ve never met his father.

ANN.
What is his name?

MILLICENT.
His father’s name? I don’t know.

ANN.
The boy’s name.

MILLICENT.
Willie Kern.
ANN.
How does he happen to drive a motor?

MILLICENT.
Well, I don't know just how it happened—he's so clever you know, and of course he isn't really a chauffeur at all.

ANN.
What is he then?

MILLICENT.
Oh, Mother! He just happens to run the school motor.

ANN.
And what did he do before that?

MILLICENT.
Why he—he ran another motor. Oh, now, Mother, you don't understand at all. (She breaks into sobs and throws herself full length on the couch.)

(ANN sits rigidly.)

MILLICENT.
Just because he's poor and clever and drives a motor is no reason why you should act this way. (Sitting up.) He's going to do something else. He's going to come to New York to get a different position. And we'll be married as soon as he gets it, and that's why I came home—to tell you. So there—you see I can't go back to school. (She rises and starts to the door.)

ANN.
Millicent! Come here.

MILLICENT.
That's all there is to tell. I'm going to bed now.

ANN.
(Rising.) You know this is the most wild and impossible thing in the world.

MILLICENT.
I don't. It isn't impossible. I'm going to marry him. I love him better than you or father or anybody in the world and I'm going to marry him.

ANN.
Stop! Do you want to disgrace us? How any child of mine could speak—even speak to such a— Oh, the disappointment! Where's your pride? How could you? How could you? Millicent, if you'll promise me to give this up I won't say a word to your father.
MILLICENT.
No—no—I'm going.

ANN.
Don't unlock that door.

MILLICENT.
I want to go now.

ANN.
You'll never see this boy again. Never speak to him—never write to him—never hear of him. I shall send you away where he'll never know—

MILLICENT.
(Coming back to couch.) You won't! He loves me and I love him. He understands me. All that vacation when you wouldn't let me come home and all the other girls had gone he was just as good to me as he could be. He knew how lonely I was and he—we got engaged that vacation. You wouldn't let me come home.

ANN.
Millicent—you don't know what you're saying. You don't know what you're doing.

MILLICENT.
Oh, yes, I do, Mother. It's you that don't know. You don't understand.

ANN.
(Kneeling before MILLICENT.) My darling—why—didn't you tell me this when you said you wanted to come home? Why didn't you tell me then? (Sobbing, ANN buries her face in MILLICENT'S lap.)

MILLICENT.
I would have told you—if you'd let me come home—but you wouldn't—and I was so lonely there without the girls and—we—we got engaged. You don't understand, Mother.

ANN.
(Lifting her face to MILLICENT.) Oh, yes, I do, dear. Yes, I do. Tell me—all about it. When did you first know him? How did you—happen to speak to him—I mean to—to love him.

MILLICENT.
Oh, Mother, why I—he—I just did—he's so handsome and so nice. You haven't any idea how nice he is, Mother.

ANN.
Haven't I, dear? What is he like? Tell me everything—how did it begin?
MILLICENT.
He—the first time I really knew he was so different you know—

ANN.
Yes, dear.

MILLICENT.
Was one Sunday morning I was ready for church before anybody else and I went out to get in the motor and ran down the steps and fell, and he jumped out and picked me up and put me in the motor, and of course I thanked him and we had to wait quite a while for the others, and I found out how different and really wonderful he was. All the girls were crazy about him. Here's his picture. *(Drawing out a locket which is on a chain around her neck.)* It's just a little snapshot which I took myself one morning—and you can't really tell from this how awfully good looking he is.

(ANN *seizes the locket and looks closely at the picture.*)

MILLICENT.
His eyes are the most wonderful—and his lashes are the longest I ever saw. You can't see his teeth and they are well, you'd just love his teeth, Mother.

ANN.
Would I, dear? Have you seen very much of him? Have you seen him any place besides in the motor, I mean.

(MILLICENT *hesitates.*)

ANN.
Tell me, dear—everything. I shall understand.

MILLICENT.
Well, of course, Mother—I *had* to see him some place else after school began again and the girls were all back and I wasn't going for the mail any more.

ANN.
Of course; and where *did* you see him?

