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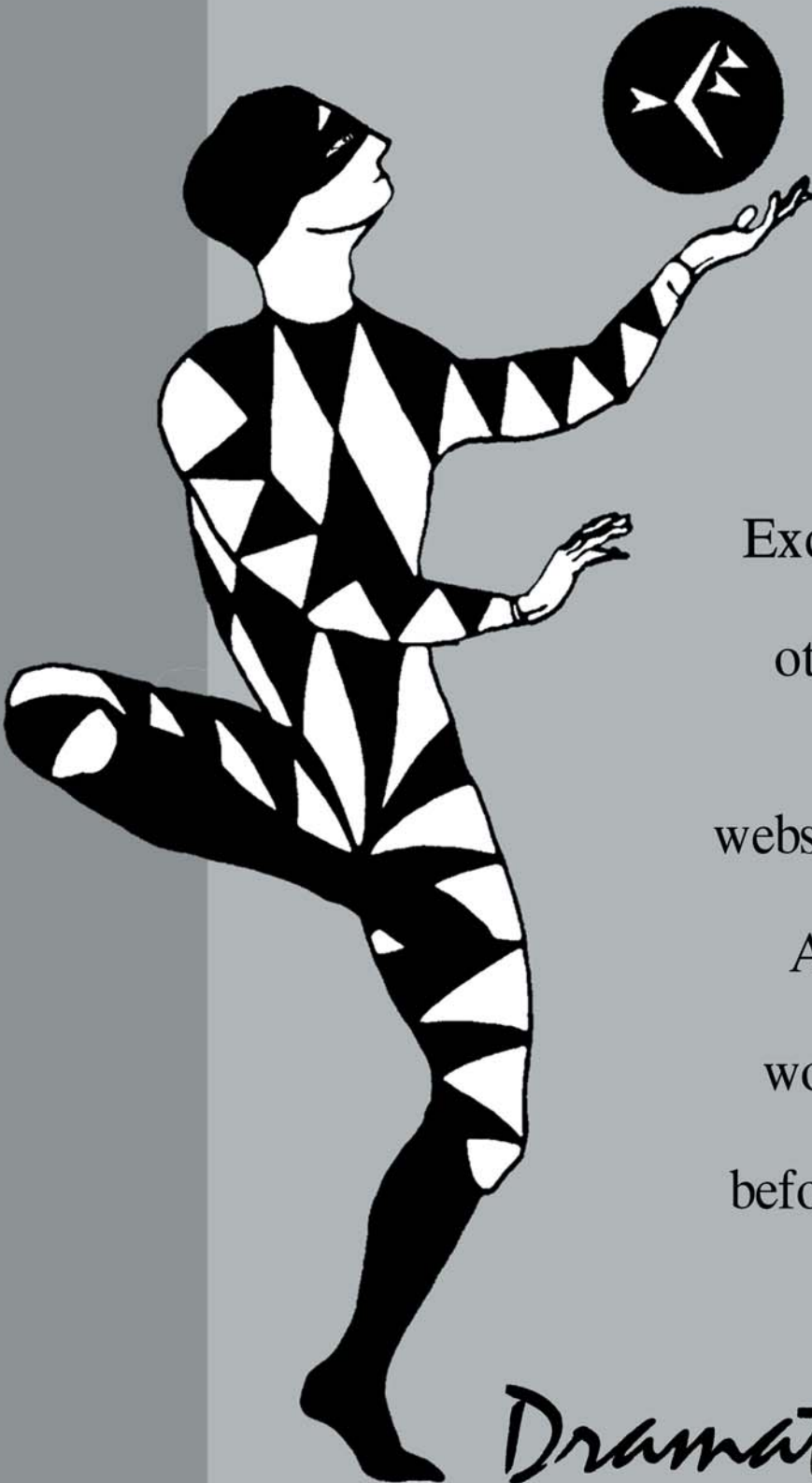
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*Dramatic Publishing*



# ACT YOUR AGE

A vintage black and white photograph of two women. The woman in the foreground is smiling and holding a large, vintage-style microphone. She is wearing a dark, long-sleeved, belted dress with a high collar. The woman in the background is also smiling and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a light-colored, sleeveless top and a necklace. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

COMEDY  
BY

WILLIAM DAVIDSON

A Comedy in Three Acts

By

WILLIAM DAVIDSON

# Act Your Age



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

Woodstock, Illinois

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(ACT YOUR AGE)

# Act Your Age

*A Comedy in Three Acts*

FOR THREE MEN AND SIX WOMEN

*Act Your Age* was originally produced by the Roosevelt High School, Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 29 and 30, 1943, under the direction of Leith Shackel. The cast was as follows:

ANGELICA (ANGY) GOETZ.....	Lois Anderson
GERALDINE (JERRY) JOYCE.....	Marion Scudder
CORA.....	Virginia Carlson
ARCHIBALD (GADGET) HOFFENFLUGEL, M.M.2c.....	Charles Lindquist
JAMES MATSON, B.M.1c.....	Robert Dease
HELGA.....	Marilyn Hertenberg
SANDRA STONE.....	Mary Markve
WESTERN UNION MESSENGER.....	Beverly Harding
COMMANDER STONE.....	William Stone
	Paul Lindmeier

PLACE: *The living room of the Joyces' home on the shore of Lake Namakogis.*

TIME: *The present. A June day in 1944.*

## SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE: *A morning in June.*

ACT TWO: *Two hours later.*

ACT THREE: *A few minutes later.*

## NOTES ON CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

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**ANGY and JERRY:** They are two teen-age girls. Jerry is the neater and more attractive of the two, while Andy is the more aggressive one. In the first act, Jerry wears a summer sports dress. Angy is comfortably—and sloppily—decked out in a pair of old slacks or dungarees with the legs partly rolled up, a gaily-colored sports shirt, and a sailor’s white cap or a “beanie” on her head. Later in the act they change. Jerry wears her older sister’s dainty afternoon tea frock, while Angy slinks about in an extreme evening gown with a low back. Her hair is done in what she considers a sophisticated upsweep fashion. In Act Two, both girls wear outfits suitable for horseback riding. For the last act they wear sports clothes.

**CORA:** She is a solid, stolid, apparently humorless girl of twenty-five. She delivers most of her remarks drily, without smiling. With Gadget, later in the play, she tends to loosen up, and then becomes coyly flirtatious. Throughout the play she wears house dresses and aprons.

**GADGET and JIM:** Gadget is the larger of the two sailors. He is a big, lumbering chap, who is neither too bright nor too beautiful. On his first entrance he is the perfect replica of the sailor returning from the Orient, loaded down with trophies. Jim is a good-looking, quiet-mannered chap, a little shy with the girls at first. Both chaps are dressed as sailors throughout, except for Gadget, who wears a milkman’s coveralls and cap at the end of Act Two and part of the time in Act Three.

**HELGA:** She is a big, raw-boned, angular woman of about Cora’s size and age. She has a deep, booming voice, and hearty manner. She wears a house dress throughout the play.

**SANDRA:** She is a very attractive young woman of about twenty-two, not too tall and rather slight of build. She wears summer clothes suitable for traveling in the first act. In Act Two, she appears as “little Elsie.” She wears a dress suitable for a ten-year-old girl, a wide-brimmed straw hat, ankle socks and slippers. Her hair is done in two braids and tied with ribbons, and she speaks in a childish treble. In the last act, she wears an attractive summer outfit from the trousseau of Jerry’s sister.

**COMMANDER STONE:** He is a forceful, kinetic man of medium height, about fifty. He is every inch the commanding officer, and a man of action at all times. He wears a uniform throughout the play.

**WESTERN UNION GIRL:** She is a flip, young girl, dressed in the customary messenger’s uniform.

**NOTE:** All costumes simulating uniforms should vary sufficiently from those worn by the armed forces, so as to conform with the laws on this subject.

## PROPERTY PLOT

**GENERAL:** Gay curtains or drapes on windows; window box with hinged cover; potted cacti plants along the window sills or in plant racks attached to the window frames; small couch with pillows; end table, containing, among other things, several magazines and a bowl of fresh flowers; hassock; sideboard; ornaments, glasses, etc., on sideboard; mirror on wall above sideboard; easy chair; small table and lamp, right of easy chair; writing desk and chair; accessories on the desk, including telephone directory, etc.; several scatter rugs on floor; colorful prints on walls, and other furnishings as space permits.

**CORA:** Two letters (unopened and each containing a snapshot), large bottle, camera, huge sandwich on a plate, bowl of soup and spoon, piece of cake on plate, coin, opened telegram, towel and bowl of ice water, piece of pie on plate, huge black bow.

