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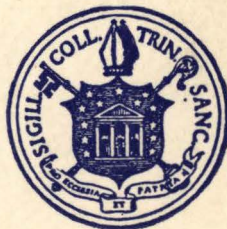
# REVIEW

TRINITY COLLEGE  
HARTFORD

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JANUARY · 1941

VOL. III - - - - No. 1



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# Vinum Daemonum

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*"I can hear the brook; is it a lovely day, Tony?"*



THE  
TRINITY REVIEW

Published Twice a Year by the  
TRINITY LITERARY CLUB

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VOL. III

JANUARY · 1941

No. 1

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Ralph S. Grover, '41

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Marshall Nead, '41

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## ELECTIONS

The following were recently elected to the  
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H. STANLEY KNOWLES, '43

GEORGE TRACY, '43

GEORGE KENT STODDARD, JR., '41

—THE EDITOR

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## PREFACE

One of the privileges man shares with God is creation. Whenever any one of us can, after six days of labor, behold the work of our own hands and find it in some fashion merits the conclusion that it is very good, then we are indeed in kin with the divine.

For most college men the art of creative writing is the only avenue open for self-expression. In every generation there are a favored few who have talent they can express in music, sculpture or painting; but most of these — more's the pity — could not pass the conventional examinations for admission to any college. Every institution of higher learning should therefore provide some vehicle for men who have the urge to write — some opportunity above the required themes of courses in composition. It is always a thrilling experience (though often followed by a wave of humiliation) for us to see our own work in print, and we do well to make that opportunity possible for others.

So with these words we offer to discerning readers the product of a group of college men, hoping for sympathetic consideration. If what you read here seems good, lend your support to *The Trinity Review*. If it seems to you bad, close the booklet with a reminiscent sigh; for you yourself once dwelt in Arcady.

R. B. OGILBY,  
*President*



## EDITORIAL

It is occasionally a good plan to sit back with the editorial pipe aglow, and view the results, good and bad, of a magazine's effort. Those results are in direct proportion to the amount and type of material that the men of Trinity College choose to turn out. That they have striven to write the best of which they are capable and have shown a keen interest in the publication is a reason for great satisfaction.

Briefly surveying the situation since the founding of *The Trinity Review* a little over two years ago, the improvement shown by the men who have had their work appear in more than one issue, has been noticeable. They have matured in style, some of them having already acquired a method which is theirs alone, and which immediately singles out their effort as being superior. More and more new names have appeared, perhaps at first hesitantly, but then gaining in confidence, until they head the list, as their predecessors graduate. Many subjects have been written about, but it is gratifying to note that the majority of them have had warmth and truly human emotions, which are common to all peoples, standing out and proclaiming that the human being is still the most important thing in our immediate horizon, a view which is now on trial for its life.

It has not been as great a surprise as one might think, to realize that Trinity College does have within its walls, real ability, for men are the same everywhere, and the creative impulse, God-given, is strong, perhaps stronger than any other impulse. It cannot come to fruition in a day, a month, or a year, but it must be encouraged and above all it must not be allowed to become cool. There are those of you here at Trinity, who have not yet given expression to your talents, but one of the purposes for which *The Trinity Review* was established, is to show you how your classmates write and what they write. Having seen these things, take up the pen, not to imitate, but to be yourself.

## NO SOCIAL MANNERS

ERNEST N. DICKINSON, '41

People say class don't count. Well, I say it does. Now you take Janet for instance. Whatever you could say about her, she never knew how to mix up with people; or, as Dutch Schneider used to say, Janet never had no polish. If she had a had polish she wouldn't of acted the way she done at Herb's party. She would of carried it all off like a regular scout instead of going to pieces the way she did.

But let's begin at the beginning and I'll tell you the whole story. Just about a year ago this month I met Janet the first time. I seen her in Ervin's Drug Store down on Shore Drive. Yeah, I remember it like it was yesterday; Ervin's Drug Store. Old Baldy was sitting back of the counter smoking a cigar, and she was leaning over the counter with her head cocked on one side reading the titles of the different books that was lying in a pile on the ice cream stand. Soon as I stepped into the store and got one look at that shape, I plunked myself down on the stool next to hers. I see she was a tall blonde, kind of pale.

"Give me a double malted milk, Baldy," I said, "and you might shake one up for the literary lady at my right."

I said the whole thing quick like that without even looking at her. I always figure you got to be fast on the trigger to get by in this world, especially with the females. If there's one thing a woman don't like, it's a dope.

She looked around slow and easy, as though being bought a milk shake was a every day event with her.



"Thank you," she said.

"Quite okay," I said.

And then while the mixing machine was going neither one of us spoke. But I was doing some fast thinking. This baby's got class, I thought. I didn't see no wedding ring on her hand. And nice all over, I thought.

When Baldy set down the two malted milks, I put a fifty cent piece on the counter and told him to keep the change. He glanced at me kind of suspicious.

"You're a stranger in these parts, aren't you?" I asked the girl. She looked straight back at me.

"You certainly don't waste any time," she said. "Do you always work that fast?"

I remember just the tone of voice she used — cool, like asking a policeman the way to the post office. This babe is a smart apple, I thought. Before I could get up a snappy answer, she came out with something like this, "Yes, I'm a stranger in town. My name is Janet Brockway. I'm an unemployed stenographer, twenty years old. I room two blocks down the road and have no bad habits. Anything else?"

"Sure," I said, quick as a jackrabbit. "Are you lonesome?" She smiled at that.

"No," she said, "Mortimer and I make out all right."

As you can imagine, that hit me like the east-bound freight. I thought sure the jig was up then.

"Didn't you say you didn't have no bad habits?" I asked her.

"That's right," she said.

"Well, I don't see no wedding ring," I informed her.

"That's perfectly natural," she said. "I'm not married."

"Well," I said, "wouldn't you call Mortimer a sort of bad habit then?"

She busted out laughing. "No, silly! Mortimer is my cat."

When she said that, I felt much better; and I decided to make a date then and there. Which I did — for that night.

You know, when I remember our first meeting now, with everything that's happened since then, I should of known she

wasn't a hell of a lot of good because she was so easy. At that time I sure thought she had polish, and plenty of it. But after that talk in the drug store she never impressed me that way again. . . . Why? Nobody knows. Leastwise I'm sure I don't.

Well, the date was all fixed and decided upon, and she stood up and said she had to go.

I said, "If you got to go, you got to go. See you tonight, honey."

And then no sooner was the words out of my mouth when I seen it. I seen it for the first time. Her foot that was all bent over. She was crippled bad.

Of course what I'm trying to get at is not to give our whole biography but to explain what happened at Herb's party the other night. But in order to do that I got to give you some idea of the connection between me and Janet — our relationship, so to speak. Her being crippled never bothered me. I hardly never thought about it. And besides I don't believe in discrimating against no one, on account of they're black, or Jews, or on account of they got something wrong with them. So long as it ain't catching. Janet was a nice girl — that is, I thought so then. And I kind of blush to admit it but, do you know, in the whole year I went around with her I never got very far. She always held me off a little, something like I was a stranger. The first night when I pulled her up closer and put my arm around her I caught her laughing. That burned me up! If there's anything I hate it's a teaser. Well, we had a fight. When I told her just what she was, she got nasty, and for a while it looked as though we was never going to see each other no more. Three days later like a regular softie, me, I come crawling back to beg her pardon. Maybe what made me go so soft was on account of I had made up my mind I was going to get places in that league.

Nights we'd go to a movie or up to Davie's Diner or maybe on Saturday night over to the casino to hear the dance band. I think she enjoyed herself, at least til afterwards. I'd put my arm around her waist. Then in a little while the same old



argument would start up. I'd ask her politely, "Why can't we get more chummy, Janet?"

She'd say no. I'd say why not. She'd say something like, "I don't partickly feel in the mood."

That would burn me up. Well, put yourself in my position. Wouldn't it burn you up? After all a fellow likes a girl to go fifty-fifty. So I'd tell her she could go to hell for all I cared, and out I'd march. Maybe a week I'd stay away, maybe two or three weeks, once it was over a month. Then like a simp I'd come wiggling back for more.

All the time we went around together Janet never said much. She was awful quiet. Sometimes I'd wonder what she was thinking of when I did all the talking and she just looked out the window or petted the cat.

I'd say, "Hey, there! Snap out of it. I'm talking to you."

But she'd just look up as though she hadn't known I was in the room til then. Sometimes she got me kind of sore.

Then there was Mortimer, that goddam cat. Why she treated him like he was a person. I didn't mind it at first but later — well, listen to this. About the third time I was in to see her I was sitting in the green plush chair in the corner of the living room. All of a sudden in came the cat. He sat in the middle of the floor looking at me and started to meow. Janet interrupted me.

"Pardon me," she said, "but you're sitting in Mortimer's chair."

Now tell me just one thing. What would you do in a case like that? You'd get plenty hot like I did. Jesus, that burned me up. Dutch says that no one but ignorant people treat cats like they was human beings. And Dutch is right.

Of course Dutch always hated Janet's guts from the first time he seen her. He only seen her once before the party, but that was enough for him he said. And Janet. Hell, one thing she never done was mix up with people. She always kept kind of off by herself. When it came to going to parties, Janet just wouldn't go. It took me two weeks to get her to come

over to the party that Herb and Sally gave last Wednesday night. Two weeks I argued with her, and I guess she only went then because it was a birthday party for me.

Now this here party. I started out to tell you about it. Did the fireworks blow up there!

Because I didn't get out of work at the factory til late that night I was to go home, get cleaned up and dressed and meet Janet on the corner of Riverview and Buckley Avenue. From there we only had a short walk to Herb's place. I met her at the corner, and what do you think she was doing? . . . She was holding Mortimer in her arms.

"You're not going to bring that?" I asked her.

"Yes," she said. "He looked so sad tonight when he saw me getting ready I had to bring him along."

I put up a kick. But in a easy kind of way, as I didn't want her to turn around and go back.

"*We*, you and I, was invited," I said, "not the cat. Supposing Herb don't like cats?"

"Who could help liking Mortimer?" she said, giving him one of those looks like she was always giving him — like he was a million dollar bill.

Well, you can't do nothing with that kind of woman. She was just brought up wrong, or else she's crazy. I don't know. I never could figure her out.

At the party there was all my best friends. They was Heid — he's the foreman in my section of the plant, and a swell guy even if he is foreman — Heid and his babe. Then there was Bob Schanley and Ginie. And the Fitzgerald brothers and their women. Dutch Schneider — he came alone, and the Simon girl; I never can remember her first name. And then of course, Herb and Sally and me and Janet.