MILLICENT.
Why, you see, it—it was awfully hard, Mummie, because I couldn't tell anybody. Nobody would have *understood*—except Fanny. She's such a dear. She's been so sympathetic through the whole thing, and she has helped me a lot. There is a fire escape out of our room and Mondays and Thursdays at nine o'clock at night—

ANN.
Oh—
MILLICENT.
What, Mother?

ANN.
Nothing—go on, dear.

MILLICENT.
At exactly nine I’d put on Fanny’s long black coat and go down and he was always there and we always went down in the arbor just a little while.

ANN.
The arbor? Where was the arbor?

MILLICENT.
Down the path of the other side of the drive—not far from the house; but of course nobody went near it at that time of night—in cold weather and—and we’d talk a while and then I’d run back. You don’t mind, do you Mother. What else could I do?

ANN.
And—he’s kissed you—of course?

MILLICENT.
Of course.

ANN.
And you’ve kissed him?

MILLICENT.
(Lowering her eyes.) Why yes—mother—we’re engaged.

ANN.
And what did he say to you there in the arbor?

MILLICENT.
I can’t tell you everything he said, Mother.

ANN.
Why not, Millicent? I’m your mother. No one on earth is so close to you—or loves you so much—or cares so much for your happiness—and understands so well. I remember when I was engaged to your father—I wasn’t much older than you—I know, dear. Tell me what he said.

MILLICENT.
He thinks I’m pretty, Mother.

ANN.
Yes dear.
MILLICENT.
And he thinks I'm wonderful to understand him and to know what he really is in spite of what' he happens to be doing.

ANN.
Yes—and how long did you usually stay there in the arbor?

MILLICENT.
Oh, not very long, only last time it was longer. He teased so and I couldn't help it. He—he—I—

ANN.
How long was it that time?

MILLICENT.
Oh—it—it was almost two hours last time.

ANN.
And what did you do all that time? Wasn't it cold?

MILLICENT.
He made me put on his overcoat—He just made me.

ANN.
(Holding MILLICENT close in her arms). And he held you close—and kissed you—and told you how much he loved you?

MILLICENT.
Yes, I love him so—Mother—but—I—tonight, was the last night to go again—but I—

ANN.
(Holding MILLICENT off as she searches her face.) Yes, dear?

MILLICENT.
I—I was—afraid to go.

ANN.
(Shrieking.) Why?

MILLICENT.
Oh, Mother—Was it wicked to be afraid? I ran away—I wanted to be with you.

(ANN snatches MILLICENT in her arms. Her head falls against MILLICENT and MILLICENT'S arms hold her close as she sobs. Someone tries the door and knocks.)
TOM.
(In the hall.) Ann!—Ann!

ANN.
Yes?

TOM.
Why is the door locked?

ANN.
Millicent and I are talking. Wait just a few minutes. And Tom—tell her grandfather not to wait to see Millicent again tonight. She's all right.

TOM.
Sure?

ANN.
I'm sure.

MILLICENT.
(In a whisper—after listening a moment.) What are you going to tell father?

ANN.
(Sitting on the floor.) Well—you see, dear—you're too young to be married now—much too young—and—

MILLICENT.
Oh, now, Mother, if you're going to talk that way. Wait till you see him.

ANN.
That's just what I want to do. I've got such a lovely plan for us—for the summer.

MILLICENT.
But I want to be married as soon as he gets his—

ANN.
I know, his position—and while he's looking and getting settled you and I will go abroad.

MILLICENT.
You're awfully good, Mother; but if you really want to do something for me—I'd rather you'd give me that money to be married.

ANN.
But Millicent, my dear child—I have to go. I'm so tired. I've been working awfully hard this winter. You're the only one in the world who could really be with me and take care of me. I need you.
MILLICENT.
Poor Mother! I don't want to be selfish and if you need me—I'll go.

ANN.
(Catching MILLICENT in her arms.) Thank you, dear.

MILLICENT.
If you'll promise me that I can be married when I get back.

ANN.
(Getting to her feet.) If—you—still—want to—marry him when you come—back with me—you may. I promise.

MILLICENT.
Mother! I didn't know you loved me so much.