**JIM:** Ditty bag, several coins in pocket, handkerchief.

**GADGET:** Two grass hula skirts; parrot in cage (parrot need not be real, as cage is covered with a piece of cloth); two gaily-colored shawls or scarfs; several bracelets; ditty bag (containing, among other things, a pair of sailor's pants with a small address book in one of the pockets); remains of a large wedge of pie; replica of Sandra's skirt, now torn in shreds (in window box, Act Two); another huge wedge of pie; vacuum cleaner; grass hula skirt (Act Two); flour sifter; sprinkling can.

**ANGY:** Knitting and binoculars on desk, cocktail glasses on sideboard, two pieces of cactus (same as those taken out by Sandra), portable radio and several pillows.

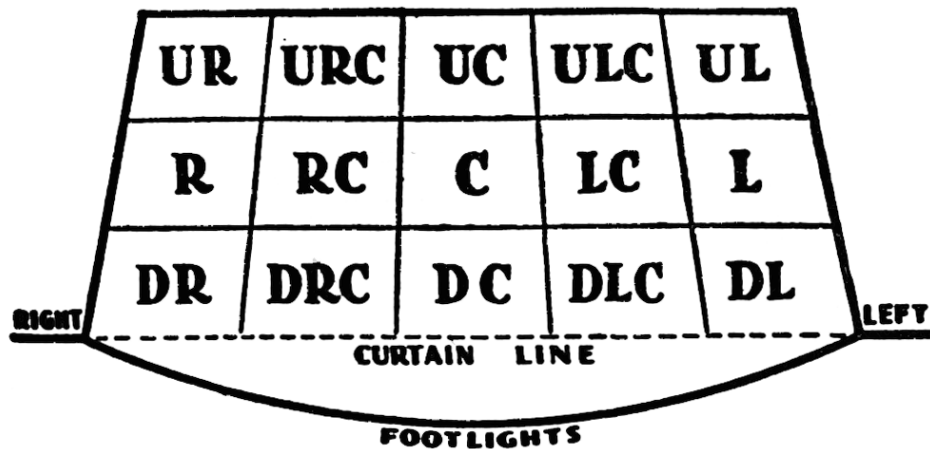
**JERRY:** Book on end table, two bed sheets, several pillows and lazy-backs (back supports, used on the beach), wedding veil.

**SANDRA:** Suitcase (containing a dress for a ten-year-old girl), clothes which she wore on her first entrance, grass hula skirt (in window box, Act Two).

**WESTERN UNION GIRL:** Telegram, slip of paper and pencil.

**NOTES ON STAGING:** A person concealed backstage, beyond the windows U C, can handle the voice of Franco, the parrot. The wrestling scenes in the play are very amusing and play for big laughs if the business is carefully worked out and rehearsed. It is suggested that an athletic director or some person familiar with the technique of wrestling coach the actors. This business should be authentic; furthermore, the actors performing it should be able to do it with ease and skill. A few special rehearsals are all that are needed. It will be well worth the extra effort.

## CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



## STAGE POSITIONS

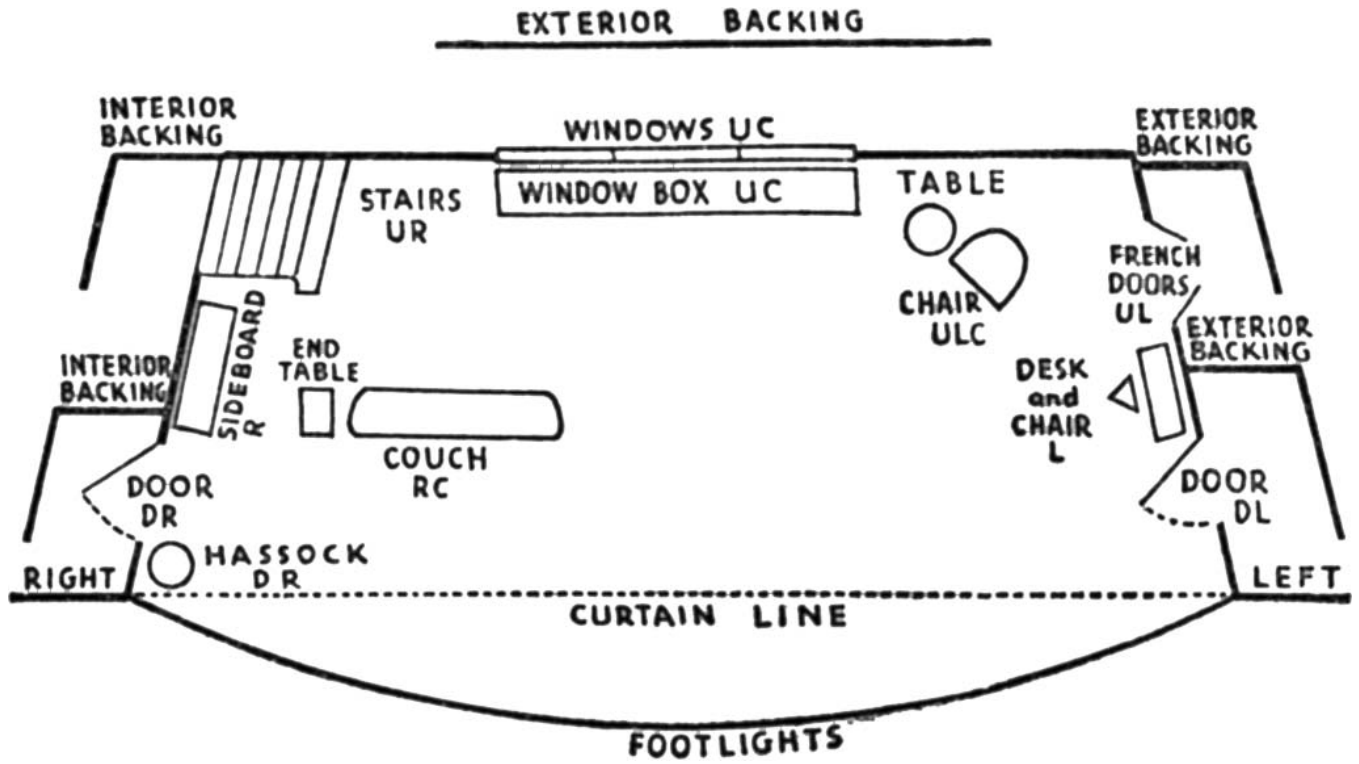
*Upstage* means away from the footlights, *downstage* means toward the footlights, and *right* and *left* are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. R means *right*, L means *left*, U means *up*, D means *down*, C means *center*, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as U R for *up right*, R C for *right center*, D L C for *down left center*, etc. One will note that a position designated on the stage refers to a general territory, rather than a given point.

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NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage of rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are fairly familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.



STAGE CHART



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## Act One

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*SCENE: The living-room of the Joyces' summer home on the shore of Lake Namakogis. It is a cheerful room, with gay curtains and acres of sunlight pouring through the casement windows which comprise almost the entire back wall of the set. Below the windows, and running the entire width of them, is a window box with a hinged cover. Through the windows can be seen the open porch and railing, and beyond the railing the landscape. A number of potted cacti line the window sills or are in plant racks attached to the window frames. A door D R leads to the kitchen, while U R several steps lead to a landing, which in turn opens on to the stairway to the second floor. The front door is D L. The French doors at U L open on to the front driveway. The furniture is simple and practical. There is a small couch at R C, facing the audience. Right of it is an end table with some magazines and a bowl of flowers. Downstage of the door D R is a hassock. Against the wall R, between the door D R and the stairs, is a sideboard. On the wall above it is a mirror. Upstage, left of the window box, is a comfortable easy chair. Right of it is a small table with a lamp. Between the door D L and the French doors U L are a writing desk and chair. Several scatter rugs are on the floor, and a few colorful prints and some ornaments complete the setting.*

*AT RISE OF CURTAIN: It is about ten o'clock on a brilliant morning in early June. There is no one in the room, but plainly visible through the windows U C, toward the left, are two teenage girls waving and shouting good-byes. They are JERRY JOYCE and ANGELA GOETZ. JERRY, the neater and more attractive of the two, is dressed in a summer sports dress, while ANGELICA, called ANGY, wears old slacks or dungarees, with the legs partly rolled up, a gaily-colored shirt, and a sailor's white cap or "beanie" on her head.*

JERRY. Good-bye, Mother! Good-bye, Mrs. Goetz!

WOMAN'S VOICE [*off* U L]. Good-bye, children. Be considerate of Aunt Sandra.

ANGY. 'Bye, Moms! 'Bye, Mrs. Joyce!

WOMAN'S VOICE [*off* U L]. Remember you must do just as she says.

JERRY. Yes, Mother.

WOMAN'S VOICE [*off* U L]. She'll be here on the afternoon train.

ANGY. Sure, we know.

WOMAN'S VOICE [*disappearing in the roar of a motor off* U L]. Good-bye ...