We got there okay. When Janet explained in her quiet way about the cat's being lonesome, I guess people thought she was a little queer. But nobody said so. They're all damn good people. The best in the United States. Give you the shirt off their backs if you was to need it.



Janet kind of kept to herself the first part of the evening. While we played cards she looked at us. But she didn't do it in no snooty way. Herb passed the drinks. Janet had one just to be sociable with the rest of us, but when she'd took that one, Gabriel on a bicycle couldn't of got her to take another.

Well, you know how them kind of parties get — along about eleven o'clock. Dirty jokes started around. Everybody got chummy with everybody else. And a couple of girls was already on their fellows' laps.

Well, put yourself in my position. If you take a nice looking girl to a party, you like to have her pay you some attention in front of everybody. After about the fourth highball I walked over and sat down beside Janet on the divan.

After a minute I said to her, "How about a kiss, honey?"

She said, "The liquor's making you mushy."

I said, "Gimme a kiss."

"Not tonight," she said. I grabbed her.

"Come on, kiss me." But she didn't budge.

"Damn you. Give me a kiss," I said.

Hell, I wasn't drunk like she thought. But I was getting mighty mad. Yet swearing at her, I guess, only made things worse. When she got up from the divan she walked over to a chair in the other corner, and the cat jumped up in her lap.

I crossed over to where she was. Mad as a bull, I said, "What the hell's the matter with you, Janet?"

She said, "Why nothing. Happy birthday."

I said, "If you don't like me why the hell do you put up with me at all?"

"I don't know. I never thought about it," she said.

"Why didn't you never think about it?" I said.

"Because it wasn't important enough."

"You mean I was never important enough?" I asked her.

"Yes, I mean that," she said, "if you want to put it in so many words."

She was smiling, so I didn't know quite whether she was joking or not. Anyhow I was getting sorer by the minute. But I just had another drink and shut up. Even if I'm not what you might call a socialite I got enough manners to know a fellow shouldn't start a fight when he's out visiting.

Janet sat down in the corner, watching the rest of us, and petting the cat and making me sorer by the minute. What would Dutch think seeing me letting my woman give us the highbrow?

Well, pretty soon the cat jumped off her lap. When he came across the floor to where I was, he jumped up on the window sill next to me. The window was open. It was a six stories drop to the ground. I don't know why I done it. Maybe I just thought it would be a good joke — pushing the cat off the window — or maybe I didn't think at all. Anyhow I pushed him off when he rubbed up against my hand. And everyone seen me do it. As a kind of joke I said, "Oops, he slipped."

Dutch started to roar laughing when all of a sudden he stopped. No one said nothing. You could of heard a pin drop, it was that quiet.

Janet looked at me and when she did she didn't say nothing, she just stared. After about a minute she smiled — the queerest smile I ever seen. God, an awful smile. Like it was on a dead person.

"Aw, what the hell, Janet," I said, "that cat wasn't no good."

She still didn't say nothing nor even move.

"I'll get you another one," I said. "Old lady Swain downstairs at our house has three kittens. I'll get all three of 'em."

Then I could hear Dutch give the beginning of a laugh. But nobody else said nothing. When I stepped over closer, Janet still didn't move.

"Aw, snap out of it, kid," I said. "You never since I known you acted natural. Give us a kiss, huh, kid?"

I bent over to kiss her, and I'll be damned if she didn't spit right in my face. I was so surprised I couldn't move a muscle.



I just stood there, the spit dribbling down my cheek. After what seemed about a hour had went by, Janet just turned around and limped out of the room. And then another long time went by before Dutch started to laugh again and everyone begun to talk.

I heard Dutch say, "She must think she's God's chosen angel. I'd of smacked her one, if it had a been me."

That made me feel a little better. Without even bothering to wipe off my face I grabbed the whiskey bottle and drank until I can't remember just what did happen. Only I think we had one hell of a good time. And I know we was glad Janet had gone.

Well, that was Wednesday night. Yesterday morning I went down to her apartment to see her. I was all ready to make a sucker out of myself again. But no one answered the door. And pretty soon the landlady came out and said Janet had moved away. When I asked her where she'd gone to, she said she didn't know.

But what the hell? Dutch Schneider is right. A guy ought not to be chasing after no girl that's below him. One thing about Janet, she never had no social manners or she wouldn't of acted the way she did at Herb's party. Dutch says I'm lucky. Dutch says she was a little ignorant snot who thought she was queen of Roonania. And Dutch is right. I'm glad as hell I don't have to put up with her no more.

But where do you suppose she could of went? She didn't have much money.

After all though, you got to hand it to Dutch. He had her all figured out from the start.

## MINORITY REPORT

I know you love me,  
But you say:  
"Love can wait till  
Another day."

Yet if you love me,  
Why make me  
Wait for what seems  
Eternity?

Is there some pleasure  
You derive  
From seeing me  
For kisses strive?

Or do you think  
Love will increase  
If now we hold it  
In a leash?

If you think that,  
Then you are wrong.  
My love for you  
Is not that strong!

*Stanley A. Moore, '42*

## THE FIRST TWO NINTHS

LEWIS B. SHEEN, '41

He walked along the street. There was spring in his step. And, though it was November, there was Spring in his heart. God was in his Heaven, all was right with the world. The ground was covered with snow. It was white, fleecy snow; pure snow. The street lights beamed placidly on his merry way. God was in his Heaven, all was right with the world.

Then he saw it. It was long and slinky. It had silky fur. It slunk stealthily on soft cushioned paws. It spat at him. It raised its hair. It didn't like him. It opened its mouth and showed its fangs. Its tongue curled greedily. It hissed at him. It raised one majestic paw, and unsheathed silver weapons. He thought that in a moment it would attack him. But it looked disdainful. It wanted to show him that it didn't like him. He saw that it didn't like him. He tried to show it that it had showed him that it didn't like him. But that wasn't enough. It must show him even more that it didn't like him. It jumped toward him. So it wanted to get tough; well, he would show it. He would catch it on the rebound. It rebounded. He missed, but it didn't. It didn't like him. He didn't like it. They both didn't like each other, and they had both shown each other that they didn't like each other, but that wasn't enough for them.

Pride, egotism, self-respect: these kept both of them from giving in to each other. They both sat down. They had to think this thing out properly. He thought. It thought. Neither would ever give in to the other. But they both knew they couldn't keep on all night. They would have to call a



truce. It wanted him to call a truce. He wanted it to call a truce. They both called the truce at the same time. It went home with him. He went home with it. He hated it and everything like it. It hated him and everything like him. He would make its life miserable, if he could. It would make his life even more miserable if it could. It wasn't being fair now. It wanted to return more than it received. It was mean. It cheated.

It would wait until he left in the morning. It would go to his desk and scatter his papers. He would be angry at this. He would go to its bed and give it damp papers to lie on. But it had an advantage. It was home more than he was. It had more time to think up mean cheating tricks to play on him. It did. He had no time to think up mean cheating tricks to play on it. It acted as though it owned the place. It wouldn't let him sit in his own favorite chair; the chair was wet and didn't smell very nice. It would jump on top of the bookcase and laugh at him then. It would solemnly mimic him, looking at the chair and smelling the wet uncomfortable odor. It didn't mind the odor. He did. He sent the chair away. But there were other chairs. Familiarity breeds contempt. It did. It was contemptuous. It owned the place. He paid the rent. It didn't contribute a thing to their life in common. All it did was sit around and smell like fish. That couldn't be helped in a way. All he gave it was fish. Fish didn't smell nice. It didn't mind the smell; he did.

He had enough. It must go away. He told it it must go away. It laughed at him. It just sat there on the bookcase out of reach and laughed at him. He saw that the sofa was wet. The room didn't smell very nice. So. He went out. He went to the store. He came back with an iron cage with beautiful bars around it. It had known that he was going out for just such a thing. It had taken advantage of his absence again. He was mad. It was glad. He got madder; it got gladder. He started after it. It ran away from him. It was swift. Blast its little pink toes. He would catch it. He grabbed for it.



It grabbed him. He yelled. It laughed. He could never catch it. Then it got confident. It thought there was no turn here. There was a turn here. He picked it up and threw it in the cage. He locked the door tightly. It came to. It was very mad. It tried to get through the doors but it couldn't. It didn't like him. He didn't like it. They glared at each other. He put it out in the hall. It yelled. He didn't mind. They both went to sleep.

In the morning it yelled again. It woke him up. He got up. He put on his clothes. He ate his breakfast. It wanted something too. More fish. It didn't get anything. He took it away. He knew it wouldn't go to heaven. He missed it, but it served it right. It just wouldn't cooperate. It had no interest in domestic harmony. It did things deliberately. It knew that it was doing wrong. It wouldn't go to heaven, he said.

He walked along the street. There was spring in his step. And, though it was November, there was Spring in his heart. God was in his Heaven. All was right with the world. The ground was covered with snow. It was white, fleecy snow; pure snow. The street lights beamed placidly on his merry way. God was in his Heaven. All was right with the world.

Then he saw it.

## TO A LOVED ONE — 1940

In this dark-shrouded time when noisome smoke  
Palls cities gutted by the shocking blast  
Of heavy bombs, and flames man-lighted cloak  
Both humble homes and treasures of the past,  
The future, through the rolling clouds that rise  
Black, ominous from off the reeking pile  
Of rubble growing as each side outvies  
The other as to which can be more vile,  
Fades, becomes obscure, and loses now the light  
That once it held. The dreams of happiness  
We once could cherish now are put to flight  
By Fate's cruel offspring, war, the world's distress.  
But yet why moan our lot or why protest?  
We are alive; we love; and so are blest.

*Raymond Cunningham, Jr., '43*



## ISLAND SUNSET

(Monhegan)

The burnished copper breadth of open sea  
Fades slowly, now, in vibrant purple hues,  
As growing night reveals itself to me  
Upon the high-massed rocks, where views  
Of space's unplumbed depths unfold,  
And dwarf the massive cliffs about whose base  
The waves move ceaselessly, with cold  
Touch laving each rock's hard roughened face.

As sunset's last swift trace upon the sea  
Fades rapidly from sight, aloft I gaze anew,  
With chained imagination now set free,  
And wonder what great power can imbue  
The evening with such mystery untold;  
And from the play of winds through starlit space  
Wake music whose weird beauty unfortold  
Excites my mind and spirit with its grace.

