

# Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

*Dramatic Publishing*



# Papa Was a Preacher

A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

BY

JOHN MCGREEVEY

DRAMATIZED FROM THE BOOK

BY

ALYENE PORTER



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY



\*\*\* NOTICE \*\*\*

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty fees are given in our current catalogue and are subject to change without notice. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. All inquiries concerning amateur and stock rights should be addressed to:

DRAMATIC PUBLISHING  
P. O. Box 129, Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

*COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES.* This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including but not limited to the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication, and reading are reserved. *On all programs this notice should appear:*

"Produced by special arrangement with  
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois"

©MCMLIV by  
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY  
Copyright renewed ©MCMLXXXII

Based upon the book, "PAPA WAS A PREACHER"  
©MCMXLIV by  
WHITMORE & STONE

Printed in the United States of America  
*All Rights Reserved*  
(PAPA WAS A PREACHER)

ISBN 0-87129-681-0

## **Directors Write Us About . . .**

# **Papa Was a Preacher**

"The audience loved the play. All the characters are good parts. There are many, many laugh lines. The wedding scene at the beginning and end give a beautiful beginning and end. . . . Laughs, laughs, except in the more serious parts like the wedding scenes."—Mrs. Vera B. Murphy, Danville, Virginia

"This play was given in a church by a group of teen-agers in order to raise money for the church. There was a very large turnout, and the play was definitely a financial success. In addition, however, there were innumerable comments about the suitability of the play, its excellent lines and its 'message.'"—John B. Suthphin, Ferguson, Missouri

"The audience was enthusiastic. We got many laughs from high-school age and adults. There were some tears also, that made us know that they really followed in spirit."—Stella Nelson, Alderson, W. Va.

"I sincerely recommend this play to any fastidious group looking for a play that is wholesome, humorous, and worthwhile."—Mabel J. Reese, Sugar Grove, Pa.

"The story touched the hearts of all. . . . applause and acclaim, and curtain calls."—Frank E. Edom, St. Louis, Missouri

"This play caused more favorable comment than any other play I have ever directed."—Marion Smith, Aurora, Indiana

# Papa Was a Preacher

**The book on which this play is based has had fourteen printings . . .**

**Five foreign-language editions have been published.**

**It has also appeared in *The Christian Herald*,  
*Magazine Digest*, and *Liberty Magazine*.**

**"The response was enthusiastic with much laughter, some tears, and prolonged applause."—Gladys Miller, Colorado City, Texas**

**"I cannot recommend it too highly."—Mrs. C. L. Walker, Winters, Texas**

**"Delightful! . . . Both students and adults responded with great emotion."—Chloe Tompkins, Leesburg, Florida**

**"The roles were varied and very true to life. . . . The theme of this play is so appealing that it 'tugs at the heartstrings.'"—Helen Summers, Portage, Michigan**

**"Very human—it seemed to fit our community."—Darvin R. Lugenbrihl, Bluffton, Ohio**

**"It was so human and true to life that it was not difficult to produce. There is enough comedy to keep it lively and entertaining, and enough meaning to make it really worthwhile. We had a record attendance for the two nights we presented it."—Alice Kell, Noble, Illinois**

**"Our school broke all attendance records."—Evelyn M. Schubert, Brownwood, Texas**

---

---

# Papa Was a Preacher

*A Play in Three Acts*

FOR SEVEN MEN AND EIGHT WOMEN

---

## CHARACTERS

EDWIN PORTER	.....	<i>Papa</i>
PEARL PORTER	.....	<i>Mother</i>
HUGH PORTER	.....	<i>the eldest son</i>
CECIL PORTER	.....	<i>a senior in high school</i>
RAYBON PORTER	.....	<i>the Don Juan of the clan</i>
JANETTE PORTER	.....	<i>young and romantic</i>
EDD PORTER	.....	<i>bandy with a camera</i>
ALYENE	.....	<i>the youngest Porter</i>
HELEN LUDLOW	.....	<i>a charmer</i>
LUCY SMITH	}	..... <i>two smitten young ladies</i>
JENNY SMITH		
JEFFREY COLE	.....	<i>also a preacher's son</i>
MISS JONAS	.....	<i>an opinionated maiden lady</i>
BRIDE	}	..... <i>just married</i>
GROOM		