ANN.
Didn't you, dear? Now go to bed. (They start to the door together. ANN catches MILLICENT again, kissing her tenderly as though she were something new and precious.)

MILLICENT.
What's the matter, Mother?

ANN.
Nothing, dear— Good night.

MILLICENT.
Good night.

TOM.
(Coming into doorway as MILLICENT unlocks and opens the door.) Not in bed yet?

MILLICENT.
(Throwing her arms about her father's neck.) Oh, dad. I'm so happy. (She goes out.)

ANN.
(Sitting at the fire.) Come, in, Tom. I want to talk to you about Millicent.

TOM.
(Closing the door and going to ANN.) What's the matter?

ANN.
She thinks she's in love.

TOM.
What?
ANN.
Our baby. She wants to be married.

TOM.
What do you mean?

ANN.
That's why she came home.

TOM.
Good Heavens, Ann! Married? What has she got mixed up in? How did such a thing happen? How could it?

ANN.
Because I didn't let her come home when she wanted to. Don't say anything, Tom. I can't bear it now.

TOM.
(Putting a hand on her head tenderly.) Don't dear! Don't! It—might have—happened—anyway.

ANN.
Oh, the things that can happen!

TOM.
Has she told you everything?

ANN.
Everything.

TOM.
What have you said to her? What are you going to do?

ANN.
I'm going to take her away—and win her—till she gives up of her own free will—I shall have to have the wisdom of all the ages. I shall have to be more fascinating than the boy. That's a pretty big undertaking, Tom. I wonder if I'll be equal to it.

TOM.
You mean you're going to give up your frieze and go away with her?

(ANN nods her head.)

TOM.
You can't do it, Ann.

ANN.
(Rising and moving away.) Oh, yes, I can.
TOM.
You cannot. Don't lose your head. You're pledged to finish it and deliver it at a certain time. You can't play fast and loose with a big piece of work like that.

ANN.
You'll have to make my frieze, Tom.

TOM.
I will not! I utterly and absolutely refuse to. You make Millicent behave and break this thing up and you go on with your—

ANN.
I can't. I can't. She's been in danger—absolute danger.

TOM.
How?

ANN.
Oh, I'll tell you. I'll tell you. She ran away to me—to me—and I was pushing her off. My little girl! She's got to be held tight in my arms and carried through.

TOM.
Ann, I'm not going to allow this to wipe out what you've done. I'll settle her—

ANN.
Tom, you can't speak of it to her—not breathe it—

TOM.
Of course I will.

ANN.
No you won't. If we cross her she'll get at him some way—somehow.

TOM.
I'm not going to let you sacrifice yourself for a wayward—

ANN.
It's my job. She is what I've given to life. If I fail her now—my whole life's a failure. Will you make my frieze, dear, will you?

TOM.
No. It's yours. You've got to have the glory of it. Ann, I haven't been fair—but you're going to have this and all that's coming to you. I'm not going to let anything take it away from you. It's too important. My God you've not only beaten me—you've won over the biggest men in the field—with your own brain and your own hands—in a fair, fine, hard fight. You're cut up now—but if you should give this thing up—there'll be
times when you'd eat your heart out to be at work on it—when the artist in you will yell to be let out.

**ANN.**
I know. I know. And I'll hate you because you're doing it—and I'll hate myself because I gave it up—and I'll almost—hate—her. I know. I know. You needn't tell me. Why I've seen my men and women up there—their strong limbs stretched—their hair blown back. I've seen the crowd looking up—I've heard people say—“A woman did that” and my heart has almost burst with pride—not so much that I had done it—but for all women. And then the door opened—and Millicent came in. There isn't any choice, Tom—she's part of my body—part of my soul. Will you make my frieze, dear, will you? (*Falling against him.*)

**TOM.**
(*Taking her in his arms.*) My darling! I'll do whatever makes it easiest for you. Don't think I don't know all—all—it means to you. My God, it's hard.

**ANN.**
(*Releasing herself and going to the hall door.*) Put out the light. I hope she's asleep.

(*They go out into the lighted hall. After a moment*)

THE CURTAIN FALLS.