*G. K. Stoddard, '41*



### BYWAYS OF NIGHT

Before the deep, still poetry of night  
Becomes the bitter, earthy prose of day,  
Come, walk with me a little while, and though  
I say no word to you, you will not mind.  
I feel you'd rather have it so.  
Our parlance is that unseen subtle tongue,  
Which only those who love can understand;  
And this is our last night alone together,  
Perhaps — , perhaps forever.  
Walk with me to where the stony bridge  
Casts its shadow on the moonlit brook,  
And beyond, to where the lindens line the road  
With poignant scent, that seems to be for us;  
And, Oh, beyond to where the lonely path  
Winds close to God, and then, forgetting Him,  
Winds back and down, and down to earth again!

*Ralph S. Grover, '41*



## THE LAST TOMORROW

JAMES MURRAY, '43

### *Dramatis Personae*

TONY KARPEK	STAFFORD
VIVIAN KING	POPE
MARTHA WARREN	OFFICE BOY
BARTHOLOMEW	CLARA
ADELINE	SERVANTS
SHEPHERD	

### ACT I — SCENE I

*The scene: A party at the home of a wealthy manufacturer in northern New England. A drawing room with an orchestra, dancers, butlers, all formal. Tony Karpek stands at the left, looking a bit cynical, presenting his profile to the audience. A man complete with cigarette and cocktail approaches. He looks wholesome and naïve as one choked to the ears with human understanding and who, although not the host, tries to see that all enjoy themselves. He is nameless. He speaks:*

Pardon me, but aren't you Bill Marlowe, Dartmouth, '29?

Ton: No, I'm Tony Karpek, Alcatraz, '33.

Other: Oh! Did you graduate?

Ton: No. I flunked out in the third term.

Other: Congratulations. *They shake hands warmly.*  
Awfully sorry for my mistake. *Goes off.*

*Tony stands surveying the room. A short, irascible man, obviously the host, approaches. He carries a cocktail in one hand, wipes his brow with the other. John Stafford is his name. He speaks to Tony in a low impatient tone:*

Staf: Must you stand there in that spot all night, drinking?

Ton: Your cocktails are terrible, J. A.

Staf: Why don't you get in with the crowd and enjoy yourself? You don't act like a chief mechanical engineer; you act more like a college boy trying to imitate Noel Coward.

Ton: *Vehemently.* I'm not a mechanical engineer; I'm an artist. I paint pictures.

Staf: How interesting. There are some beautiful women here tonight.

Ton: *Mockingly.* In icebergs there is beauty too. *Then seriously.* I've been in this town for three months and I've seen nothing less feminine than the women.

Staf: *Complacently.* That's New England for you. Our women are noted for it.

Ton: Why, there's even a woman working as a draftsman at the factory. It's revolting, she always wears a hideous smock and has her hands and face full of chalk and ink and pencil smudges.

Staf: *Still complacent, accepting it as a compliment to New England womanhood.* You mean Martha Warren. She's good looking, isn't she?

Ton: I've never penetrated the camouflage.

Staf. *Musingly.* She's an excellent worker, too.

Ton: Served her apprenticeship as a foundry worker, no doubt.

Staf: *Ignoring Tony.* She has a marvelous head for practical engineering.

Ton: Takes after her mother, of course.

Staf: *Suddenly rouses from his thinking, clasps Tony*

*easily on the shoulder.* Well, don't drink too much, Tony. You'll want a clear head for those propeller shaft plans this week.

Ton: *Deliberately irrelevant.* I'm going to paint Mt. Washington in the sunset. That ought to disease Rembrandt.

Staf: I do wish you would get acquainted around. *Goes off.*

*Tony stands there. A butler approaches bearing a tray half full of drinks. Tony gulps down the one he has, places it on the tray, and selects another. The butler bows. Tony bows—no lower and with no less serious deference. The butler, unastonished, moves on with dignity.*

*A beautiful girl approaches, apparently to lay her drink on the table. This is Vivian. She wears a brilliant evening gown and presents a stunning appearance. Tony stares at her.*

Ton: *Awed.* I know what you're doing. *Vivian looks up a trifle startled. Her drink remains suspended halfway between the table and her mouth.* You're looking for someone who's asleep. You're a dream.

Viv: *Looking at him curiously.* You're a bit direct, aren't you?

Ton: Only when I'm a bit desperate.

Viv: *Good humoredly.* You've been wanting to speak to me all evening, I suppose.

Ton: No. This is the first time this evening that I've seen you, as a matter of fact. But the moment I saw you I said to myself, "If you let her get away without speaking to her, you are doomed to a life of sadness and grief. Hence I was desperate."

Viv: You reach the straits of desperation quickly. You must be one of the writers from the New York literary colony.

Ton: I choose to ignore the insult. I am Tony Karpek, an artist.

Viv: Oh, I've heard of you. You're the new chief mechanical engineer for Green-Trebley. From Kentucky, I understand—or is it Missouri?

Ton: Both. But I refuse categorically to be classed as a



mechanical engineer. I am an artist. I paint. I can show you some of my work.

Viv: Do you carry it with you? Have you a cigarette?

*Tony offers her a cigarette and lights it for her. She stares at his hands, and blows a puff of smoke.*

Viv: You have nice hands.

Ton: And you have a nice mouth.

*They stare at each other.*

Viv: My name is Vivian King. Miss Vivian King. My father's in shipping.

Ton: Delighted to know you Miss King. Mine's in his cups.

Viv: *Good naturedly.* The beast!

Ton: On the contrary. It makes him docile; and keeps him from under foot. You know what a nasty nuisance alert fathers are. *Vivian starts to leave.* Are you leaving me too? I should like to ask you to dance, but I dance so badly with a girl for the first time.

Viv: You *do* have to get used to a person.

Ton: Besides the music is terrible.

Viv: *After a slight pause.* I'm awfully glad to have met you, Tony.

Ton: Thank you. May I see you again, formally, I mean.

Viv: *Slowly.* Yes. *Pauses.* Yes, of course you may.

Ton: Isn't there some place you like especially to go? Some place whose glamor for you can transfer its radiance to your escort.

Viv: I love to go to the park on Sunday afternoons. There's a sort of a rock grotto by the brook in the center of the park. It's frightfully cool there. And the park is more deserted than one would suppose on Sundays. Everyone leaves the city for picnics and things.

Ton: Like ants swarming out of the hive.

Viv: Something like that. Well, I must leave now, Tony. Goodbye.

Ton: Until Sunday. Sunday in the park.

*She goes off. Tony watches her, then raises his glass in a toast.*

Ton: To the grotto by the brook. May God preserve the site to the end of time.

*Curtain*

SCENE II

*Scene: A grotto in the park on Sunday. A mass of rocks and a small cliff at the back. A brook flowing across in front. Greenery all about. Enter Tony and Vivian. They sit down carefully against the rocks in the middle of the grotto. Vivian wears a long white dress, and carries a large hat in her hand. Tony is carefully dressed.*

Viv: How do you like it?

Ton: It's enchanting.

*A brief pause.*

Viv: What shall we talk about?

Ton: *Sits up with a start.* Yes, that is a problem. What shall we talk about? We're rather uninteresting people when you come right down to it.

Viv: We lead uninteresting lives.

Ton: That's why I'm an artist. It gives me color. I can insult people and smash windows and everyone charges it up to temperament. Let a mechanical engineer do it and he's charged with drunkenness.

Viv: Mechanical engineers don't want to do it.

Ton: Further proof that I'm an artist. I want to. It still leaves me a bit pallid, though.

Viv: Haven't you a lurid past?

Ton: *Snaps his finger.* Oh, that.

Viv: *Teasingly.* Any bad women?

Ton: Scads of 'em.

Viv: I'm glad.

Ton: Makes you feel a bit superior, I suppose, to be wanted by a man who's known plenty of other women.

Viv: I told you that you were direct.

Ton: Too direct, sometimes. It spoils the romance.

Viv: Anyway we still haven't anything to talk about.

Ton: *Looking up.* We needn't worry about that any more.

Here comes someone.

*Enter Bartholomew; a ridiculous looking chap wearing glasses, a shock of uncombed hair. He is sucking an orange and wearing dirty white slacks.*

Bar: Hullo.

Viv and Ton: Hullo.

Bar: I see you too have discovered it.

Ton: What? The secret of life?

Bar: This rock throne room.

Viv: I think of it as a grotto.

Bar: You should elevate your thoughts. *Looking them over.* My name's Bartholomew. My parents christened me that, you know.

Ton: You needn't apologize, Bartholomew. Those things will happen. I'm pleased to meet you just the same. I'm Tony Karpek and this is Miss King, Miss Vivian King.

Viv: Pleased to meet you.

Bar: Pleased to meet you. *Throws himself on the ground and sucks ruminatively on the orange for a while. Then:* I'm a philosopher.

Ton: Well, well!

Bar: *Sitting up.* What did you say?

Ton: I'm an artist.

Bar: A comrade of the intelligentsia! *They shake hands.* What do you paint?

Ton: The sky, the sea, the mountains.

Bar: Nudes?

Ton: All too rarely.

Viv: Gentlemen! You forget I'm here. *All laugh.*



Ton: If you're really a philosopher, give us a piece of philosophy.

Bar: Pick a subject; any subject.

Ton: Love.

Bar: I can give you three choices on that: Love is a bubble; Love is a religion; and Love isn't.

Ton: And Love what?

Bar: Isn't.

Viv: How intriguing.

Bar: Which of the three do you want?

Ton: Well that last one is self-explanatory. The second one concerns religion, a stuffy subject at best. The first one — what do you say, Vivian?

Viv: *Yawning.* What do you say?

Ton: I say take the self-explanatory one and let the matter drop right there. I'm in no mood to be bored.

Viv: Still, I'd like to know why its a bubble.

Bar: Because it bursts in your face and you find there's nothing to it.

Ton: That's not a philosophy; that's a riddle.

Viv: And what about the religion one?

Bar: Oh, that's only for the extremists, the fanatics who worship Love and see it as the *be all* and *end all* of everything; as the root of all being.

Ton: Ah-Sweet-Mystery-of-Life type, eh?

Bar: Exactly. The people who always believe in it and never realize what a lot of poppycock it is.

Ton: Oh, come now, Bartholomew, you must have a girl.

Bar: I have. Her name's Adeline.

Ton: My God!

Bar: But I don't love her.

Ton: All a matter of future breeding, eh?

Bar: Precisely. Immortality is only achieved when you leave part of your flesh and blood in the world above you when you die.

Ton: Brats, eh?

Bar: Brats.

Ton: Philosophy certainly isn't what it's puffed up to be.

Bar: Your viewpoint is intemperate.

Ton: And yours irreverent. What emotion do you call it when you kiss your girl?

Bar: Adeline?

Ton: Mother of Heaven!

Bar: I never kiss my girl. The kiss is a stupid pagan custom and has no social significance whatever.

Ton: The biologists think it has plenty of social significance.