PLACE: *The living-room of a parsonage in a small West Texas town.*

TIME: *Late spring. The present.\**

## SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE, *Scene One: An evening in late spring.*

*Scene Two: Afternoon, a week later.*

ACT TWO, *Scene One: The following Wednesday evening.*

*Scene Two: Thursday afternoon.*

ACT THREE: *Friday morning.*

\* If desired, the action of the play can be assumed to have transpired in the 1920's. Suggestions for costumes of this period will be found under "Notes on Characters and Costumes."

---

---

## NOTES ON CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

---

**PAPA:** He is a tall, forthright man in his forties. Papa can be stern if the occasion calls for sternness, but he is always kind and just. Throughout the play he dresses neatly and conservatively. He may change for Act Three.

**MOTHER:** Mother, too, is in her forties, a woman of simplicity, charm and attractiveness. She dresses plainly, but Mother's charm imbues even the simplest of dresses with an air. In Scene Two of Act One she first appears in her bridal dress. At the end of Act Three she again changes to her bridal dress, complete with veil.

**HUGH:** He is in his early twenties, the eldest of the Porter children. Hugh is nice-looking, quiet and sincere. He wears a neat suit.

**CECIL:** Cecil is eighteen, and very likeable in a wistful, loose-jointed way. He lacks his brother Raybon's self-confidence. He wears school clothes throughout the play.

**RAYBON:** He is a handsome, self-assured boy of seventeen. He tends to dominate or overshadow Cecil, but never intentionally so. He wears school clothes, and changes to his best suit for Act Three.

**JANETTE:** She is in her mid-teens, a pretty girl with highly romantic notions about life—and herself. She wears school clothes, and changes to her best dress in Act Three.

**EDD:** He is next to the youngest in the family, a solid, dependable youngster. Throughout the play he wears school clothes, but changes to his best suit for Act Three.

**ALYENE:** Alyene is the youngest of the Porter children, and prides herself on being an authority on Shakespeare. She is forever quoting him to prove it. She is quite grown-up for her years. However, at heart, she is still a child. She, too, wears school clothes, changing to her best dress in Act Three.

**HELEN:** Helen is a charming coquette of seventeen, who is

---

not at all unaware of her "power" over the boys. Also, she is a little fashion plate.

LUCY and JENNY: Both girls are in their teens, and about the same age as Cecil and Raybon. They are not unattractive, but fail to make the best use of their natural endowments. On their first entrance both girls wear glasses and unattractive dresses. Their hair is pulled tightly back. They are easily embarrassed and collapse into giggles with little or no provocation. On their second appearance, in Scene One of Act Two, while there is still room for improvement, they look much prettier. Their hair is more attractively arranged and their clothes are more flattering. Upon their appearance in Act Three, the change is complete. They have discarded their glasses entirely. Their frocks are very attractive, and their hair is most becomingly arranged.

JEFFREY: Jeff is eighteen, a nice unassuming chap. He wears school clothes.

MISS JONAS: She is a tall, spare, spinsterish-looking woman in her fifties, with a loud, shrill voice and an air of complete self-righteousness. Throughout the play she dresses plainly and severely.

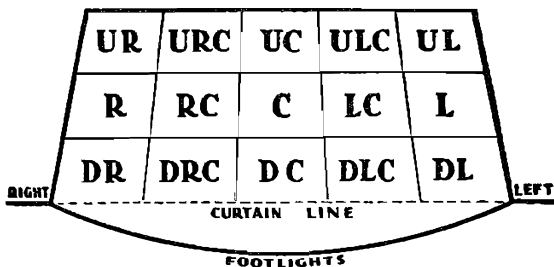
BRIDE and GROOM: The Bride is young, pretty and properly nervous. She wears a simple dress and hat and carries a bouquet. The Groom is a rather slick-looking article. He dresses somewhat flashily.