JERRY. Good-bye! Have a good time!

ANGY [*yelling to be heard*]. We'll miss you! Good-bye!

[*JERRY and ANGY disappear, waving a last good-bye, and then enter from U L. ANGY crosses D C and looks as if she were taking possession.*]

ANGY. Aren't parents rare? [*She turns to JERRY.*] Now we have a whole perfect day with positively nothing to do except what we shouldn't.

JERRY [*reproachfully, pausing by the desk at L stage*]. Angy, Mother said she was putting us on our honor.

ANGY. Just as if it was a train or something. [*She sits down on the window box U C and starts removing her shoes and socks.*] Is your sister going to be married on the porch?

JERRY. Yes. I guess when you're in love you don't mind the mosquitoes. [*She is searching diligently through the desk, looking for something. Now she glances over at ANGY.*] Angy, what are you doing?

ANGY. I'm going to look for frogs.

JERRY. [*still searching about the desk*]. You promised your mother you wouldn't go in the water—not until Aunt Sandra comes.

ANGY. [*continuing to remove her shoes and socks.*] What's the old onion like?

JERRY. I don't remember. I haven't seen her since my christening.

ANGY. You must know something about her. It's *your* aunt that's coming here to tutor us—not mine.

JERRY. [*crossing to the end table by the couch R C and looking under the magazines there*]. I can't help it if one of my aunts is a teacher. You've probably got a skeleton in your closet, too.

ANGY [*with distaste*]. At least, she didn't have to bring that little Elsie.

JERRY. I guess she had to be tutored, too.

ANGY [*rising and rolling up her slacks some more*]. How old is the infant?

JERRY. Three years younger than we are. She can't be a day over eleven.

ANGY. What's your aunt going to tutor her in—blocks?

JERRY. Mother said first year Latin. [*She is flipping anxiously through the magazines.*]

ANGY. But that's what she's tutoring us in. [*She crosses to the door U L.*]

JERRY. She must go to one of the progressive schools.

[*ANGY starts to open the door U L.*]

JERRY. Angy you promised your mother you wouldn't go in the lake.

ANGY [*pausing*]. The shore isn't exactly the lake.

JERRY. It's part of the lake.

ANGY [*turning back*]. It's part of the shore, too, with just a little water slopping over it. Can your Aunt Sandra swim?

JERRY [*evidently beginning to be quite worried at not finding what she is looking for*]. I guess she can all right. Her father's something in the navy.

ANGY [*coming to C*]. You mean your aunt's father is still alive! He must be positively senile. [*She stands with her hands on her hips.*] What *are* you looking for?

JERRY [*tragically*]. They're gone, Angy! They were in here.

ANGY. What were?

JERRY [*desperately*]. Our letters.

ANGY. You mean we had some—from when?

JERRY. We each had one.

ANGY. How do you know?

JERRY [*moving to the sideboard at R stage, searching there*]. I saw them when Cora brought Daddy the mail.

ANGY. Why'n't you grab them?

JERRY. Daddy was there.

ANGY. How stultifying. [*She sits on the couch in an attitude of supreme disgust.*]

JERRY. He wouldn't open our mail. I'm sure he wouldn't.

ANGY. I don't know. To keep us from being deceitful, parents will do all sorts of sneaking things.

JERRY. Daddy hates sailors. He was in the army.

ANGY. Mom says it makes her seasick just to look at a sailor.

JERRY [*coming down to right of couch*]. I knew we shouldn't have put our names in those socks.

ANGY. We had to make sure the sailors got them, didn't we? You can't leave everything to the Red Cross.

JERRY. We needn't have answered their letters. [*She sits beside ANGY.*]

ANGY [*gazing front*]. Gadget was terribly, terribly lonesome. [*She sighs.*]

JERRY. Yes, but the more we wrote the lonelier they got.

ANGY [*righteously*]. It was our duty.

JERRY. But it wasn't our duty to get engaged to them. Not without seeing their pictures.

ANGY. They promised to send them—just as soon as they got shore leave.

JERRY [*desperately*]. But when we got engaged, they said they'd never get shore leave. They practically *promised* to be torpedoed and die for us.

ANGY. In his last letter, Gadget said they were going to put all that torpedoing off until next trip.

JERRY [*nearly sobbing*]. Just the same, I don't like being engaged to a man who practically lies to me even before I meet him.

[*CORA enters D R, carrying a large bottle in one hand and two letters in the other. She is a stolid, apparently humorless girl or twenty-five. She delivers most of her remarks drily, without smiling.*]

CORA [*coming right of the couch*]. Here's the horse liniment. [*She puts it on the end table.*]

JERRY. But it isn't our legs. It's our hearts.

CORA. It'll do Pinto's leg a lot of good. I use it myself.

ANGY. I'll take it out to the barn. [*She notices the letters.*] Whose are those?

CORA [*Inspecting the envelopes*]. Them sailors have wrote you again.

[*ANGY and JERRY rise eagerly.*]

JERRY. Really?

ANGY [*putting her hand to her heart*]. How divine!

JERRY [*grabbing the letters from CORA, handing one of them to ANGY*]. Then Daddy didn't read them!

CORA [*to JERRY*]. No, but he caught me takin' them out of the pile.

JERRY. He didn't!

CORA. It's okay. I told him they was your report cards.

JERRY. What did he say?

CORA. He says, "Gad, Cora, don't let me see them things until after my vacation."

JERRY. [*opening her letter*]. Jim's written an awfully thick letter.

ANGY. [*opening hers*]. Mine's just as thick.

CORA [*drily*]. Maybe they're sendin' them socks back for recaps.

ANGY [*holding up a snapshot*]. Gadget's sent his picture [*She moved to C as she admires it.*]

CORA. What's he look like?

ANGY. Like—[*She holds the picture off at arm's length for a better view.*] Like an Admiral!

[*CORA and JERRY crowd around ANGY at C stage to look.*]

JERRY [*after a dubious moment*]. It's sort of an unusual face.

CORA. I'll say it's unusual. It looks like he'd had it tattooed on.

JERRY [*reassuringly*]. I think it's a nice kind face.

ANGY. I just love men that look divinely rugged. [*She sighs.*] Beginning now.....

[*Insert name.*] is my favorite actor.

[*JERRY has opened her letter and moves back in front of the couch, taking a surreptitious glance at her picture.*]

ANGY. Did Jim send his picture too?

CORA. Let's see. [*She indicates ANGY'S picture.*] There can't be *two* of them in *one* navy.

[*Now CORA crosses to JERRY, in front of the couch, to look at her picture. ANGY is devouring her picture.*]

JERRY. I think it's lovely.

CORA [*squinting at the picture*]. You win the blindfold test.

JERRY [*looking at the picture with her heart in her mouth*]. He must be very, very nice.

CORA. Could be, but it ain't necessary [*She crosses to the door D R.*]

ANGY [*who up to now has not taken her eyes off her own picture*]. Come on; let's read our letter. [*She sits on the couch.*]

JERRY. Yes, let's [*She sits on the couch.*]

CORA [*crossing behind the couch*]. Okay!

[*ANGY and JERRY are seated side by side on the couch. CORA stands behind the couch and, leaning over between them, reads indiscriminately from one letter to the other.*]

ANGY. Gadget's sunk another battle-wagon—practically single-handed.

CORA. And unarmed—except for his pencil.

ANGY. I guess he won't sink any more for awhile—he's in port.

CORA. So's Jim. He says an Eastern port.

ANGY. Maybe it's Boston. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

JERRY [*a little worried*]. Well—don't you think maybe that's awfully close?

CORA [*helpfully, turning the page of ANGY'S letter*]. Don't Gadget say nothin' about the Princess Ugbu they rescued from the Japs in Fiji?

ANGY [*with a little laugh*]. She though Gadget was rare.

CORA. Maybe that's why she didn't eat him. [*She speaks to JERRY.*] Jim wants you to send him your picture.

ANGY. Gadget wants mine, too. I'm going to send it.

CORA. That one on your mother's bureau—in rompers?

ANGY [*with dignity*]. Cora, don't be crude!

JERRY. But how can we send them our pictures, Angy? They think we're eighteen.

ANGY [*maneuvering her hair into a different position*]. When I put my hair up this way I look very old for my age—positively mature.

JERRY [*doubtfully, considering the effect*]. It helps some.

CORA. Yeah; it hides the wrinkles. [*She crosses to desk L, to straighten out the mess JERRY had made ransacking it.*]

ANGY [*excitingly, after a pause*]. Jerry, has your sister got all her dresses at college?

JERRY. Most of her trousseau is here.

ANGY [*jumping up and moving to C*]. Then it's a snap! Hurry up!

JERRY. But, where?

ANGY. We're going to dress up in your sister's clothes.