Viv: Tony!

Ton: *Turning to look at her fondly.* Hullo; are you still here? *Looking steadily at Bartholomew.* I had forgotten she was here, but now that I'm recalled, I don't see any need for three of us here.

Bar: *Gets up, brushing off the seat of his trousers.* Of course you realize I have as much right to this spot as you. But as a philosopher I'm willing to waive my rights.

Ton: Philosophy rises in my estimation.

Bar: I should like to resume our discussion at some future date.

Ton: Yes. Do come anytime. Bring Adelaide.

Bar: Adeline.

Ton: Why don't you do the poor girl a favor and call her Addie? — or Max.

Bar: *Ignoring him.* So glad to have met you Miss King.

Viv: A pleasure for me too I'm sure.

*Bartholomew goes off. Vivian turns and looks at Tony who is sitting close to her now, gazing at her eagerly.*

Viv: He's an interesting fellow, isn't he? *Tony says nothing but continues to gaze at her. Continues in mock alarm.* Tony! Does that look mean what I think it —

Ton: Yes. *He moves closer, throws his arms around her, and kisses her passionately. Slowly her arms creep around his neck. They break off the kiss, but remain in each other's arms.* My darling!



Viv: I love you, Tony.  
Ton: We'll be awfully happy.  
Viv: Deliriously happy.  
They kiss again ecstatically.

*Curtain*

SCENE III

*The scene is the drafting room of a factory the next day. A man in shirt sleeves and green visor sits working at the drafting table near the window. Enter Martha Warren approaching Tony's end of the table.*

Mar: Hullo, Tony! Working?

Ton: *Curtly.* Of course not.

Mar: What are you doing?

Ton: I'm diagramming the Delaware-Lackawanna railroad.

Mar: That's not funny. *Pauses. Then with vitality.* Why do you treat me like a skunk, Tony?

Ton: You remind me too much of what I should be.

Mar: What do you mean?

Ton: You're hardworking; a good engineer; ambitious; in love with your work. Besides it's ridiculous for a woman to do this sort of work — and be so good, too.

Mar: That's jealousy, Tony.

Ton: A woman should never take up this sort of work unless she intends to remain unmarried.

Mar: How do you know I don't?

Ton: From the way you act toward me.

Mar: And with that response I guess it looks as if I'll remain unmarried.

Ton: It's your own fault. If you'd get some conventional job and devote yourself to being feminine and useless — but you won't. You don't need to work anyway.

Mar: Everyone needs work.



Ton: You'd be far more interesting if you didn't work and devoted yourself to women's clubs and picking flowers, and things.

Mar: Like Miss Vivian King.

Ton: Like Miss Vivian King.

Mar: *Sneering slightly.* She'll make an excellent mother for somebody's children.

Ton: Mine, I hope.

Mar: But I don't want anybody's children. Not even my own.

Ton: That's your business. Don't bother me with it.

Mar: *Close to tears.* All right, Tony, I admit it. I'm crazy about you. What then?

Ton: *Looking toward the man working near the window.* Shh! Pope can hear you.

Pope: I cannot. Go right ahead, Martha.

Mar: *Ignoring him.* What then, Tony?

Ton: *Laying aside his work.* How would you paint Mt. Washington, Martha?

Mar: I wouldn't.

Ton: I'll tell you how: You'd paint it to scale, with compasses and every other instrument of our foul profession. There's your answer, Martha.

Mar: I'm practical.

Ton: Worse than that, you're virile.

Mar: Yet I love you.

Ton: You couldn't.

Mar: I'm only being honest with myself doing this work. The other life you speak of would be a sham for me.

Ton: This work is such a sham for you, you're even beginning to fool yourself.

Mar: Why should my success be a red flag in your eyes? You're higher than me.

Ton: At college they told me I could become the greatest engineer in the country if I had more affection for my work. At the time I wanted to quit and become a painter. But when

they said that I didn't have the courage to give up engineering. I've hated myself ever since for it. It's not your success that hurts me; it's your honesty with yourself. You gave up parties and beaux and women's clubs for your profession. I lacked the courage to follow mine. You're the living reminder of my failure. That's why I detest you.

Mar: *Warmly.* Now you're being frank, Tony.

*An office boy bursts in excitedly.*

Office Boy: Tony, Miss King! Her gas heater exploded when she tried to light it. It hit her eyes; if she lives, she'll be blind for life! *Tony and Martha stand motionless. Pope springs from his chair. Tony turns slowly around and slaps Martha across the face.*

### *Curtain*

## ACT II — SCENE I

*Scene: The grotto, two weeks later. Enter Tony leading Vivian.*

Viv: I can hear the brook, Tony.

*Tony guides her to the grotto, helps her seat herself.*

Viv: Is it a lovely day, Tony?

Ton: Beautiful.

Viv: *Sighs happily.* My first real day out.

*They sit silent for a time.*

Viv: You're so quiet, Tony. Are you annoyed with me?

Ton: *Leaning up on his elbow.* How could I be?

Viv: Oh, don't Tony. Be flippant and gay and idiotic — like you used to be.

Ton: Was I good?

Viv: You were priceless.

*Tony takes her hand.*

Ton: You're a princess. It must be hell.

Viv: It's not so terrible, really, Tony. Only at night when I'm in bed, alone.

Ton: If you'd marry me I'd be in the bed with you. I'd stay awake until you slept every night.

Viv: Not now, Tony. I've got to wait. You may meet someone — someone who's whole.

Ton: I have already. Plenty of them. I don't want them.

Viv: Tony, what did you do the night — the night you found out?

Ton: I went out and got uproariously drunk.

Viv: You dear.

Ton: And that day I slapped people.

Viv: Where did you get drunk?

Ton: In the Green Pheasant Grill — right next to a juke box. It kept playing "Mexicali Rose." I cried.

Viv: What a terrible night.

Ton: I told one of the girls there about you and she cried too. Said her uncle lost an eye once, too, in a beer bottle fight. So we cried and drank champagne, and she kissed me and said she was going to kill herself tomorrow anyway, that the world was rotten to her.

Viv: I wish she hadn't kissed you.

Ton: Then a drunken sailor came over to see what was the matter and she told me not to tell him because he had no soul. He insisted he did have a soul and to prove it he would pay the check. So I told him and he cried, too, and ordered more champagne and offered to fight every man in the place for me. I told him that he was young and when he grew older, he would learn that life was all tragedy. Then he insisted that he had a soul and knew life was all tragedy. So the girl told him she was sorry she said he had no soul and told him she loved him. I left, then.

Viv: Did you go home, then?

Ton: No, I browsed around the streets looking for my wrist watch. I had lost it. And who did I run into but Bartholomew.



Viv: The funny little fellow we met in the park here?

Ton: The same—in every way. I told him what had happened.

Viv: What did he say?

Ton: He said he accepted it philosophically. But he went out and got drunk with me.

Viv: What a queer little fellow!

Ton: And during the night he got his glasses broken and trampled on, and I said I would pay for them, and he said, "Nonsense." He said you were the sweetest, most beautiful girl he had ever known, and that included Adeline. And he said his faith in God had been shattered. He vociferously offered to marry you until I threatened to punch him in the nose if he took you away from me. At dawn we went home singing "Mexicali Rose," crying all the way.

Viv: I wish I had been there. Poor Bartholomew. Did he get new glasses?

Ton: I made him some. The poor devil hasn't any money. He's coming here today. He wants to see us. He's bringing Adeline.

Viv: Oh, good!

*They grow silent. Then:*

Viv: Tony!

Ton: *Rousing himself.* What?

Viv: Have I changed any?

Ton: Not a bit.

Viv: Has my tan gone?

Ton: It looks lovelier than ever in that white dress.

Viv: Do they do up my hair nicely?

Ton: Beautifully.

Viv: Is my figure all right, Tony?

Ton: It's divine. Everyone stares.

Viv: I wouldn't mind, even if I could see them. I like it,  
*Pauses.* Tony.

Ton: Yes?

Viv: Come here. *Tony comes closer, looking into her face.*

Put your head in my lap, Tony. I want to rumple your hair. *Tony lies with his head in her lap. She strokes his hair; then leans down and kisses his forehead.* You mustn't mind if I kiss you in the eye or some other outlandish place, Tony.

Ton: *Softly.* 'Course I won't. *He kisses her lips.*

*Enter Bartholomew and Adeline. Only his glasses are different. Adeline is dressed like a shop girl. She is chewing gum. They see Tony and Vivian.*

Bar: Hullo!

Add: Boy, they got it bad!

*Vivian starts and breaks away.*

Ton: Hullo, Barthy.

Bar: Adeline, this is Tony Karpek and Miss Vivian King.

Add: Pleased to meetcha.

Ton: How do you do Addie.

Viv: How do you do.

*Bartholomew sprawls on the ground. Adeline sits down, carefully pulling down her skirt, eyeing Tony distrustfully.*

Bar: I'm awfully sorry, Miss King. I wish it had happened to me.

Viv: Why you?

Bar: I'm a philosopher. Such things don't matter to philosophers. I could accept it indifferently.

Ton: Oh, don't be so pompous, Barthy.

Add: *Giggling.* He's fresh.

Ton: You can read her Charles Dickens. Never mind your philosophy.

Viv: I'd love to have you, Bartholomew.

Add: You don't never read at my house.

Viv: Tony, are the flowers still in bloom on the hill?

Ton: Millions of 'em.

Viv: Pick me some. I love their smell.

Ton: *Rising.* Come on Barthy.

Bar: *Rising.* The beauty of flowers lies not in the blossoms but in the stem.

Ton: More of your damned philosophy. *Exuent.*

*Addie and Vivian alone.*

Add: Gee, your fella's cute.

Viv: Lots of people think so.

Add: He's much better than Batty.

Viv: Than who?

Add: Batty. We call him Batty.

Viv: Oh, you mean Bartholomew.

Add: *Giggles.* Yeah. *A bit shyly.* Does your fella kiss nice?

Viv: I'll say.

Add: I figured he did. *Sighs.* I made Batty kiss me once and it was like eating a lemon.

Viv: *Laughing.* Batty doesn't believe in kissing.

Add: He don't know how.

Viv: Do you know any fellows who do?

Add: Do I! But them guys aren't serious. I figure Batty'll marry me.

Viv: And the others won't?

Add: Nah! The joy boys we call 'em. I got a girl friend who's going to have a baby.

Viv: I love babies.

Add: She don't.

Viv: Oh, is that so?

Add: *Oh* is right.

Viv: Unmarried, I suppose?

Add: Worse still: unattached. She got drunk one night and told one of the fellas. She hasn't had a date since.