NOTE: "Papa Was a Preacher" can be staged as a contemporary play, or the action can be set in the 1920's. If the latter period is used, costumes of the 1920's will do much to enhance the charm of the play as well as bring back the feeling of the period.

The boys would wear knickers, long stockings and cardigan sweaters, while the girls would wear middy blouses and skirts or jumper-type dresses. The girls' "best" dresses should be rather short with wide sashes and bows. Papa would wear a single-breasted suit. The wedding dress, of course, should be very old-fashioned but very becoming to Mother. A severely-cut dark suit and an outlandish hat would be ideal for Miss Jonas. The women would wear cloche hats.



## CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS

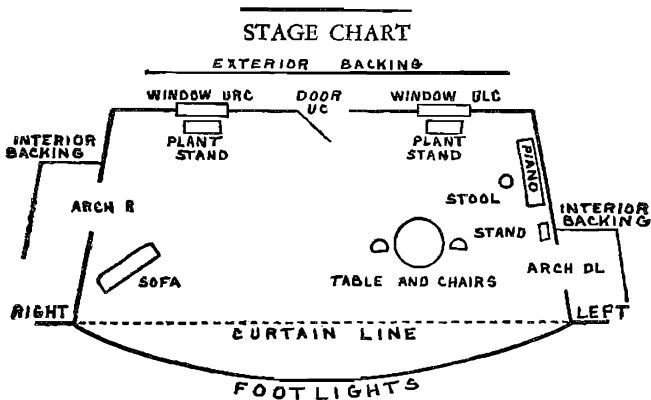


## STAGE POSITIONS

*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 to a given point.

---

NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or 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 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.



**PROPERTIES**

**GENERAL:** Curtains on windows; sofa and pillows; table and two chairs; old-fashioned lamp on table; battered upright piano and stool; music on piano and battered box-type camera on top of piano; telephone on small stand; wicker ferneries or plant stands; well-worn carpet, pictures, bric-a-brac, etc.; vases of flowers and streamers (Act Three).

**BRIDE:** Bouquet, handkerchief.

**GROOM:** Ring, checkbook.

**PAPA:** Book for wedding ceremony, letter, pamphlets.

**ALYENE:** Pen and ink, two gallon jugs containing green liquid.

**MOTHER:** Handkerchief, bridal dress and needle and thread, glass of milk and piece of pie on a plate, bouquet brought in by Miss Jonas.

**HELEN:** Small framed photograph.

**EDD:** Battered camera and two envelopes with notes.

**CECIL:** Schoolbooks, small duffle-bag.

**JANETTE:** Handkerchief.

**MISS JONAS:** Camera in case on long shoulder strap, enlarged photo, handkerchief, bouquet.

**HUGH:** Small suitcase.

**LUCY and JENNY:** Small sacks.

---

---

# ACT ONE

## Scene One

---

SCENE: *The living-room of a parsonage in a small West Texas town. It is an old house with high ceilings. The wall-paper in the room is faded, but still, there are traces of a former glory about the place. A large door U C opens onto the front veranda. On either side of this door are large, curtained windows. In the R wall at center is a small arch into a hallway that leads to Papa's study and the stairs. In the L wall, downstage, is a similar arch opening into the dining-room. The furnishings are simple—worn but neatly kept. Below the arch R, at a slight angle, is a small sofa with sofa pillows. There is a small table at L C; chairs are on either side of it. On the table is an old-fashioned lamp. A battered upright piano is against the L wall, upstage of the arch. In front of the piano is a stool. Just downstage of the piano is a small stand for the telephone. Under the two windows are wicker ferneries or plant stands. A well-worn carpet, a few pictures and odd bits of bric-a-brac complete the setting. There is about everything the air of having been donated.}*

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: *Just before the curtain rises we hear the piano playing "The Wedding March." As it finishes, the curtain rises. PAPA is performing a wedding. MOTHER is seated at the piano. The BRIDE and GROOM are at C, facing PAPA, who stands at R C, facing them, with his book. The BRIDE carries a bouquet. ALYENE stands behind the BRIDE. EDD stands behind the GROOM. PAPA is speaking:}*

PAPA [*solemnly*]. Will you, Harry, take Jean, here present, for thy lawful wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this

day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do you part?