JERRY [*rising, crossing to ANGY*]. I don't think we'd better use her trousseau. She's afraid it will get worn out.

ANGY. Maybe her other things will be good enough for pictures. We'll get your mother's camera.

JERRY. She doesn't like me to use it.

ANGY. Cora can use it. Come on. [*She crosses to the landing U R.*] I'll wear the red evening dress. [*Change to the color of the dress she wears.*]

JERRY [*indicating with her hand as she cross U R*]. You mean the one with the back here? [*She points to a spot quite low on her back.*]

ANGY. The one your old man said your sister couldn't wear out of the house.

CORA. The minute she put it on she was half way out.

ANGY. You'll take the pictures—won't you, Cora? [*She is on the landing.*]

CORA [*shaking her head*]. Pictures can get you into a lot of trouble.

ANGY [*pleadingly*]. Oh, come on ...

JERRY. Please...

CORA [*crossing to C*]. Okay—but it's things like this makes me wish I was a full-time groaner.

ANGY. A what, Cora?

CORA. A full-time groaner. [*She pauses at C.*]

ANGY. What's that?

JERRY. Why, I thought you knew that Cora was a lady wrestler.

CORA [*proudly*]. Sure; I'm in the wrestlin' racket. [*She takes a wrestler's stance.*]

ANGY. Who do you wrestle with?

JERRY. With Helga. She works next door for the Judsons.

ANGY. Who wins?

CORA. We take turns. That's why they call it a racket.

[CORA crosses D R and goes out.]

ANGY. Come on! Hurry up! [*She starts upstairs.*]

JERRY [*following*]. I think I'll wear the tulle. It's the one she wore when George met her.

ANGY. Did she wear it when he proposed?

JERRY. No—the red one.

[JERRY and ANGY go out U R. A moment later two sailors are seen through the windows U C, coming from U R. GADGET, the larger of the two, is laden down with two hula skirts, a

*parrot in a cage covered with a piece of cloth, two gaily-colored shawls or scarfs, and some bracelets, as well as a ditty bag. He is a large, lumbering chap who is neither too bright nor too beautiful. He is the perfect replica of the movie sailor returning from the Orient. GADGET is pulling along JIM MATSON, a good-looking, quiet sailor, whose only baggage is a ditty bag. The latter appears quite reluctant. GADGET looks inside the window, smiles approvingly, and then beckons JIM to follow. Both disappear from view off U L. In a moment there are several knocks at the door U L. Then the door opens, GADGET sticks his head in. He peers around and enters, dropping his baggage on the window seat. He looks back and sees that JIM is not with him.]*

GADGET [*staring U L*]. Listen, Jim; I tell you everything's fixed.

[GADGET goes out U L for a moment, and shortly returns leading the reluctant JIM.]

JIM [*looking around apprehensively*]. There's nobody at home. Come on. [*He starts out the door U L again.*]

GADGET. Oh. No! [*He sniffs.*] Smell that! [*He starts toward D R.*] Galley's to starb'rd. Can I pick a soft berth? [*He sits on the couch and relaxes.*]

JIM [*still U L*]. You should have told them we were coming, Gadget.

GADGET. Women like to be surprised. [*He points to the windows.*] First square portholes I've seen in six months.

JIM [*coming D L C*]. You're sure everything's all right?

GADGET. I got you a three-day leave and two beautiful women—and you ask me if everything's all right.

JIM. How do you know they're beautiful?

GADGET. After you've been two years in the navy they're all beautiful! [*He gets up, crosses to the door D R, and opens it.*] Hey! Hello! [*There is no answer. He peeks in.*] Oh, boy, pie! [*He closes the door, his face beaming.*]

JIM. Let's go. [*He starts U L again.*] These girls probably aren't so much.

GADGET [*looking around as he moves U C*]. You don't find palooka canaries in a cage like this.

JIM [*by the door U L, worried*]. I'm coming up for my chief's and I can't afford any trouble.

GADGET. What trouble could there be aboard a yacht like this? [*He sits in the chair U L C.*]

JIM. That's exactly what you asked me in Liverpool. We woke up in the brig.

GADGET. I didn't know they was married—not to prize fighters.

JIM. Old Picklepuss warned me that another trip to the brig and there'd be no chief's.

GADGET. Ah, the Exec always says that. [*He crosses U R and glances upstairs.*] Maybe they're topside. [*He turns.*] Why do you want to be a chief and give up your freedom?

JIM. I just do—that's all.

GADGET [*crossing back in front of the window box*]. After you've got your chief's you'll be worse than Franco. He looks like an ensign—all dressed up and no place to go. [*He peers into the parrot's cage.*]

JIM [*nervously, moving toward GADGET*]. Now, what's the matter?

GADGET. I have to duck this stuff before the girls come. I want to surprise 'em [*He opens the cover of the window box.*] I'll put 'em in here. [*He begins to dump his paraphernalia in the window box.*] What'll I do with Franco? [*He holds up the cage.*]

JIM. Dump him in, too.

GADGET [*putting the parrot in the window box and closing the lid*]. Okay!

FRANCO'S VOICE [*as he is being put in the window box*]. Lower away!

GADGET [*sniffing, as he glances D R*]. Gee, don't that pie make you hungry? [*He crosses toward the door D R*]. Come on; let's take a gander.

JIM [*protesting, as he moves L C*]. Gadget, we can't just take over like this.

GADGET. Sure we can. [*He sits on the couch again*]. From now on we sit in the lap of luxury— [*He pats his knee*].—and maybe part of the time luxury will sit in ours. [*He looks up at JIM, somewhat uncertainly*]. Under certain conditions you rate.

JIM [*grimly*]. I knew it all the time—they're *conditions*!

GADGET [*passing it off lightly*]. They don't amount to anything. Sort of rules of etiquette.

JIM [*moving toward GADGET*]. That sounds like the Liverpool build-up.

GADGET. No, no. It's just that you gotta observe certain social regulations when you spend the week-end at the home of a girl you ain't met yet.

JIM. For instance?

GADGET. Well—you gotta be engaged. [*He spreads out his hands in a gesture*].

JIM. This is a swell time to be thinking of that. [*He starts U L again*].

GADGET. I already thought of it.

JIM [*whirling toward GADGET again*]. You mean you're engaged?

GADGET. Temporarily—yes.

JIM. How do you do it—temporarily? [*He speaks sarcastically*].

GADGET. By correspondence.

JIM. You mean you wrote it! Sailor, you're hooked. [*He laughs as he starts U L again*].

GADGET. Don't you worry; the brain'll think us out of it.

JIM [*coming back quickly to GADGET*]. *Us!*

GADGET [*rising, moving to L C, past JIM*]. Oh, yeah. I was gonna tell you. You're engaged, too.

JIM. Engaged! [*He grabs GADGET by the front of his shirt*]. I've never seen the girl.

GADGET. It was them letters. That's what done it.

JIM. What letters?

GADGET. The ones I wrote for you.

JIM [*releasing GADGET quickly and going to the door U L*]. I'm getting out of here.

GADGET [*moving U C*]. They was beautiful letters. All bout rescuin' that Fiji princess what five us them mementos, and them five battle-wagons you sunk.

JIM. That's just swell. Good-bye. [*He starts out U L*].

GADGET [*detaining him*]. You can't! [*He brings him back in*]. Not after all them vows. Besides, you know how these modern girls is—they got a sailor on every ship.

JIM. Yeah, and they got uniformitis, too. These'll want to get married.

GADGET. Ah, no, Jim. They're just eighteen or nineteen.

JIM. Eighteen! My sister was eighteen! Henry never had a chance!

[JIM goes out U L hurriedly.]

GADGET. Hey, wait a minute! Wait a minute!

[GADGET goes out U L, after JIM. CORA enters D R. She is carrying a camera. She crosses to



*C, evidently trying to decide on a good location for the picture. A moment later the front door D L opens, and an angular woman of about CORA'S size and age enters. It is HELGA.]*

HELGA. Whatcha doin'? [*She strides to L C.*]

CORA. I gotta take some pictures of the girls. They got a yen on for a couple of sailors.

HELGA. Well, they're easy found ... [*She crosses to C.*] I gotta wire from Joe. [*She flexes her muscles and limbers up as she talks.*]

CORA. Collect?

HELGA. Nope. He's got a spot for us on the Twin Rivers card.

CORA. When?

HELGA. Saturday night.

CORA. Miss Stone'll be here. Maybe I can't get off. [*She moves back of the couch and trains her camera U C.*]

HELGA. Joe's offerin' fifty bucks. [*She moves up to the window box and sits.*]

CORA. Joe! Fifty bucks! What's illegal?

HELGA. Nothin'

CORA. It ain't mud wrestlin'? I had one bout wallowin' around in six inches of that stuff, and I'm through.