Viv: The swine!

Add: *Sighing.* Yeah. That's why I'm sticking to Batty. He ain't so hot to look at, but he ain't no joy boy neither.

Viv: He's a dear.

Add: Do you think so? Say, ain't that funny. I was thinking how swell that Tony was too. *After a pause.* Say! Seein' you think Batty's so swell, and I think Tony's cute, how about me asking Tony to our dance? Department C is holding it next Saturday. Batty can't dance, but I'll bet your fella's a swell dancer. Can I?



Viv: I'd scratch your eyes out.

Add: *Tartly.* Well, I only thought I'd ask. A girl's got to look out for herself these days, and it seems to me your Tony was kinda makin' eyes at me before there. Anyway, I never saw a good lookin' fella like him yet that stuck to one girl.

*Enter a stranger, carrying a rough hewn walking stick.*

Viv: *Clutching at her eyes with her fists.* If I could only see what you look like!

Stranger: *In a deep voice.* She's hideous. Got paint on an inch thick and a hard mouth.

Add: *Rising.* Say! Who do you thing you are? If I call a cop you'll change your tune! Imagine! Insulting a girl because she's poor and taking advantage of a girl because she can't see.

Viv: Do shut up, Addie! What's your name, sir?

Stranger: Shepherd, miss, John Shepherd.

Add: You look like Abraham Lincoln.

Shep: *Bows.* I accept the compliment.

Viv: You have the advantage of me sir.

Shep: I know, Miss King. I was deeply grieved to hear of your accident.

Viv: You know me?

Shep: I do odd jobs for your father in the summer.

Viv: Oh, I remember you! The tall man with the hairy arms.

Shep: I'm honored. You *have* noticed me. You seem pleased.

Viv: You must forgive me. It's so strange, this hearing voices out of a black void when the strange voice comes from one I've already seen. *An awkward silence.*

Add: I'm sorry I was mean. You're much prettier than me, really, even if I ain't overpainted like the guy says I am.

Viv: Let's not be funereal, Addie; let's be happy! *Turns toward Shepherd.* Wait'll Tony comes back. He'll cheer us up. Do you know Tony?

Shep: Slightly.

Viv: He's wonderful! Do you know what he told a cop in Boston once? He told him he was the illegitimate son of a Duke. And the cop believed him! Kept calling him "your majesty."

Add: *To herself.* The cop must be nuts. *Figures to herself.* Tony must be thirty-two.

Viv: O, I forgot to tell you. The cop thought he was insane.

*Tony and Bartholomew enter carrying huge bunches of flowers.*

Ton: Who thought Tony was insane?

Viv: The cop in Boston.

Ton: That cop had a suspicious mind.

Bar: All cops have suspicious minds. That's why they're cops.

Ton: Excellent Barthy! You're beginning to talk like a real philosopher! Hullo! Who's this monster?

Viv: Oh, that's Mr. Shepherd.

Ton: *Shaking hands.* Glad to know you, Shepherd. This is Bartholomew. Barthy, meet Mr. Shepherd.

Bar: *Shakes hands.* Glad to know you, Mr. Shepherd. *Shepherd bows and sits down.*

Add: Don't he look like Abe Lincoln, Batty?

Bar: James Monroe was a greater president. I can prove it.

Ton: My God! Here we go again. Addie, who do you think was the greatest president?

Add: Franklin D. Roosevelt. He's cute. Besides I got unemployment insurance once.

Ton: Bravo! Personally I think Harrison was our greatest president because he wasn't in there long enough to do any harm.

Bar: Which Harrison?

Ton: *Cheerfully.* Shut up, Batty.

Bar: Here's the flowers, Miss King. *Dumps them in her lap.*

Add: Hey! I want some of them.

*Bartholomew takes some for Addie, then stands by the*



*brook. Addie sits smelling them.*

Viv: *Quietly.* Tony.

Ton: *Whispering.* Darling!

Viv: Give me a cigarette, please. *He gives her one, lighting it for her.* I can't see your hands this time. I can't even see your face. Are you shaved, Tony? I like you when you need a shave. *Tony takes her hand and runs it along his cheek.*

Ton: Like it?

Viv: Love it. *He holds her hand.* Do you like Mr. Shepherd, Tony?

Ton: Do you?

Viv: Yes.

Ton: Then so do I.

Viv: He sounds sort of sad.

Ton: Maybe he loves you, too.

Viv: Good heavens, I don't think so! He used to work around our house when I was a little girl. He must be as old as my father.

Ton: He doesn't look much more than forty-five.

*They sit smoking silently.*

Viv: It would be nice to think he did though. I mean pining for me all these years and now coming to my side in my hour of penance.

Ton: *Squeezes her hand.* Romantic little ass!

Bar: *Rouses himself.* Does anyone believe in reincarnation?

Shep: I believe in everything.

Bar: Why do you believe in everything?

Shep: *Shrugs his shoulders.* The longer you live, the more wonderful things you see. Skepticism is out.

Add: I had a girl friend once who was told by a fortune teller that something wonderful was going to happen that day. Then she went out and broke a leg in an elevator and collected two thousand bucks.

Ton: *Ironically.* What luck!

Bar: I think I was a pirate in the other world before I was reincarnated.



Ton: *Rising.* Zeus! Put up your dukes, you scoundrel. I was Captain Smythe of the H. M. S. Dragonfly and you raped my wife on one of your hellish raids! On guard, I say!

Bar: *Softly.* I say, Tony.

Ton: What?

Bar: I think I see Martha Warren way over there.

Ton: So what?

Bar: She's acting queer. Picking flowers, and inhaling deep breaths of air. She's wearing a light dress and high heels, too. She's alone.

Ton: Are you sure she hasn't got her slide rule with her?

Viv: Do call her over, Tony.

Ton: If you want. Call her over, Barthy.

Bar: Hallo, Miss Warren. Yoo hoo. Hallo, Miss Warren. C'mon over. *Beckons.* Here she comes. She looks self-conscious as hell.

Ton: I can imagine. Martha Warren in high heels! It's revolutionary.

*Shepherd glances at him sharply.*

*Enter Martha Warren, dressed in the loveliest feminine fashion, walking a little self-consciously.*

Ton: Hullo, Martha. Going to a masquerade?

Viv: Tony, don't be rude! How are you, Martha?

Martha: *Falteringly.* Vivian! I'm so sorry I didn't get over to see you. I didn't think you remembered me very well.

Viv: Nonsense! Everyone remembers *you*.

Mar: *Ironically.* Yes, that's true.

Ton: I didn't know you knew each other.

Viv: We went to high school together.

Mar: Yes.

Viv: But then we lost sight of each other. I left for Middlebury, and Martha went to M. I. T.

Ton: M. I. T.! My God!

Mar: Oh, contain yourself, Tony.

Viv: Of course we moved in different sets in high school.

Mar: Tell the truth, Vivian. I moved in no set at all.

Viv: We were a pack of snobs.

Ton: Do you know the rest of these people, Martha? This is Mr. Shepherd, and Miss, Miss Addie—what's your last name?

Add: *Tactfully*. Just call me Addie.

Bar: It's Gortenbacher.

Add: *Hotly*. You shut your mouth, Batty.

Mar: *Cooly*. How do you do, Addie. And you, Mr. Shepherd. How are you Bartholomew?

Add: *Aside to Bartholomew*. I bet she's fast!

Shep: I've heard a lot about you, Miss Warren.

Mar: Have you? People talk about me shamelessly.

Ton: You ask for it.

Viv: Won't you sit down and join us, Martha? We're just out for an airing. Bartholomew, go on about you're reincarnation.

Bar: Miss Warren, do you believe in reincarnation?

Mar: No.

Ton: She wouldn't.

Add: Batty thinks he was a pirate.

Bar: I'm sure I was, cause every time I look into the water I get a dizzy feeling.

Ton: That's not the water. That's the sight of your own reflection.

Add: *Giggling*. *To Martha*. He's fresh, ain't he? He ain't got no respect.

Mar: He's hateful.

Add: He's cute though. I'll bet you like him too.

Mar: *Looking at Addie*. Good Lord! Is it written all over me?

Bar: What do you think you were in the last world, Mr. Shepherd?

Shep: I'm more interested in what I'll be in the next.

Ton: *Shuddering*. Ugh! The next!

Bar: What's the matter Tony? Don't you like to think of the next world?



Ton: This one's good enough for me!

Viv: *Passionately.* Well it's not for me! I hate it! Hate it! Damned, miserable, stuffy little world! I hate it!

*All are silent, gazing at one another uncomfortably. Then Shepherd starts to hum Foster's "Beautiful Dreamer." The rest join in. Addie goes to Bartholomew by the brook. Tony is seated by Martha, and Shepherd by Vivian.*

Add: I wish I knew you when you was a pirate, Batty.

Bar: I wish I did too.

Add: What do you think I was?

Bar: A servant girl.

Add: Yeah, I guess I never was much. But a servant to a very great lady, though. A princess, or something. That's why I got such good taste in clothes and things.

Ton: You look different, Martha.

Mar: *Wearily.* Don't be cruel now, Tony.

Ton: I don't feel very cruel. I feel empty.

Mar: She's wonderful, isn't she? I misjudged her terribly. I thought she'd crack.

Ton: I'm unworthy of her, really.

Mar: Tony! Did that come out of you?

Ton: *Smiling wryly.* Yes, my little blueprint; the almighty Tony is losing his conceit.

Mar: Then you're not unworthy of her.

*Tony leans back. Martha looks at him fondly. Vivian is nervously plucking at the grass.*

Shep: *To Vivian.* Vivian, does Tony know?

Viv: *Startled.* She gropes to find Shepherd's arm, and clings to it. Know what, Mr. Shepherd?

Shep: That you have only a few months to live?

Viv: *Grips Shepherd's arm, her face pale, and her voice low and earnest.* He must not know, Mr. Shepherd. Do you understand me? He must not know.

Shep: The doctor told you?

Viv: *Hastily.* Yes. A tumor on the brain where I was knocked against the stove.



Shep: *Brokenly.* Miss King, permit me to say I—

Viv: Remember Mr. Shepherd, Tony mustn't know.

Shep: He shan't.

*Vivian looks relieved, but her breathing comes fast for some moments.*

Viv: Please go now, I want to talk to Tony.

*Shepherd moves off towards the brook. At a nod from him Tony goes to Vivian's side.*

Viv: Do I look healthy?

Ton: As healthy as a stallion.

Viv: *Persistently.* As healthy as Martha?

Ton: *Briefly.* More so.

Viv: No, tell the truth, Tony.

Ton: *Seriously.* Yes, you do.