GROOM [*after a momentary glance at BRIDE*]. I will.

PAPA. And will you, Jean, take Harry, here present, for thy lawful husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death you do part?

BRIDE [*after momentary glance at GROOM*]. I will.

PAPA [*to GROOM, sotto voce*]. The ring. [GROOM *fumbles, gets out ring.*] Now, repeat after me: "With this ring——"

GROOM. "With this ring——"

PAPA. "I thee wed——"

GROOM. "I thee wed——"

PAPA. "And plight you my troth."

GROOM. "And plight you my troth." [GROOM *slips ring on BRIDE's finger.*]

PAPA. Forasmuch as Harry and Jean have consented together in Holy Wedlock, I pronounce that they are man and wife!

BRIDE [*looking at GROOM*]. Oh, Harry! [GROOM *gives her a kiss.* MOTHER *plays a few triumphal ending chords on piano.*]

PAPA [*smiling, crossing to them*]. I hope you two will be very happy. [*Shakes GROOM's hand.*]

GROOM. Thanks, Preacher. I know we will.

BRIDE [*a little weepy*]. That was just beautiful! [MOTHER *has risen and comes to left of table L. C.*]

PAPA [*pleased*]. As many weddings as I've performed in almost twenty-five years, I still get a funny feeling in my heart every time.

MOTHER. And I still cry. [*Blinks at BRIDE and GROOM, dabbing at her eyes.*]

GROOM. Well, what do I owe you? [EDD, ALYENE and MOTHER *lean in a little on this.*]

PAPA [*after a moment's hesitation, moving to R C*]. Oh, whatever you think is right.

GROOM [*nodding, reaching in his pocket for checkbook*]. I wonder if you have a pen and some ink?

Act I            Papa Was a Preacher            Page 11

PAPA [*quickly*]. Of course! Alyene . . . [ALYENE *goes quickly out D L. The GROOM sits right of table L C. The BRIDE stands upstage of table. MOTHER moves up to piano, and EDD crosses to her.*]

BRIDE. It was very kind of you to marry us on such short notice.

PAPA [*smiling*]. I'm used to that. Love isn't ruled by the clock.

[ALYENE *hurries in D L with pen and ink and takes them to the GROOM at the table.*]

ALYENE. Here you are, sir. [*Pauses left of table.*]

GROOM. Thanks. [*Makes out check. The FAMILY tries to mask its interest.*]

MOTHER [*moving to BRIDE above table*]. I suppose you're going on a honeymoon?

BRIDE [*blushing furiously, moving to C*]. I think Harry has plans.

GROOM [*finishing*]. You bet I do! [*Tears check out with a flourish, rises and moves to C.*] Here you are, Preacher. A little token.

PAPA [*taking check*]. This is very generous.

GROOM [*taking BRIDE's arm*]. Nothing but the best for me and my missus. [*BRIDE giggles.*] Well, we'd better be on our way.

BRIDE. Yes, dear. [*She and GROOM move quickly U C.*]

MOTHER [*calling*]. Every happiness! [*They hesitate U C. The BRIDE turns and throws her little bouquet. ALYENE runs toward U C and catches it.*]

BRIDE. Good-bye.

PAPA. God be with you! [*The BRIDE and GROOM hurry out U C. ALYENE clutches bridal bouquet. MOTHER moves toward PAPA. PAPA is looking at check. EDD comes below table L C.*]

MOTHER. Was he generous, Edwin?

PAPA [*holding out check for MOTHER to see*]. More than generous.

Page 12      Papa Was a Preacher      Act I

MOTHER [*surprised*]. Gracious! Why—that's wonderful, dear!  
[*Looks at shabby sofa.*] I can slipcover the sofa for the anniversary celebration.

EDD. Do you suppose the check's any good?

PAPA [*surprised*]. Edd! [*Crosses past MOTHER to EDD.*] I'm surprised at you.

EDD. Sorry, Papa. [*Lowers his head.*]

PAPA [*looking at check*]. Of course it's good. [*Looks at MOTHER.*] We've no reason to suppose it isn't.