HELGA. No, it ain't exactly dirty.

CORA [*moving to L C and training the camera U C from that angle*]. It better hadn't. I ain't goin' to grunt and groan through another of them artificial beauty treatments.

HELGA. It ain't exactly mat wrestlin' either.

CORA [*crossing up to HELGA*]. Then what is it?

HELGA. It's kinda different.

CORA. Spill it. [*She sits beside HELGA on the window box.*]

HELGA. It's molasses.

CORA. Ah, not molasses! Why, that ain't even patriotic.

HELGA. It's the kind they feed the cows. *They don't mind.*

CORA [*arms folds, in stubborn indignation*]. Well *I do.*

HELGA. Joe says we owe it to our public. He says they want us in molasses.

CORA. Well, I ain't stuck on it.

HELGA. Joe says you ought to see the letters. He says molasses is practically a command performance.

CORA [*seriously, shaking her head*]. A girl shouldn't disappoint her public.

HELGA [*this is the clincher*]. What's more, he says Warner Brothers is goin' to have a talent scout there.

CORA [*impressed*]. Honest!

HELGA. Joe says they're hungry for new talent out there. He says they haven't got a molasses wrestler in the whole of Hollywood.

CORA. They say it's just like a small town.

HELGA. Can you get off?

CORA [*rising, leaving the camera on the window box and moving down to L C*]. For Warner Brothers? I gotta.

HELGA [*rising, moving down to C*]. Joe says we'd better do a little trainin', especially where I almost break your leg. [*She gets a leg hold on CORA, and the two of them grunt and groan while they practice a few holds as the scene continues.*] He said he couldn't hear your groans

back of the sixty-five cent seats.

CORA. What does he think I am—a hog caller?

HELGA [*continuing to wrestle with CORA*]. He don't like your face, either.

CORA. What's the matter with my face? [*She sticks it out belligerently.*]

HELGA. He said you looked as if you expected somebody to kiss you.

CORA. I give 'em this one. [*She makes a face denoting intense anguish.*]

HELGA. If Joe wanted to kiss that, he musta been thinkin' of his wife.

CORA. Of course, I always got this one. [*She improves on the original.*]

HELGA [*studying CORA'S expression for a moment*]. Yeah; that's better. There's more intellectual sufferin' in it. And use more lipstick. In the last match it didn't show where you bit me. [*She releases CORA.*]

CORA. Yeah—and next time you pull out my hair, make sure you get the switch.

HELGA [*crossing D L*]. Okay! We'll have a workout this aft.

[*HELGA goes out D L. CORA crosses L, to the mirror, and practices a few imaginary hold, paying special attention to her facial expressions. "Lower Away" emanates from the parrot in the window box. CORA turns toward it as the girls come running down the stairs U R. JERRY is dressed in a daintily attractive afternoon frock. ANGY follows her into the room attired in an extreme evening dress with a low back. ANGY'S hair is done in an upsweep fashion. They come to C stage.*]

JERRY. We hurried as fast as we could!

ANGY. I practically *threw* my things on.

CORA [*by the right end of the couch, staring at ANGY'S low-cut gown*]. You almost missed.

ANGY [*picking up some knitting from the desk L*]. I think I'll have a picture of me knitting Gadget another pair of socks. [*She joins JERRY again at C stage.*]

CORA [*surveying the incongruous combination*]. You'll look like "Whistler's Mother."

JERRY. Angy anyway, I knit both pairs. [*She sits on the couch.*]

CORA [*drily*]. There's nothin' like wool socks in Fiji.

JERRY. Jim said the Princess admired them very much.

ANGY [*practicing a slinky walk D L*]. That's where Gadget sunk his last battle-wagon.

CORA. That bird has dunked more battleships than I have doughnuts.

JERRY [*crossing quickly to the window box and sitting, framed in one of the windows*]. I think I would like Jim to have a picture of me just as I am.

CORA [*crossing to the window box, taking the camera, and moving behind the couch as she trains her camera on JERRY*]. Yeah, and he'll like it, too.

ANGY [*grabbing up a pair of binoculars from the desk*]. Oh, I know how I want my picture taken. [*She crosses to left of the window box and peers through the binoculars, speaking in what she considers an emotional voice.*] I shall be searching the sea, waiting for my lover to return and claim my heart.

[*CORA trying to get the camera in focus, succeeds only in getting a view of ANGY'S rear elevation as she bends over to peer through the binoculars. She straightens up in disgust.*]

ANGY [*as she hits a cactus with her hand*]. Ouch!

JERRY. What did you do?

ANGY. I bumped into a cactus.

JERRY. Romance is like that—full of thorns and things.

ANGY [*catching site of GADGET and JIM off U C*]. Oh! ...

JERRY. What is it?

CORA [*joining the girls*]. Boat tipped over?

ANGY [*peering through the binoculars*]. Look! Down by the shore.

CORA [*shading her eyes*]. Couple of gobs, ain't they?

ANGY. What are they doing?

CORA. Looks like they're fightin' [*She reaches for the binoculars.*] Here! Let me have those.

[*She takes the binoculars from ANGY and stands U C.*]

ANGY. No; they're just arguing.

JERRY. Maybe they're lost, or something.

CORA. Like a couple of homin' pigeons.

ANGY. Don't you wish it was Gadget and Jim?

JERRY. Wouldn't it be luscious!

ANGY. Devastating!

JERRY. Oh, no—it wouldn't either! It would be over—forever. [*She comes nervously down to C stage.*]

ANGY. It would just be the beginning.

JERRY. Not when they found out we were only fourteen.

ANGY [*coming down to L C*]. How too revolting!

JERRY [*moving over to ANGY at L C*]. Miss Peacock said I had an eighteen-year-old mind—except in Latin.

ANGY [*crossing L, to the mirror, surveying herself*]. They might not guess. [*She comes D L, posturing a bit, turning her ankle once or twice with her high heels.*] In this dress, I feel like a woman of the world.

CORA [*U C, still looking through the binoculars*]. You'd better.

JERRY [*moving toward L stage*]. You're fascinating, Angy; you really are.

ANGY. You look fascinating, too—like a saint, or—[*insert the name of a current movie star.*]—or something.

CORA [*lowering her binoculars and turning to the girls*]. It's them.

[*JERRY hurries U C, to CORA.*]

ANGY [*moving behind the couch and up to CORA*]. Are you sure?

CORA. I'd recognize Gadget's face in any gutter.

ANGY [*taking the binoculars*]. Let me see. [*She holds them nervously.*]

CORA [*steadying the binoculars*]. Here.

ANGY. Oh, there they are! Oh, isn't it just too, too—something!

JERRY. Is it Jim?

ANGY. It's them. It's both of them.

JERRY. What will I do?

CORA [*drily*]. Runnin' helps.

ANGY [*laying down the binoculars*]. I'm not going to run. [*She moves D L C, adopting a sirenish glide.*]

JERRY. But I won't know what to do.

CORA. I'll bet Jim will.

ANGY. I'm going to be ..... [*Insert name of movie actress.*—in “The Missing Sarong.” [*She goes into another pose.*]

JERRY. But—but who shall I be? [*She crosses to ANGY.*]

CORA. Just be yourself. You won't disappoint anybody.

JERRY. I don't know. I really don't. [*She crosses U C, picks up the binoculars, and gives a little gasp of pleasure.*] Oh! [*She stares intently for a moment. She lays them down and walks away from the window to behind the couch.*] I'm going to stay, too. [*She crosses to the end table right of the couch.*]

ANGY [*crossing U C, looking nervously out of the window*]. They're almost here. [*She turns to JERRY.*] What are you going to be doing?

JERRY [*taking up a book from the end table*]. I think I'll be reading something. I guess this Red Cross Handbook will do.

CORA [*still U C*]. You'd better look up “shock.”

[*JERRY moves D R and sits on the hassock. She tries to appear very much interested in the book.*]

ANGY. I'm going to be much more impressive. [*She crosses R C, picks up a bottle of liniment from the end table by the couch and is about to put it out of sight in the sideboard R, when she hesitates and thinks better of it.*] Sailors are used to women of the world. [*She takes a cocktail glass from the sideboard and crosses to the right of the couch. She then pours some of the liniment into the cocktail glass.*] Gadget's been everywhere—Singapore, and Rio de Janeiro, and the Aleutians, and the Fiji Islands—and Brooklyn—and—oh, he's seen everything! [*She hides the bottle in the sideboard.*]

CORA. I'll bet he's never seen a girl drink Sloan's Liniment.

ANGY. Oh, I won't drink it! I'll just toy with it [*She sits on the couch and assumes the attitude and expression which she considers the perfect replica of the well-groomed vampire.*]

CORA [*peering out the window*]. They're comin' up the steps.

JERRY. I can hardly breathe.