Viv: I am, you know, Tony. I'm perfectly healthy, except for—well, for my eyes. The doctor said I had a wonderful heart.

Ton: *Softly.* He was right, darling, a wonderful heart.

*Shepherd begins to whistle "Beautiful Dreamer" again and the rest joining in humming—softly.*

### *Curtain*

### ACT III — SCENE I

*Vivian's bedroom; decorated in luxurious style with ivory colored fittings and expensive furniture. Bed is at center stage and two windows with easy chair between them are at left. Phonograph is at back stage and door at right. Also lamps, bureau, another chair, etc. Vivian is propped up in bed—still beautiful, but grown pale. Bartholomew is seated in one of the chairs doing a crossword puzzle, and Tony, in tuxedo, is seated in another reading. It is growing dark outside but none of the lamps are lit.*

Bar: What's a four letter word meaning "forsook?"

- Ton: *Engrossed in his reading.* Egad.
- Bar: What?
- Ton: *Looking up.* Egad.
- Bar: I said "forsook."
- Ton: Oh, I thought you said "forsooth." *Goes back to his reading.*
- Viv: What time is it?
- Bar: About six.
- Viv: Will someone please get me a cigarette?
- Tony brings her one from the dresser and lights it.*
- Viv: Put a record on the phonograph or snap on the radio, will you, Tony?
- Tony puts a record on. It is "Look Down That Lonesome Road" sung by a Negro male quartet. Tony goes over to his chair and resumes reading.*
- Viv: *As the record finishes.* They're good.
- Bar: What's a four letter word meaning "Disgusted?"
- Ton: "Nuts."
- Viv: What did the doctor say today, Tony?
- Ton: You need rest — plenty of it.
- Viv: *Sighs.* That's all he ever says.
- Silence.*
- Viv: Were you very shocked when you heard I was going to die, Tony?
- Ton: *Harshly.* You're not. That's a lot of nonsense.
- Viv: *Shrugs.* Doctors are never wrong, you know.
- Ton: *Coming to the side of the bed and sitting on it.* They're always wrong. I could cite you hundreds of cases where they were wrong in cases like this.
- Viv: *Shivers.* Don't. It makes me creepy. The law of averages say they should be right some time. Maybe I'm the goat.
- Ton: Everybody has a friend, or knows someone who has a friend, who's been given up by the doctors decades ago and is still kicking about.
- Viv: *Crying out.* Don't, Tony!



Ton: *Reaches out and takes her hand.* What's the matter, darling? You seem upset tonight.

Viv: Oh, I promised myself I'd never discuss this with you again, but it keeps preying on my mind. It's hellish. This dark blackness all the time. Waiting about to die, like a mouse in a box. Oh, why can't I be brave and heroic about it? Why can't I go away somewhere, so you'll forget me and be happy again?

Ton: Just try it.

Viv: You used to be so gay. Now I've brought this appalling thing on top of the two of us. Tony, why, me? I was happy and popular and had good times. Why not someone who wouldn't care so much?

Bar: Like me!

Viv: Why not someone who didn't have you, Tony? Or why not after we really belonged to each other? O God, right in the middle of our dream! Why couldn't He let us finish it? Why? Why? Why? *Tears quiver in her eyes and roll down her cheeks.*

Ton: *Gently earnest.* Darling, this is something we have to pay for. We will have our happiness, after the last installment is paid.

Viv: *Hopelessly.* Tony, you don't really believe that, do you?

Ton: *Gets up and lights a cigarette.* No, of course I don't. That's what I ask myself. Why? What sort of a grim joke is it? Barthy, suppose you tell us.

Bar: I can't.

Viv: Even he's lost faith in himself. Oh, let's skip it! We can't do anything about it by moaning. Sometimes I think I'll just go out and raise hell. It's all I've got left to do. I can't just lay here day after day waiting. It's maddening! *Slightly hysterical now.* Tony! Let's! Let's be frivolous and wild. Let's drink and laugh and go places. Let's spend money and play nasty pranks on people. Let's be ecstatic! Let's go to Monte Carlo and the Casbah and Rio. Oh, Tony, let's live!



Wildly — recklessly. It'll be glorious! My last fling! Like the condemned man eating his hearty meal!

Ton: We'll sail on the most luxurious liners — into the sunlight, always into the sunlight. We'll eat bananas on the beach at Tahiti. We'll drink rum in Calcutta and vodka in Moscow.

Viv: *Ecstatic*. And we'll live in sin, Tony. Just you and me and the whole wide world. We'll thumb our noses at everything. Oh, we *are* going to be deliriously happy.

Ton: And this'll go on for years and years and then some day we'll just get washed up on some shore locked in each other's arms laughing at the whole pig-sighted world.

Viv: Oh, Tony! It's wonderful!

Bar: *Eagerly*. Can I go?

Ton: Addie's too hard headed and practical.

Bar: *Wildly*. To hell with Addie! It's just me. I'll go if I have to be a stoker on the ships you travel on.

Viv: Let him, Tony. He's part of all this. Let him laugh at it, too.

Ton: I'll paint!

Bar: And I'll write. The most wonderful philosophy of the ages. The philosophy of freedom! The complete, untrammelled joy of living!

Viv: Like belching in the middle of a formal dinner. Oh God! won't we have fun.

Ton: We'll tell nobody. We'll just go. Like thieves!

Viv: Like wild pigeons!

Ton: We'll go next week!

Viv: Tomorrow!

Bar: Yes, tomorrow!

Ton: Tomorrow! Oh, if we only had some champagne. We should have a toast.

Viv: We'll have one, anyway. *Raising an imaginary glass*. To the future! May it always be as far away as it is tonight!

Ton and Bar: *Raising imaginary glasses*. To the future!

*Enter Clara, the nurse, carrying a tray of food.*

Clara: Here's your supper, Vivian — want me to fix the pillows? *She turns on the lights.*

Viv: *Gaily.* Ha! Food! Just when I need it most. What have we tonight, Clara?

Clara: Creamed chicken on toast and orange juice.

Viv: Good ol' creamed chicken and orange juice!

Bar: Did someone say orange juice?

Viv: *Laughing.* Of course, Clara. Bring Bartholomew a glass of orange juice. He loves it. He's always sucking oranges.

Clara: *Alarmed.* Vivian, you're getting over-excited. *She looks reprovingly at Tony and Bartholomew.* Have you two been exciting her?

Viv: *Almost shouting.* Clara! Get the orange juice and stop being officious.

*Clara goes out.*

*Vivian begins to eat.*

Viv: Tony! Put a record on. Something gay and discordant.

*Tony goes over and puts the latest swing record on.*

Viv: *Shouting above the music.* Beginning tomorrow we live!

*Bartholomew looks uneasily at Tony.*

Viv: You two aren't backing out now. Come! Tell me.

Ton: Darling, tomorrow we leave for Paris on the *Nor-mandie.* Believe me.

Viv: And all the doctors this side of Hippocrates can't stop us.

*Clara comes in with Bartholomew's orange juice, gives it to him and goes out glancing suspiciously at Tony and Bartholomew.*

Viv: Who was that?

Ton: Clara.

*The music stops.*

Viv: *Waving her fork.* My last meal here! The rest of my life I'll eat in weird little cafés with the sounds of strange tongues dinning in my ears.

Ton: Why didn't we think of it before?

Viv: We've thought of it now. That's enough.

*She finishes her meal. There! Lays down her fork loudly.*  
Tony and Bart sit, thinking. Tony, take this tray out.

*Tony takes the tray out. Vivian sinks back.*

Viv: Tony means it. Doesn't he Bartholomew?

Bar: Yes, I think we all mean it.

Viv: Will Addie miss you?

Bar: *Shrugging.* For a while. *Pause.* I was good to her.  
*Reenter Tony.*

Viv: Who's that?

Ton: *Sinking on the bed.* Me.

Viv: Darling! Put another record on will you? *Tony starts to get up.* No, wait! Let's do something, anything, tonight. Now that I'm so near getting out of this bed, I can't stand it another minute. Do you know what we'll do? We'll go to the grotto — now.

Ton: It's dark.

Viv: Tony!

Ton: But darling. The doctors — . . . .

Viv: Tony, the world is full of frightened people. Let's keep away from them. Let's start our brave new life tonight. Bartholomew, you'll have to leave the room now. I've got to get dressed. Come early tomorrow morning. We'll make an early start. Tony, get my things out of the closet. *She pushes off the bed clothes and swings to a sitting position, on the side of the bed.*

*Bartholomew rises.*

Bar: 'Til tomorrow. *Exit.*

Viv: The last time in our lives we'll ever think of tomorrow. The last tomorrow!

Ton: *At the clothes closet.* The last tomorrow!

Viv: Tomorrow doesn't come sometimes, Tony.

Ton: This tomorrow will. We'll make it.

*Curtain*



SCENE II

*The scene: The grotto. It is night, all is silent except for the brook. The stars shine brightly. Tony and Vivian are invisible but their voices are plainly audible.*

Viv: Where are the stars, Tony?

Ton: Right above your head.

Viv: Pick me one.

Ton: I did.

Viv: The biggest?

Ton: The smallest.

Viv: But the prettiest.

Ton: By far.

Viv: I'll cherish it.

Ton: But I want something for it.

Viv: What?

Ton: A kiss.

*Silence.*

Ton: Are you cold?

Viv: Not when you hold me in your arms.

Ton: That star is dancing across your lips now.

Viv: Will you always love me, Tony?

Ton: 'Til the day I die.

Viv: You must never die, Tony. It's not like you.

Ton: And what of you?

Viv: I must always die.

Ton: That statement is ridiculous on the face of it.

Viv: Bartholomew would understand.

Ton: Bartholomew's queer.

Viv: No, he's not. He's only lost—like the rest of us. And his escape is his fancied philosophies.

Ton: Cynical bits of nonsense, most of them.

Viv: He's afraid, too.

Ton: He seems cocky enough.

Viv: He lets his hair grow long and uncombed because he's afraid of baldness.