MOTHER. No reason at all, dear.

EDD. Except we never saw him before, and likely we'll never see him again. [*Crosses to piano, sits and fingers keys idly as scene continues.*]

PAPA [*rather sternly*]. Which is no reason to question his honesty, Edd. I'm ashamed of you. [*Crosses back to MOTHER.*]

MOTHER [*looking at check over PAPA'S shoulder*]. Surely a man wouldn't give a bad check as his marriage fee.

EDD. He looked shifty to me.

PAPA [*sternly, as MOTHER crosses to sofa and surveys it critically*]. You've got to have faith in people, Edd. How can we live together if we don't believe in one another?

MOTHER [*rearranging pillows on sofa*]. It'll make such a difference to have a new slipcover on the sofa! Everyone will be coming in here for the reception after our wedding, dear.

ALYENE [*who has been U C, mooning over bouquet*]. Seems funny to hear you and Papa talking about your wedding—  
[*Grins.*]—when you have six children. [*Crosses and sits right of table L C.*]

PAPA [*smiling fondly at MOTHER*]. Twenty-five years—two weeks from tomorrow, Pearl.

MOTHER [*coming to PAPA, smiling*]. I'm almost as excited as I was twenty-five years ago. [*Takes his arm.*]

PAPA. I hope Hugh gets home from college in time for me to coach him on the ceremony.

MOTHER. Oh, he will!

Act I                  Papa Was a Preacher                  Page 13

PAPA. It'll seem strange to have some one else saying those words.

ALYENE. I just love weddings, and this is going to be the best of all! Hugh as the minister—Cecil giving the bride away. . . .

MOTHER. Raybon will sing—and Janette will play the piano.

EDD [*with a flourish, twirling around on stool*]. And I'll be the chief usher.

ALYENE. With me as flower girl! [*Holds bouquet out in front of her dreamily.*] You should have caught the bridal bouquet, Mother. You're going to be married next.

MOTHER [*crossing back to sofa*]. I wonder what shade would be best for the slipcovers. . . . [*Sits on sofa and ponders.*]

EDD [*dryly*]. Better wait till that check goes through!

PAPA [*sternly*]. Edd!

EDD. Sorry, Papa! [*Twirls around to face piano again.*]

PAPA [*moving R*]. I'd better get to work, or there'll be no sermon for Sunday. [*Pauses in arch R.*] My subject is "Faith," Edd. [*EDD turns to look at PAPA, who nods and goes out R.*]

MOTHER [*smiling at EDD*]. I know you meant well, dear.

EDD. If everyone was like Papa, maybe I'd have more faith. [*There is a knock on door U C. EDD rises and looks out window U L C.*] It's the Smith sisters!

ALYENE [*heading quickly toward arch D L*]. I know why they're here!

MOTHER [*rising, meaning to stop ALYENE*]. Alyene! Where are you going? [*ALYENE continues out D L as EDD crosses and opens door U C.*]

[*LUCY and JENNY SMITH enter U C.*]

EDD. Hi, Lucy—Jenny!

LUCY. Hello, Edd.

JENNY [*giggling lightly*]. It's nice to see you.

EDD [*edging past them, toward door U C*]. Nice to see you, too. I was just on my way out. So long!

MOTHER [*as she sees him escaping*]. Edd! [*It is too late. EDD*

*slips out U C. As LUCY and JENNY stand uncertainly U C, MOTHER moves to them.*] Lucy—Jenny—this is a pleasant surprise! Come in, come in.

LUCY [*as she and JENNY come down to C*]. Is Janette here?

JENNY. Or Alyene?

MOTHER [*shaking her head*]. I'm sorry. Both the girls are out.

Won't you sit down? [*LUCY and JENNY exchange looks, then cross and sit very primly on edge of sofa.*] Maybe they'll be home soon. Or, if not the girls—then, maybe Cecil or Raybon. [*LUCY and JENNY perk up.*]

LUCY. That would be nice!

JENNY. Of course, you understand, we came to call on the girls—but if Cecil and Raybon happened to come in . . .