ANGY [*lifting the glass to her lips and speaking with a world-weary voice*]. You may answer the door, Cora.

[*CORA crosses to the door U L in response to a knock, and admits GADGET and JIM.*]

GADGET [*immediately on the defensive as he stares at CORA*]. Say, you ain't Angy?

[*JIM tugs at GADGET'S blouse and indicates that he should keep quiet.*]

CORA [*falling into the spirit of the occasion, acting very elegant*]. And who shall I say is callin'?

GADGET [*completely taken aback*]. Huh?

JIM [*taking off his hat*]. Just say, Mr. Matson and Mr. Hoffenflugel.

CORA. I'll try.

GADGET. Hoffenflugel. [*He spells it.*] H-o-f-f-e-n-f-l-u-g-e-l.

CORA. Just a moment please.

[CORA *crosses down to C. JERRY is apparently deep in her book, and ANGY is contemplating her cocktail.*]

CORA. A Mr. Matson and a Mr. Hoffenflugel to see you.

ANGY [*in her world-weary voice*]. Are we at home, Geraldine?

JERRY [*after a moment's reflection*]. Why, yes, Angelica; I believe so.

ANGY. You may say we are at home, Cora.

[JIM and GADGET *have come in and stand at L C. GADGET scratches the back of his head in bewilderment.*]

CORA [*with a start, as she turns and finds them practically beside her*]. Miss Joyce and Miss Goetz are at home.

GADGET [*truculently*]. If we was blind we wouldn't be sailors.

JERRY [*rising*]. Why, Angelica, it Mr. Matson and Mr. Hoffenflugel. You know, the sailors.

GADGET. We thought we'd surprise you.

[JIM *nudges GADGET and indicates that he take off his hat, which he does hastily. CORA gives the sailors a bored look, crosses bock of the couch, and goes out D R.*]

ANGY. You interest me [*She looks from one to the other and settles on JIM, the handsome one of the two.*] Are you Mr. Hoffenflugel? [*She crosses toward JIM eagerly, hand outstretched.*]

[GADGET *starts to meet ANGY, to shake hands, but she passes him coldly.*]

GADGET [*taking her arm and bringing her roughly back to him*]. Naw—that's Jim. Didn't you get my picture?

ANGY [*not too pleased at this*]. Oh, yes. Yes, of course. [*She passes her hand over her brow and speaks in a bored tone.*] I have such a terrible head this morning. You know how it is.

GADGET [*looking at the glass*]. Already?

ANGY [*indicating her costume*]. I just came in a moment ago.

GADGET. Ten o'clock and you just got in?

ANGY [*airily*]. C'est la guerre.

GADGET. La Gaire ought to be horsewhipped!

JERRY [*in explanation*]. French.

GADGET. I don't care if he's Spanish. [*He turns to ANGY.*] He goes ashore, see?

JIM. "La Guerre" is not a man, Gadget; it's an expression.

GADGET. Well, whoever it is or whatever it is, eleven o'clock is no time of night for a nice girl to be getting' back in the mornin'

ANGY [*dramatically, putting on her act as she moves in front of the couch*]. It makes one forget. Forget that at this very moment my loved one may be sinking beneath the waves.

GADGET [*moving to the left of the couch*]. Put that down! We ain't sinkin' now.

ANGY. Ah, yes! For a brief moment we have surcease from our fears. [*She sits on the couch and looks at the cocktail glass.*]

GADGET. Surcease, martini, or highball, it's all the same to me. I'm a teetotaler myself.

[JIM gives GADGET an amused and surprised look.]

GADGET. And while you're engaged to me you lay off that stuff.

JERRY [*rising, moving to JIM at C*]. You're Mr. Matson, aren't you? [*She extends her hand.*]

JIM. Yes, I guess I am, all right.

JERRY. I'm glad you were able to come.

JIM. I hope you haven't been worried, or anything.

GADGET [*sarcastically*]. She's been worryin'—you can see that.

JIM. Oh, I'm sure she hasn't.

GADGET. She's got on an evenin' dress, hasn't she?

JERRY. No—this is an afternoon dress.

GADGET [*puzzled*]. But it's still mornin' [*He pauses to think this over. Then he bursts out.*] My gosh, that's even worse!

FRANCO'S VOICE [*from under the window box*]. Lower away!

ANGY [*rising*]. Who's that?

JERRY [*turning U C*]. It came from in there. [*She nods toward the window box.*]

ANGY. Who is it?

GADGET. It's a little present I brought for you—from Fiji. [*He leans over the window box and opens it.*] It's a parrot. [*He brings out the cage.*]

[ANDY and JERRY move U C, with JIM and GADGET.]

ANGY. Oh, isn't he beautiful?

GADGET. The princess give it to me when we left. There was tears in her eyes.

JIM. That was after it bit her.

GADGET [*handing her the cage*]. It's for you.

ANGY. Oh, a real royal parrot!

GADGET. Ain't she a beauty?

ANGY. And you brought him to me from halfway around the world.

JIM. It's certainly a small world.

[GADGET takes the parrot's cage from ANGY and puts it on the window box.]

JERRY. Not there—we have a cat!

GADGET [*putting the cage back in the window box*]. Yeah—wouldn't want to lose a nice cat. Show 'em the rest of the stuff the Princess give us, Jim.

JIM. No, no; I think you'd better. You're sort of steeped in its lore.

GADGET. Maybe so. [*He holds out the two garish shawls or scarfs.*] Right out of Fiji they come, and worn by the Princess herself. Ain't they beauties? [*He hands one to each of the girls.*]

JIM. Gadget like something that can speak for itself.

JERRY. Oh, thank you! I think it's very unusual. [*She puts it on as she moves toward the desk L with JIM.*]

ANGY [*fingering it*]. To think this very scarf once adorned the shoulders of a royal princess.

GADGET [*to ANGY*]. You better put yours on. You may catch cold and sneeze; then the devil

knows what might happen. [*He puts it around ANGY'S shoulders, playfully pulling her toward him with the ends of the scarf as he does so, and trying to kiss her.*]

ANGY [*pulling quickly away, looking at the label*]. What does this mean—"Jacob Goffstein, Brooklyn, New York"?

JERRY [*looking at the label on hers*]. Why, mine says that, too. Isn't it strange?

GADGET [*flustered*]. Oh, you mean the label! What does it mean? Oh, that—that's very simple. Yeah, very simple, indeed. You see, it's sort of this way ... That is—uh—uh—Well, you know how women are—just sisters under the skin. Whenever them Fiji princesses got hold of an American label—bingo—they sew it on just like you girls used to go for them Paris labels. [*He grins broadly, proud to have talked himself out of that one.*]

JERRY. I've seen my sister do that.

ANGY [*the worldly one*]. The eternal woman.

GADGET [*picking up one of the grass skirts.*] Look at what Jim brought you from Fiji. It was a goin'-away present from the Princess. She took it right off her back. [*He tries unsuccessfully to show how the Princess wore the grass skirt on her back.*]

[GADGET gives up and crosses to JERRY. JERRY takes the grass skirt hesitantly.]

JERRY. Oh, thank you Jim. What is it?

GADGET. It's a Fiji skirt. [*He crosses back to the window box and comes up with another grass skirt.*] I got Angy one too.

JERRY [*holding it up*]. It's very lovely and it has unusual lines, but I don't know just where I could wear it.

GADGET. You wear it around the waist like this. [*He illustrates with the one he is holding, and does a little hulu.*] It hangs down.

JERRY. I guess I mean when.

GADGET [*handing the grass skirt to ANGY*]. Why in Fiji, the girls wear 'em most all the time.

JIM [*drily*]. Especially in the mosquito season.

[GADGET has removed his ditty bag and JIM'S from the window box. ANGY and JERRY hold the grass skirts awkwardly in their hands.]

GADGET [*indicating the ditty bags*]. Where do we put these?

ANGY. The maid will attend to them.

JERRY. What cute little laundry bags!

GADGET. Them ain't laundry. Them's seagoin' suitcases. [*He tosses them on the floor U C.*]

JIM. Sort of week-end bags.

ANGY [*swallowing*]. You mean—your clothes are in there?

JERRY. Do you just carry them around with you, always?

ANGY. Even if you don't need them?

GADGET. A gentleman don't sleep bare.

JERRY. Then you're spending the night—somewhere?

GADGET. I'll say we are!

ANGY [*coming down behind the couch*]. You mean—here? [*She gazes front, somewhat frightened.*]

GADGET. We're devotin' our whole leave to you.

JIM. [*looking at a few coins he takes from his pocket*]. We just couldn't go anywhere else.

ANGY [*giving JERRY a frantic look*]. But we haven't a place for you to sleep.

JERRY. Just nowhere at all.