Ton: It wouldn't make him look much worse.  
Viv: And he wants Addie only because he wants children.  
Ton: I'd rather a wildcat mothered mine.  
Viv: Do you want children, Tony?  
Ton: No.  
Viv: You used to.  
Ton: That was when I was young.  
Viv: About six months ago.  
Ton: A person ages very fast sometimes.  
Viv: Don't you think I can see through that?  
Ton: Now the star's dancing around your hair.  
Viv: Don't evade the issue.  
Ton: What issue?  
Viv: The issue of children — of your wanting children.  
Ton: I've gone so completely sour on the little dears I don't even want to talk about them.  
Viv: Why don't you want them anymore?  
Ton: Because their mother can't have them.  
Viv: You mean no other girl would do?  
Ton: Exactly.  
Viv: There'll be some healthy, attractive young girl.  
Ton: I've seen thousands of them in my thirty-two years and have never turned a hair. But the moment I saw you I said: Kiddies, here comes mommy.  
Viv: Won't they feel cheated?  
Ton: They'll understand.  
*Pause.*  
Viv: Tony!  
Ton: Yes?  
Viv: I wish it had come true.  
Ton: So do I.  
Viv: We'd name the boy Roger and the girl Penelope.  
Ton: Roger would be dark and serious.  
Viv: Penelope would be a perfect devil. The most stunning little blonde, with the most devilish eyes.  
Ton: We wouldn't let her go into the movies.

Viv: Even though she'd be as good as Shirley Temple.  
 Ton: Better.  
 Viv: She'd smash our car when she was only sixteen.  
 Ton: And keep the whole hospital in stitches with her antics.  
 Viv: And what a handsome boy she'll catch!  
 Ton: Let's not think about that.  
 Viv: You love her don't you?  
 Ton: Too much to want to lose her.  
 Viv: Maybe she'll get a divorce.  
 Ton: I forbid it.  
 Viv: She'll get it, then, whether she really wants it or not.  
 Ton: She's a resolute little beggar.  
 Viv: Roger'll become a writer.  
 Ton: A novelist?  
 Viv: He'll write about the Civil War.  
 Ton: If he does I'll disown him.  
 Viv: He'll be eccentric.  
 Ton: Extremely eccentric.  
 Viv: He'll revolt at the atheism of the age and go to extremes. He'll become a Catholic priest or a Jewish rabbi.  
 Ton: Then we'll have to have another son.  
 Viv: The family name must be carried on.  
 Ton: We won't name this fellow; we'll let him name himself when he's twenty-one.  
 Viv: What do you think he'll pick?  
 Ton: Joe, if he has any sense.  
 Viv: We'll call him "X" 'til he decides.  
 Ton: He'll like that.  
 Viv: Do you think it'll give him an inferiority complex at school?  
 Ton: Heavens, no! He'll be idolized because of it.  
 Viv: We really ought to have a sister as a companion to Penelope.  
 Ton: Penelope will be sufficient unto herself.  
 Viv: I can hear all the boys calling up: "Is Penny home?"



Ton: She'll lead them a merry chase.

Viv: You like Penny best, don't you?

Ton: By far. Joe will probably turn out to be a no good. A bank thief and a gambler.

Viv: Then I'll love him best.

Ton: I'll be stony and unbending with him, but underneath my heart will be broken.

Viv: You'll want to turn him over to the police, but I'll save him and send him away with some money.

Ton: Roger will be true to his principles.

Viv: We'll neither of us understand him.

Ton: Maybe he'll get to be Pope or become the head Rabbi.

Viv: That would frighten me.

Ton: I wouldn't stand for it.

*Short silence.*

Viv: We've led a full life, haven't we, Grandpa?

*They both laugh.*

Viv: Tony!

Ton: Yes?

Viv: *Hollowly.* I wish I had never gone near that gas heater.

Ton: Good God!

*A long silence.*

Viv: Where's the star now, Tony?

Ton: It's resting on your bosom like a brooch.

Viv: Is it becoming?

Ton: Very.

Viv: Don't bother it, will you?

Ton: Don't you want me to catch it and imprison it for you?

Viv: If you do I'll never speak to you again.

Ton: It may go away.

Viv: Let it enjoy that privilege.

Ton: It seems to like you though.

Viv: I'm glad.

Ton: We've got lots to live for, really; stars and kids.

Viv: You must paint me a picture of Penelope sometime.

Ton: I'll put my heart and soul into it.

Viv: You could paint me too. I wish I could see what I look like to you.

Ton: It will rival the Mona Lisa.

Viv: Addie would like you to paint her, I'll bet.

Ton: If I painted Addie as I saw her, Barthy would never marry her.

Viv: He won't anyway. He's going with us tomorrow.

Ton: He might try to drag her along—for the sake of those kids.

Viv: Doesn't it scare you, out here under the cold night to think of cutting loose into a trackless forest?

Ton: I'm used to knocking around. It frightens you though, doesn't it?

Viv: Not very much. When you're moving in a black vacuum like me things lose their perspective anyway.

Ton: How about your father? It'll take him off a few won't it?

Viv: Pood Dad! He's crushed already.

Ton: Vivian! Why are you breathing so hard?

Viv: Am I? It must be the cold.

Ton: We've got to be careful of you.

Viv: Just hold me tight, Tony, never mind the rest.

Ton: I've been holding you in my arms all my life but I didn't know it was you until just now.

Viv: I know, I remember you now. You came in the night. You looked different each time, but underneath you were the same. You were the football player who beat Harvard that day. You were the tall, smiling band leader at the fraternity dance. I made the same ideal fit a different body each time.

Ton: Maybe I'm not the real thing. Maybe you only fitted the ideal to my body.

Viv: You're the ideal, Tony.

Ton: What can I say nice about you?

Viv: When you spoke of me as the mother of your children you said more than all the poets ever wrote.



Ton: I couldn't possibly say anything I thought was nicer no matter how I tried.

Viv: We said we were going to be deliriously happy, that first day in the grotto. Remember?

Ton: We can yet.

Viv: You can't patch shattered dreams.

Ton: We'll make new ones.

Viv: I wonder if other lovers will know that this grotto once belonged to us.

Ton: We don't care. They'll lose it too.

Viv: They won't have as much fun as we did here.

Ton: They couldn't.

Viv: They won't meet as many interesting people here, either.

Ton: Shepherd was the most interesting.

Viv: I don't like to think of him. Besides I think Penelope was the most interesting — or maybe Roger.

Ton: Roger was the most interesting — for the morbid.

Viv: Joe was entirely too rational — even for a bank robber.

Ton: Bank robbers are always rational. They have a perfectly natural desire for money.

Viv: *Regretfully*. I'm afraid we'll have to leave Joe and Penelope and Roger behind after tomorrow. They're all a part of this world.

Ton: I'll try. But I don't think I shall ever forget Penny. You won't mind will you?

Viv: Of course not. I'll remember her and the boys, too. When it rains I'll wonder if they've got their rubbers on.

Ton: They won't.

Viv: We'll have to take care of Bartholomew anyhow.

Ton: Yes, Barthy's going to be a nuisance.

Viv: He'll be worth it, though. It'll be fun watching him blossom out.

Ton: He always wanted to be a pirate.

Viv: He was once. Don't you remember? Hundreds of years ago.



Ton: He's changed a bit since those days.

Viv: For the better?

Ton: Depends on your point of view.

Viv: Everything does. *Pauses.* Can you still see the star, Tony?

Ton: Clearly.

Viv: Where is it?

Ton: It's on your hand. Now it's dancing on your fingers. You have lovely white hands.

Viv: I told you you had nice hands once a long time ago, remember?

Ton: I'll never forget.

Viv: Is the star still on my hand?

Ton: Yes. Here, put your hand to my mouth and I'll kiss it away.

Viv: The star?

Ton: The star.

Viv: I hope it doesn't run away.

Ton: It won't.

Viv: There! Where did it go?

Ton: Right into your eyes.

Viv: I hope it does some good.

Ton: I'm sure it will.

Viv: Tony, I've always been afraid to ask, but how do my eyes look?

Ton: They're beautiful.

Viv: They don't have a hideous blank look or anything?

Ton: I only wish you could see them.

Viv: I do try to put some expression in them, but I have no control over them.

Ton: Set your mind at rest. They're as lovely as the rest of you.

Viv: Tony! What was that? I felt something deep inside me — like a pain.

Ton: Dear!

Viv: Tony, what is it?

Ton: The star.

Viv: Has it gone?

Ton: Fled to the heavens.

Viv: O, Tony!

Ton: Here, don't cry, I'll call it back, if you want.

Viv: No, don't even try, Tony. You can't. I know, somehow.

Ton: Perhaps you're right.

*Enter Shepherd. He pauses and listens, leaning on his stick.*

Viv: There doesn't seem to be any reason to linger now with the star gone.

Ton: No, it made it much more interesting.

Viv: But I wanted to be in the grotto again. *Suddenly crying.* Oh, Tony, hold me. Kiss me. I don't want tomorrow to come, Tony. I only want tonight.

*A pause. Shepherd shakes his head and goes off, apparently satisfied.*

Viv: Tony, do you suppose the star took Penelope and the boys, too?

Ton: Probably.

Viv: Oh, Tony, what's the use? I hope tomorrow never comes! Our last tomorrow!

Ton: Vivian!

Viv: *Suddenly in a panic.* Tony, hold me!

Ton: What is it? What's the matter?

Viv: I'm slipping down, Tony.

Ton: *Shaken.* Vivian!

Viv: My God, Tony, hold me! Oh, if I could only see! I can hear wings flapping inside me. Can't you hold me, Tony? *Becomes hysterical.* Hold me, Tony—just until tomorrow. Hold me tight, please. Don't let me slip!

Ton: Vivian! What is it?

Viv: *Still hysterical.* Why can't you hold me any longer, Tony? I can hear water rushing up towards me. Tony! Tony! *Grows calm.* Never mind, Tony. I see. It's the final in-

stallment. I get the prize now, Tony. Dearest Tony — kiss me — once — Tony.

*She gasps, and then is silent. Tony rushes out of the grotto.*

Ton: *Staring, and in a hollow voice.* She's dead! She's dead! Vivian!

### *Curtain*

#### SCENE III — THREE NIGHTS LATER

*This scene takes place in the factory again. Same as Scene III, Act I. It is night and raining very hard. The rain lashes against and streams down the huge window at the back. Tony sits in a chair staring out the window, his back to the audience. A packed valise is on the floor at his left with his hat on it. The place is brightly lighted with indirect lighting in the ceiling. As Tony sits there alone, gloomy, Martha comes into the room. She goes over and stands behind Tony.*

Mar: I always come in at the wrong time, don't I?

Ton: *Without looking up.* It's uncanny.

Mar: Where are you going, Tony?

Ton: *Turns and looks up at her.* None of your business  
*Martha slaps him smartly across the cheek. Tony starts to rise angrily but subsides.*

Ton: *Rubbing his cheek ruefully.* Now we're even.

*Martha says nothing but stands there breathing hard in anger.*

Ton: *Still rubbing.* Aren't you even going to say you're sorry?

Mar: *You didn't.*

Ton: I was in a hurry.

Mar: You're always in a hurry; but you're never going anywhere.

Ton: This is one time I am.

Mar: Where?