LUCY. We wouldn't want to be rude to them. Would we, Jenny?

JENNY. Oh, no!

MOTHER [*hiding a smile as she begins to see why they have come*]. I know Cecil and Raybon would be happy to see you girls.

LUCY [*hopefully*]. You really think so, Mrs. Porter?

JENNY. We thought they only had eyes for Helen Ludlow.

MOTHER [*crossing to right of table L C*]. Helen does seem to have won their hearts.

LUCY. It doesn't seem quite fair, do you think, Mrs. Porter?

MOTHER. Fair?

JENNY. That Helen Ludlow should have two boys—

LUCY. And Jenny and I don't even have one apiece.

MOTHER. That does seem unbalanced. [*Sits right of table.*]

But that's the way Cecil and Raybon have always been.

LUCY [*sighing dreamily*]. Raybon has such a beautiful voice. . . .

JENNY [*sighing*]. He sings like an angel. . . . [*There is a little pause as LUCY and JENNY lose themselves.*]

LUCY [*finally*]. The last preacher had a very small family.

MOTHER. Yes. I know.

JENNY [*pointedly*]. All girls.



MOTHER [*fumbling to say something*]. Girls are very nice . . .

JENNY. If you're a boy.

LUCY. But if you're a girl—boys are nicer.

MOTHER [*smiling*]. I've noticed that myself. [*There is another pause.*]

JENNY [*clearing her throat*]. Daddy's so interested in the church.

MOTHER. Yes, I know. Mr. Smith has been so generous. And we're very grateful.

LUCY. I think Daddy would like to do even more. [*Looks at JENNY.*]

JENNY [*nodding vigorously*]. Oh, yes! I heard him say that Mr. Porter certainly deserved a better monthly allowance and that he meant to see to it that it was arranged.

MOTHER. Why—how very thoughtful! With Hugh away at college, it hasn't been easy. If your father—

LUCY. Oh, I'm sure Daddy will do all he can, Mrs. Porter.

JENNY. He's always encouraging us to get better acquainted with your children.

MOTHER. I see.

LUCY. "Why don't you spend more time with Janette Porter?" he'll say.

JENNY. Or: "When is one of those nice Porter boys going to drop around to see you girls?"

MOTHER [*understanding*]. Well—I feel the same way. I mean—I think it would be so nice if you and Janette could be closer friends.

LUCY. And if Cecil and Raybon ever had any free time.

MOTHER. I know the boys would very much enjoy getting to know you girls.

JENNY. You really think they would, Mrs. Porter?

MOTHER. Why, yes. Yes. I'm sure of it.

LUCY [*looking at JENNY*]. Daddy would be so pleased!

JENNY [*agreeing eagerly*]. I can't think of anything that he'd like better.

MOTHER. Well, I'm sure that the boys' neglect has been an

oversight. And I'll certainly remind them that Mr. Smith has two charming daughters. [LUCY and JENNY rise, giggling happily.]

LUCY. That would just be wonderful, Mrs. Porter. [MOTHER rises.]

JENNY. It certainly would. [Takes LUCY's arm.] We'd better go. It's getting late. [She and LUCY move U C. MOTHER moves up to door U C.]

MOTHER. Remember us to your father.

LUCY. Oh, we will! And we'll be waiting. . . . [Opens door.]

JENNY [as they pause in doorway]. For Cecil and Raybon—to discover us! [She and LUCY giggle and hurry out U C. MOTHER moves R and glances toward study. She shakes her head worriedly.]

[ALYENE'S head appears around the arch D L.]

ALYENE. Are they gone?

MOTHER [facing her]. That was very rude, dear.

ALYENE [coming in, still with bouquet]. They didn't want to see me. They've only got eyes for Cecil and Raybon. [Comes below table L C.]

MOTHER [nodding]. I think they'd like me to use my "influence." [In the distance, we hear an amateur trumpeter playing with more feeling than accuracy: "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms." MOTHER reacts.] Gracious! Orley's started again!

ALYENE. The poor man's Gabriel!

MOTHER. "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms." Janette must be with him.