GADGET. We roll in anywhere. [*He plops himself down on the couch, which is too small for stretching out; his neck is bent double at one end and his legs are draped over the other end.*]

This is what I call solid comfort.

JIM [*crossing U C and trying the top of the window box*]. The window seat looks all right—if that cactus doesn't fall on me.

JERRY. But Aunt Sandra is coming.

GADGET [*with a disarming wave of his hand*]. Jim won't need all that room.

ANGY. I don't think she would like that.

JERRY. Oh, dear, no. Aunt Sandra hates sailors.

GADGET. Maybe she could sleep in the barn.

JIM. That's where we better sleep—in the hayloft.

GADGET. Not me. I got hay fever. That's why I joined the navy.

ANGY. There's the garage.

GADGET. Gasoline gives me a headache. I see things.

JIM. You shouldn't drink it.

GADGET. It's them fumes. [*He sits up.*]

JERRY. I think the garage would be swell. [*He rises.*]

GADGET. Sure and Angy could bring me my meals. [*He reaches back and gives her a playful poke in the ribs.*]

ANGY [*moving around right of the couch*]. Oh, I don't know! I'm afraid I couldn't hide it from Aunt Sandra.

GADGET. Why not?

ANGY [*in an emotional voice, her head held high*]. I have such emotional depth.

JERRY. She just can't conceal anything.

GADGET [*significantly, looking at the dress*]. Right now she ain't tryin' very hard.

ANGY [*embarrassed*]. Would—would you like to look at the garage? [*She joins JERRY hurriedly a L stage.*]

GADGET [*sniffing, as he glances toward the kitchen, D R*]. There's places I'd rather look.

JIM. Is it near the highway? [*He joins the girls at L stage.*]

JERRY. Yes—it's almost on it.

JIM [*making a motion with his thumb to GADGET*]. Fine. It would be a good start. Come on, Gadget.

[JIM takes JERRY by the arm and starts to follow ANGY, who goes out U L.]

GADGET [*hanging back and speaking significantly to JIM*]. Hey, Jim. You forgot your ditty bag.

JIM [*to JERRY*]. Just a second.

JERRY. I'll wait.

GADGET. You run along. It's confidential. Naval Intelligence.

JERRY. Oh, certainly! We'll be at the end of the path.

[JERRY goes out U L.]



GADGET [*elatedly, slapping JIM on the back*]. Can I pick ‘em! Looks, money, chow—  
JIM. And a head full of wedding bells.

GADGET. Clear from Philadelphia, I can pick ‘em. I got television eyes.

JIM. Don’t forget Aunt Sandra. She’s probably married to a minister.

GADGET. Just leave everything to the brain. [*He taps his head.*] I’ll stretch this into a real week-end.

JIM [*picking up his ditty bag*]. Look out you don’t stretch it into a life sentence.

[*JIM goes out U L. GADGET looks at the cocktail and starts for it. Then, turning firmly to business, he crosses to the telephone, on the desk L, and picks up the receiver.*]

GADGET. Gimme Western Union ... [*He sings happily as he waits.*] I got a telegram for Commander O. W. Stone, The Captain, U.S.S. Alaska, Boston Navy Yard, Boston, Mass ... Archibald Hoffenflugel ... Yeah, I know. [*He spells it.*] H-o-f-f-e-n-f-l-u-g-e-l ... e-l, I said, MM2C, and James Matson, BM1C, respectfully request a twenty-four hour extension of their liberty in order to get married. Signed, James Matson, BM1C ... No, that ain’t my name, but Matson’s got more influence ... No, I don’t want to hear your read it. I know what it says. I wrote it ... Charge it to—[*he looks at the telephone for the number*]—one-eight-nine. Mr. Joyce ... No, I don’t know the initials ... Who’m I? Why, I’m Mr. Joyce, you dope! [*He slams down the receiver.*]

[*GADGET crosses over to the cocktail glass and picks it up, preparatory to drinking it.*]

FRANCO’S VOICE [*from the window box*]. Lower away!

[*Startled, GADGET lowers the drink and then hears the doorbell. He sets the glass down and goes out U L, leaving his ditty bag on the floor U C, in his haste. CORA enters D R, crosses to the door D L, and opens it. On the threshold is a very attractive young woman of about twenty-two. She advances into the room with a cordial smile, as CORA steps back, and sets down her suitcase at C stage. It is SANDRA STONE.*]

SANDRA [*holding out her hand*]. You’re Cora, aren’t you?

CORA [*shaking hands nervously*]. Yes, ma’am.

SANDRA. I’m Miss Stone, Jerry’s Aunt.

CORA. Yes, ma’am. [*She looks around.*] Did you lose little Elsie?

SANDRA. Oh, no! She stopped off at Deephaven to visit her roommate. She’s coming on Monday.

CORA. I guess the girls can wait.

SANDRA. Are they around playing? [*She moves U R C.*]

CORA. Yeah—they’re playin’ around [*She glances over her shoulder toward the windows U C.*]

SANDRA. They’re expecting me, of course?

CORA. They’ve been countin’ the minutes. [*She picks up SANDRA’S suitcase hurriedly.*] Maybe you’d like to go right to your room?

SANDRA [*coming down to CORA at C*]. I believe I should. The train was awfully crowded. [*She looks at the suitcase CORA is holding, and exclaims.*] Why, that’s not my suitcase!

CORA [*holding it up*]. It's the one you brought.

SANDRA. Goodness—it's little Elsie's!

CORA. Are you sure?

SANDRA. It's not mine and—[*She opens the suitcase and holds up a dress that might be worn by a ten-year-old child.*]—I haven't worn anything like this for years. Is Miss Joyce back yet? [*She closes the suitcase.*]

CORA. She's still in college. It's got somethin' to do with examinations.

SANDRA. It usually has. [*She speaks speculatively as she moves past CORA to the desk.*] I wonder if Miss Joyce ...

CORA. Yes, ma'am. Her summer dresses are here. Of course, the stock's kinda picked over.

SANDRA. Just any little thing.

CORA. Would you like to go up now [*She crosses to the stairs U R.*]

SANDRA. I think I should. Will you tell the girls I've come?

CORA. Yeah; I'll tell 'em, Miss Stone.

SANDRA [*noticing the ditty bag for the first time as she moves toward U R*]. Why, what's this doing here?

CORA. Oh! Why, that—why, that's the laundry. [*She crosses toward SANDRA.*]

SANDRA [*holding it up*]. Girls certainly don't wear much these days.

CORA. Ain't it the truth. Just live in their bathin' suits.

SANDRA [*opening the bag and taking out a huge pair of sailor pants*]. And slacks.

CORA. Yeah, slacks, too.

SANDRA [*holding the pants up in front of her*]. A strapping girl!

CORA. Takes after her father.

SANDRA [*discovering and removing a small notebook from the watch pocket*]. And here is the laundry list. [*She leafs through it, reading.*] Stella—Bridgeport 65-789. Toots—Lillydale 67-823. Evelyn—Harmony 45-027. Laundry evidently isn't all he picks up. Here. [*She hands the notebook to CORA.*]

CORA. [*thumbing through it*]. There ought to be a classified section.

SANDRA. Cora, as the daughter of a Naval Officer, I can't object to your keeping company with a sailor, but shouldn't your telephone be on the list?

CORA. Aw, he ain't my sailor.

SANDRA [*becoming confidential*]. Cora, don't you think you and I ought to come to an understanding?

CORA. Yes, Miss Stone.

SANDRA. Isn't there something I could do for you?

CORA. I'll say there is——

SANDRA. What is it?

CORA. Gimme Saturday afternoon and evenin' off.

SANDRA. Is there anything else?

CORA. Sunday. I gotta get up gradual. [*She indicates stiffness.*]

SANDRA. It's agreed. Now, perhaps you can tell me about this. [*She indicates the ditty bag.*]

CORA. A couple of sailors just blew in to spend the week-end with the girls.

SANDRA [*aghast*]. With those children!

CORA. Them sailors think they're gown up.

SANDRA. They must be blind.

CORA. They may be blind, but they act like seein'-eye dogs.

SANDRA. How can they think——

CORA. They've dressed up in her sister's clothes.

SANDRA. So that's it!

[*The telephone rings. CORA answers it.*]

CORA. Joyces' residence ... You got the wrong address. I didn't send no message to Commander Stone.

SANDRA [*crossing to CORA*]. Just a moment.

CORA [*into the telephone*]. Wait! Maybe I did.

SANDRA. Did she say Commander Stone?

CORA. It was some kind of a plush-handled Stone.

SANDRA. It may be for me. Father's spending the week-end at the Witherspoons. [*She takes the telephone from CORA.*] You have a message *from* Commander Stone? ... *For* Commander Stone! ... Well—read it back, please ... And what was it you wanted to know? ... By all means, send it collect. ... And, oh, yes, just change the name of the recipient from Commander Stone to Picklepuss Stone. ... Thank you so much. [*She hangs up the receiver and turns to CORA.*] Is Matson one of the sailors?