Ton: Anywhere.

Mar: What did her father say?

Ton: He was princely about it.

Mar: How thoughtless of him.

Ton: I could have taken his rage better. He called me into his study and told me he was sorry but I'd just have to go away. He couldn't stand the sight of me anymore.

Mar: You can't blame him, really.

Ton: I told him I'd leave immediately. He was very apologetic. Offered to send me money. I refused.

Mar: Noble of you!

Ton: Then suddenly he broke down. Just sort of crumpled up and got old. Told me to forget it. Said he knew I loved her too. I assured him I did. He begged me to get drunk with him, violently, insanely drunk. I told him it was no good, that I tried it once. He said we'd be different; we'd stay drunk forever. But for the first time in my life I said "No" and meant it. I walked out.

Mar: You were mean.

Ton: No, I wasn't. If it were my own father I would have pushed him into the window.

Mar: Honor thy father and mother.

Ton: That's a lot of nonsense. We owe our parents nothing. They didn't beget us as a favor to us.

Mar: As a favor to themselves?

Ton: Something like that.

Mar: Give me a cigarette, Tony.

*He gives her one and lights it for her.*

Mar: So you're running away.

Ton: *Flatly.* Yes.

Mar: And what about those children you wanted?

Ton: They're out of the question.

Mar: I could give them to you.

Ton: You said you didn't want children.

Mar: I don't.

Ton: Yet you'd bear me some.

Mar: Dozens of 'em.

Ton: Two would be enough. Vivian and I were going to have three but the last one turned out to be a bank robber.

Mar: All of ours would turn out to be bank robbers.

Ton: They'd be insipid unless you wanted them too.

Mar: *Earnestly, laying her hands on Tony's shoulders.* I'd want them if you did, Tony. Honest I would.

Ton: *Shaking his head.* It can't be.

Mar: Why?

Ton: Vivian warned me that someone young and healthy would come along. I couldn't cheat her.

Mar: Maybe she'd like you to.

Ton: *Mockingly, like a pious hypocrite.* "I'm sure so and so would like it that way," eh?

Mar: I didn't mean that exactly.

Ton: What did you mean?

Mar: *Savagely.* I mean I want you. You! And I'm not going to let a fresh dug grave come between us. That's all she is now. A grave and a memory. When she was alive I could bear it. But now she's dead, I can't, I won't.

Ton: You're begging to be slapped again.

Mar: *Dejectedly.* No, I'm not Tony. I guess that finishes us. I had hoped — 'til now.

Ton: *Calmly.* You *were* very tenacious.

Mar: You're strange, Tony. You never crack. That's what I like about you.

Ton: *Looking at her curiously, lighting a cigarette.* Yes I have been wondering. Just what did you see in me?

Mar: *Gazing rapturously into space.* You were an animal, Tony. You still are. A breathing, living, uncaring animal. You came through everything without cracking. You stuck by Vivian — without tears and heroics. You accepted her death. You've held me at arms length. You've continued at this work you despise. You've crashed through this whole miserable world of yours smiling and bold without a faltering.

Ton: Perhaps I'm really uncaring.



Mar: *Thoughtfully*. No, not altogether. You have a soul, Tony, a very beautiful soul. You can feel but you realize how inconsequential things are. Did you ever read Omar Khayyám?

Ton: No. Was it good?

Mar: It was a man, Tony. He was a lot like you. But he paused to weep. That's why he's famous. You'll never be famous, Tony. But you're a better man than he. I feel sure of it.

Ton: *Staring at her*. You know I never knew you looked at me that deeply before, Martha. I thought I was like a bag of popcorn to you. You wanted me; you didn't know why.

Mar: *Smiling, but nearly in tears*. No. When I want something, it's pretty worthwhile, Tony. I've had to pick things out all my life. Other girls have had them picked out for them. I *know* what I want.

Ton: *Abruptly*. Martha, please don't cry. I couldn't stand that.

Mar: Oh yes you could, Tony. You could stand anything. It wouldn't bother you. You wouldn't let it.

Ton: Well, don't do it anyway. It annoys me.

Mar: See, Tony? That's you. Nothing moves you. You're a rock.

Ton: A moment ago I was an animal crashing through something. What am I when you boil them all together?

Mar: *Fervently*. You're a man, Tony, a real honest unspoiled man. And God, how I wish you were my man!

Ton: I'm beginning to feel uncomfortable. Haven't I any bad features?

Mar: *Surprised*. Why, Tony, these are all bad. Can't you even see that?

Ton: Then what do you want me for?

Mar: Because I'm like you. Primitive, ruthless, uncaring—

Ton: *Abruptly*. Now you're praising yourself. I can tolerate it while you speak of me, but I cannot abide conceit. And I still think you were praising me. Throwing yourself at my head, as it were.



Mar: *Laughing.* Of course I was, Tony! You're wonderful.

Ton: Vivian said that.

Mar: I'm not surprised.

Ton: Do you suppose she saw that in me — that animalistic tendency, or whatever it is?

Mar: I think she did. It frightened her a little, I suppose.

Ton: Why, doesn't it frighten you?

Mar: I understand it. I've been waiting for someone like you all my life.

Ton: Vivian told me I was her ideal.

Mar: *Quickly.* Then she didn't understand.

Ton: Why?

Mar: Because you're not the answer to an ideal a girl like Vivian would have.

Ton: Not to you maybe. But you can be wrong. I dare say you are.

Mar: *Surely.* Oh no I'm not.

*Tony picks his hat off the suitcase, places it on his head.*

Ton: Goodbye, Martha.

Mar: Don't go.

Ton: As well talk to the winds.

Mar: We'd have wonderful fun together. I wouldn't care how you treated me.

Ton: Goodbye, Martha.

Mar: Take me with you, Tony.

Ton: What? Away from your blueprints? You'd be crazy.

Mar: I wouldn't even think of them. They're to blame for everything, really.

Ton: It's too late to realize that now. Stick to them. They're your friends, such as they are.

Mar: Can't I go?

Ton: *Emphatically.* Not with me.

Mar: Is Bartholomew going with you?

Ton: Bartholomew joined the navy.

Mar: And what of his girl friend, little what's-her-name.

Ton: Adeline.

Mar: Not really?  
Ton: Really.  
Mar: Wasn't her last name Gortenbacher?  
Ton: Precisely, Adeline Gortenbacher.  
Mar: Lord! No wonder he joined the navy! Are they going to be married?  
Ton: Some day perhaps.  
Mar: Do you suppose he'll come back to her?  
Ton: Not if he runs into a fertile woman on his travels. All he wants is children.  
Mar: Men are brutes.  
Ton: I thought you liked them that way.  
Mar: Will you come back to me, Tony?  
Ton: No.  
Mar: Neither you nor he will have children. I feel it in my bones.  
Ton: Perhaps that'll be humanity's loss.  
Mar: What do you think she'll be like, Tony? If you do find someone?  
Ton: *Bitingly*. Someone who does *not* understand me. A native girl, perhaps.  
Mar: *Flushing hotly*. You're a pig!  
Ton: I wondered what sort of an animal it was. Crashing through the corn, I suppose.  
Mar: Where are you going?  
Ton: The Green Mountains, I expect — or Patagonia.  
Mar: You'll find Patagonia disappointing.  
Ton: No doubt.  
Mar: Tony, did you love Vivian?  
Ton: *Tony goes over to her and grips her arms fiercely.*  
Ton: *In a hard voice*. There seems to be an altogether too prevalent idea around here that I didn't. First her father, now you. I did. I loved her so much it hurt. She was the most beautiful girl I have ever known. In soul and body. She was too beautiful for this world. It wilted her. That gas heater was only a means to an inevitable end. If it wasn't that, it



would have been something else. I've seen too many of those young people die. God keeps frantically trying to recall them. Their parents are allowed to bring them into the world only through an oversight. I stood between Vivian and reality. That's why she loved me. No one else, not even her father, loved that girl as I did. No one else — and this includes you — realized her true beauty, the beauty of her soul that shone in her eyes.

Voice: But I did, Tony.

*It is Shepherd. He stands in the doorway. Tony is startled. He releases Martha.*

Ton: *Speaking as if in a trance.* Yes, Shepherd, I think you did. I felt it that afternoon in the grotto.

Shep: When she was a little girl I used to watch her play. It used to pain me. She was as healthy and as brave as the other little girls, but there was something in her that shrank from reality. When they played tag or hide-and-seek, she'd get panic-stricken as they closed in on her. She would imagine that the innocent young children were the most horrible monsters. If she were a more nervous child inherently she would have died long ago.

Ton: Yet when she was thrust into the dark, full of vile monsters, she never complained of fright.

Shep: More escape from reality. She peopled the dark with laughter and sunshine . . . and you, Tony.

Ton: I felt you approved of me.

Shep: You played your part beautifully. It was predestination. I was afraid for a while that you loved Martha Warren.

Ton: How did you learn I didn't?

Mar: You do, Tony! You've got to!

Shep: That same day in the grotto.

Ton: I resented it bitterly, seeing her with Vivian. It put Vivian at a disadvantage when all the time I knew that Vivian was the princess. That high school business and all made things seem different.

Shep: Vivian would never intentionally hurt anyone, and



championing Martha would only hurt both Martha and the snobs. The snobs have remorse, now, anyway.

Mar: There's a word for that; it's "sophistry."

Ton: What should I do now?

Shep: Patagonia is as good a solution as any. So is Martha.

Ton: *Eyeing Martha.* I'll take Patagonia.

*Shepherd bows.*

Mar: *As Tony picks up his suitcase.* Tony, kiss me good-bye. *Tony makes no sign that he hears.* If you don't, you'll come back.

Ton: *At the doorway.* And if I do, I'll come back. Or, worse still, I wouldn't go. You're rather lovely, Martha.

Mar: That's your first compliment — to me.

Ton: You're welcome.

Mar: Now, kiss me.

Ton: No.

Mar: You coward.

Ton: *Dropping his suitcase and hat and approaching her.* It'll be like playing post office. *Kisses her gently on the mouth.*

Mar: I said, "Kiss me!"

*Tony relents, folds her in his arms, and kisses her tenderly. Martha slides her arms around Tony's neck and becomes completely submissive.*

Ton: *After releasing her and preparing to go.* Goodbye.

Mar: *Stepping towards the door as he vanishes. Tony! She turns and runs to the window. Shepherd joins her, silently. Dully.* He'll get wet.

Shep: *After watching for a moment.* Do you think he'll come back?

Mar: *Turning to face him. Intently.* He's got to! He can't leave me here to suffocate!

*The rain splatters rhythmically against the window pane, lashing and dripping.*

*Curtain*