ALYENE. She spends all her time mooning over that horn-tooter.

MOTHER [crossing D L]. Orley's a very nice boy.

ALYENE [crossing to R C]. Without his trumpet!

MOTHER [smiling]. He loves to serenade your sister. When Cecil and Raybon come in, I want to see them. [Goes out D L.]

ALYENE [dreamily]. Yes, Mother. [Hugs bridal bouquet.

*Then, she lapses into a "dramatic" pose.*] "If that thy bent of love be honorable, thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow, by one that I'll procure to come to thee, where and what time thou wilt perform the rite, and all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay and follow thee, my lord, throughout the world!" [*Trumpet has stopped during the speech. ALYENE looks down at bouquet. She moves over to position taken by bride earlier. She is re-living the ceremony. She casts her eyes modestly down. She looks adoringly at her make-believe bridegroom. She holds out her trembling hand and has ring slipped on. Softly, she whispers:*] I do!

[*JANETTE has come quietly in U C. She is amused by ALYENE'S pantomime.*]

JANETTE [*tiptoeing softly to C*]. You do what?

ALYENE [*with a scream of surprise, staggering D L C*]. Janette Porter! You should be ashamed!

JANETTE. I didn't recognize the lucky man. Anyone I know?

ALYENE [*turning away*]. I just witnessed a wedding for Papa—and I caught the bride's bouquet.

JANETTE [*moving D R*]. It should have been me. [*Sits on sofa.*]

ALYENE [*fascinated*]. What do you mean?

JANETTE [*with a worldly air*]. Well, after all—you're a mere child. But Orley and I—

ALYENE [*moving toward JANETTE*]. What about you and Orley?

JANETTE [*maddeningly mysterious*]. You wouldn't understand.

ALYENE [*sitting on upstage arm of sofa*]. Let me try.

JANETTE [*leaning back*]. I've never known anyone like Orley Dunn. It's a marriage of true minds. [*Closes her eyes.*]

ALYENE. I suppose your love of music brought you together.

JANETTE. That's only part of it.

ALYENE [*rising*]. The loudest part.

JANETTE. I think Orley plays beautifully!

ALYENE [*unbelievably*]. You do?

JANETTE [*sitting up*]. A trumpet is—is a very difficult instrument.

ALYENE. It must be. [*Starts to door U C.*] I promised to meet Fay and go roller-skating. [*At door, she looks down at bouquet and makes a decision.*] If you don't mind its being second-hand—[*Holds up bridal bouquet.*]—catch! [*Throws it, and JANETTE catches it.*]

JANETTE [*rising*]. Are you sure you don't want it, Alyene?

ALYENE. Not while I'm roller-skating. [*Goes quickly out U C.*]

JANETTE *smiles after ALYENE, looks down at bouquet and goes out R. There is a short pause.*]

[RAYBON and HELEN LUDLOW appear at the door U C. HELEN comes in first. She carries a small framed photograph of herself. RAYBON is close behind her.]

RAYBON. If you only knew, Helen, how much this means to me!

HELEN [*coming down to C, coyly*]. Oh, Raybon! I'll bet you have a drawer full of pictures—all from pretty girls!

RAYBON [*startled*]. Helen! Did—did Cecil tell you that?

HELEN. Well—he hinted. [*Turns and moves to R C.*]

RAYBON [*pretending deep hurt*]. And you—you believed him?

HELEN [*turning to him*]. I—I didn't want to. Am I the first girl you ever asked for a picture?

RAYBON [*clearing his throat*]. Well—I wouldn't say that. [*Crosses to her.*] But let me have it, Helen—and you'll be the last!

HELEN [*moving toward sofa*]. I want to give you the picture, Raybon, but I hate to hurt Cecil. He is your own brother!

RAYBON. He's used to it.

HELEN. To being hurt? [*Sits on sofa.*]

RAYBON [*crossing toward her*]. It's good for him—develops his character.

HELEN [*coyly, looking up at him*]. What about your character, Raybon?

RAYBON. It's fully developed. [*Reaches out for photo.*] May I have the picture?