CORA. Yes, ma'am.

SANDRA. Apparently quite an ambitious young man. [*She cross to C.*] These girls should be taught a lesson they won't forget.

CORA. Yes, ma'am. But not by them sailors. [*She follows SANDRA.*]

SANDRA [*crossing U R*]. I think we can do it ourselves.

[*CORA picks up the suitcase and turns toward the stairs.*]

CORA. Yes, ma'am.

SANDRA [*going up the stairs*]. You had better tell the girls that I shan't be here until tomorrow.

CORA. Ain't you a school teacher?

SANDRA [*pausing*]. Yes, but from a progressive school.

CORA. Then you'll feel right at home, because things here are certainly progressin'.

[*SANDRA goes out U R, followed by CORA. A moment later, GADGET comes hurrying in U L. He goes straight to his ditty bag and is about to pick it up when he sees that it is open. He picks up his pants and starts to roll them up, stops, and feels around madly for the address book. He then starts looking around the floor. The more he looks the more panic-stricken he becomes, and, dropping his pants, he searches through the pockets of his uniform. He is looking down inside his shirt after having gone through his hat, when CORA enters U R.*]

GADGET [*blustering*]. Who's been foolin' with my ditty bag?

CORA. [*coolly, coming to C*]. Must have been the F. B. I. [*She holds the address book in her hand.*]

GADGET. What would they be doin' in my bag?

CORA. I dunno. Maybe they run out of telephone numbers.

GADGET [*seeing the address book and making a rush to grab it*]. Hey, that's mine! Give it here!

CORA [*holding it back of her*]. I was gonna give it to Angy. She might wanta join the club. [*She moves in front of the couch.*]

GADGET [*following her*]. Aw, you got me all wrong. Them ain't girls—they's—they's lottery tickets.

CORA. Sailor—you said a mouthful.

GADGET. Listen; you look like a girl that could keep her trap shut.

CORA. Thanks!

GADGET. This is strictly confidential.

CORA [*starting D R*]. I'll wait and read it in the papers.

GADGET [*holding her back*]. Listen—I'm levelin', see. I'm a secret agent and them's my operators.

CORA [*pretending to be impressed with this idea*]. Why o' course. Why didn't I think of that?

GADGET. Because you're a woman—that's why. Logic ain't in 'em [*He extends his hand.*]  
Let's have that notebook.

CORA. Why?

GADGET. Ain't I just told you the reason?

CORA. I wouldn't know. Logic ain't in me.

GADGET. Okay—then I got to take it.

CORA [*standing her ground*]. Okay—come and get it.

GADGET [*advancing*]. I'll get it.

CORA. You bet you will.

[*As GADGET lunges for the notebook, CORA seizes his right hand with hers, and gives it a quick twist, spinning him around. She then puts a hammer lock on his right arm and forces him to his knees.*]

GADGET. Hey, look out!

CORA [*calmly*]. That's what I'm doin'.

GADGET [*pretending to laugh*]. That's a good one on you. I sure had you scared.

CORA [*drily*]. I almost fainted.

GADGET [*starting to rise*]. Okay! Let's get some pie. [*He tries to get up.*] Ow!

CORA. Don't hurry on my account.

GADGET. Look out! You'll get me mad!

CORA. All over?

GADGET. I'm warnin' you.

CORA. Listen, you big blowfish; one more crack out of you and you'll have your arm in a sling for a month.

GADGET. Aw, I was just foolin'.

CORA. Well, I don't feel playful. Come on.

GADGET. Where are we goin'?

CORA. To the kitchen. I got a little K.P. work.

GADGET. I can't do that—honest. I'm a machinist mate—second class.

CORA. That's even better. You can fix my electric mixer.

GADGET. I never studied them things.

CORA. It's right down your alley. A motor on one end and a propeller on the other.

GADGET. Listen—if I fix it, you won't tell Angy?

CORA. She'll be glad you fixed it.

GADGET. I mean about the notebook—and this? [*He wiggles his arm.*]

[*As GADGET is about to rise, JIM and JERRY enter D L. GADGET is on his knees, facing them. CORA is standing directly behind him, still holding him.*]

JIM [*coming to C with JERRY*]. What's up?

JERRY. Have you got a stomachache?

GADGET. No! No—it's just that—er—— [*He turns his head appealingly to CORA.*]

CORA. He learned it in India—it's Yogi.

GADGET. Sure—sure, that's it! I learned it from Gandhi—in Mecca. [*He salaams and says, "Allah! Allah!"*]

JERRY. Do you know Gandhi?

GADGET. Know him! Why, I lived with him for two weeks! [*He salaams again as he says "Allah!"*]

CORA. No wonder he looks starved to death. [*She jerks GADGET to his feet.*] Come on!

[*GADGET rises awkwardly and starts to back out D R. CORA precedes him, still holding his arm.*]

JERRY. But why do you back out?

GADGET. I gotta face East—Mecca.

[*CORA and GADGET go out D R.*]

JERRY [*pointing*]. But that's West.

JIM. Possibly he was going the long way around.

JERRY [*sitting on the couch R C*]. My, all that way! Isn't science wonderful? [*She pats the couch beside her.*] Won't you sit down and tell me all about yourself?

JIM [*sitting very carefully on the extreme left end edge of the couch*]. Well, er—there really isn't very much to tell. You see, I come from Iowa.

JERRY [*moving toward him*]. Isn't that romantic?

JIM [*trying to edge away from her*]. Yeah, Osage, Iowa.

JERRY. I think that's perfectly wonderful. [*She moves closer to him.*]

JIM. Well, it was sort of my parents' idea. [*He slides up on the left arm of the couch.*]

JERRY. I'm so proud of you [*She looks at him adoringly.*] I think you were perfectly wonderful under fire.

JIM [*with a start*]. Under fire! Why, I've never been under fire—which time?

JERRY. The time commander Stone asked you to take over the bridge when the firing got too heavy.

JIM. Oh, that time....

JERRY. And everyone else went below.

JIM. Well, when a fellow is writing from out there at sea, he sort of gets carried away, and——

JERRY. ——the real you shines forth.

JIM [*uncomfortably, rising and moving to C*]. No, no; it's not exactly that. But sometimes it gets terribly hot and fellow sees illusions and mirages, and things like that.

JERRY. Not up there in the Aleutians.

JIM [*with a start*]. Oh, the Aleutians! No! Not up there! Up there it's snow blindness.

JERRY. You were awfully noble about those Eskimo girls.

JIM [*dubiously*]. Which ones?

JERRY. The Aleutian ones. The ones that wanted to leave their husband and run away with you.

JIM [*uncertainly, looking at her*]. And what did I do?

JERRY. You went off—*alone!* [*she ends with a dramatic flourish.*]

JIM. That *was* snow blindness.

JERRY [*adoration in her eyes as she rises and moves toward him*]. But you've entirely recovered, haven't you?

JIM [*backing toward L stage, away from her*]. No, no, not yet! Why, even now, when I look at a woman, everything gets sort of—blurry, and melts.

JERRY. Oh, you do! [*She continues to move toward him.*]

JIM. Oh, no—not me! Just—just things.

JERRY. Maybe you're nearsighted. [*She speaks archly as she stands directly in front of him, looking up in his face.*] Maybe you don't get close enough.

JIM. Oh, no, no! It's not that! No, I—

[GADGET comes in D R in excellent spirits. He is finishing a large wedge of pie.]

JIM [*delighted at this interruption, breaking away and moving to C stage*]. Oh, hello there, Gadget! How are you, old man? What have you—

GADGET [*indicating the pie as he moves to C stage*]. It's nearly lunch time.

JERRY. Oh, already! Well I suppose I had better change. [*She moves reluctantly to the stairs U R.*]

JIM. Yes, I think you had, all right.

GADGET. What for? She's rigged out okay.

JERRY [*pausing at the steps*]. I'm glad you like it. It's from the trousseau. But you should see the wedding veil.

[JERRY flashes JIM a big smile and goes out U R.]

JIM. [*frantically*]. Did you hear that? Wedding veil! So they get engaged to every sailor they meet, do they? [*He starts D L*] Come on!

GADGET [*reassuringly*]. The brain'll think you out of this one.

JIM. Oh, yeah!

GADGET. Sure! [*He crosses behind the couch, dusting off his hands as he finishes the last of the pie. He picks up the cocktail glass.*] All it needs is a little primin'.

[GADGET tosses off the contents of the glass in one gulp. He gags, breathes heavily with his mouth open, as if he had swallowed hot soup, and looks around wildly. He grabs the bowl of flowers from the end table and buries his head in it.]

## QUICK CURTAIN