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*Dramatic Publishing*



A Play in Two Acts

by

WILLIAM DAVIDSON

# Room for One More

Dramatized from the book

by

ANNA PERROTT' ROSE WRIGHT



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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(ROOM FOR ONE MORE)

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# Room for One More

*A Play in Two Acts*

FOR FOUR MEN AND EIGHT WOMEN

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Originally produced by the class of 1951 of the Eveleth High School, Eveleth, Minnesota, under the direction of Miss Luella McMahon, with the following cast:

*(In the order of their appearance)*

MOTHER	.....	Valerie Beard
JOEY	.....	William Malevich
TROT ROSE	.....	Elaine Carlstedt
TEENSIE ROSE	.....	Geraldine Debelak
JANEY	.....	Marilyn Moog
BETTY	.....	Marjorie Flom
MISS WINSTON	.....	Roxana Parker
POPPY	.....	Charles Brandt
JIMMY JOHN	.....	Franklin Rainaldi
MRS. BIDDLE	.....	Joan Gruden
GEORGE BIDDLE	.....	Fred Butler
RESCUED WOMAN	.....	Lorraine Claus

PLACE: *The living-room and dining-room of the Pumpkin Shell, a small summer cottage on the New Jersey coast.*

TIME: *The present. Summer and early fall.*

## SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE, *Scene One: About five-thirty of an afternoon in June.*  
*Scene Two: Two weeks later. Afternoon.*

ACT TWO, *Scene One: Early September. Afternoon.*  
*Scene Two: Early fall. Evening, one year later.*

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## NOTES ON CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

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**NOTE:** Throughout the play, unless otherwise indicated, the children wear the usual assortment of knockabout clothes suitable for summer vacation at the seashore—blue jeans, slacks, wrap-around skirts, loud sports shirts, shorts, swim trunks, bathing suits. None of their clothes look too new, and show signs of hard wear. They are chosen—and worn—for comfort and convenience.

**MOTHER:** She is in her early forties, quiet, competent, and thoroughly lovable. Her love for the children is real and deep. More than that, she respects them—and their intelligence. Throughout the play she dresses in comfortable summer clothes.

**JOEY:** Joey is in his late teens, a good-looking, dependable boy. He is straightforward and sincere, with a warm, generous nature. In the final scene of Act Two he wears a suit.

**TROT:** She is a happy, laughing, and competent girl of Joey's age. She wears a formal in the final scene of Act Two.

**TEENSIE:** She is in her early teens—an intense, earnest girl. She practically never stands still, and the childlike in her nature is often more apparent than the budding girlhood. Her favorite costume is a faded pair of blue jeans. In the final scene of Act Two she wears one of Betty's formals, and looks quite grown up.

**JANEY:** Janey is a tall, slender girl in her mid-teens, with scared, anxious eyes. She is hesitant at first, unsure of herself and on the defensive. As the play progresses, she gains confidence. She wears a formal with an attractive scarf about her shoulders in the final scene of Act Two.

**BETTY:** Betty is Joey's age, attractive, loyal, persistent, and slightly spoiled. She dresses far better than the other children, and in the final scene of Act Two she wears a formal.

MISS WINSTON: She is a worried-looking social worker of thirty-five, dressed plainly with flat heels and an unattractive hat.

POPPY: Poppy is around forty-five, a quiet, gently-humorous man who shares his wife's deep love for children. He wears a business suit.

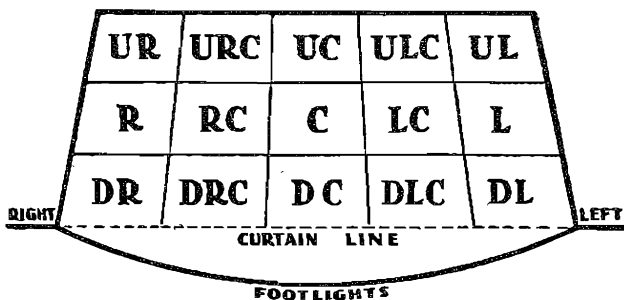
JIMMY JOHN: He is a pale, thin boy of Teensie's age. He walks with a cane—or crutches. Jimmy John is a typical product of the slums, tough, surly, suspicious. Supposedly, he wears leg braces, but these are assumed to be hidden under his trouser legs. On his first entrance he wears worn, nondescript clothes, probably castoffs. Later in the play he wears clothes similar to those worn by the other children. In the final scene of Act Two he wears a suit belonging to Joey. The coat is not a bad fit, but the trousers are definitely Charlie Chaplin.

MRS. BIDDLE: She is a gracious, affectionate woman in her forties, but mentally a lightweight. She wears good-looking sports clothes.

GEORGE: He is in his late teens, an easygoing, unassuming chap. In the final scene in Act Two he is dressed for the dance.

RESCUED WOMAN: She is middle-aged and nondescript. She wears a voluminous beach cloak.

## CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



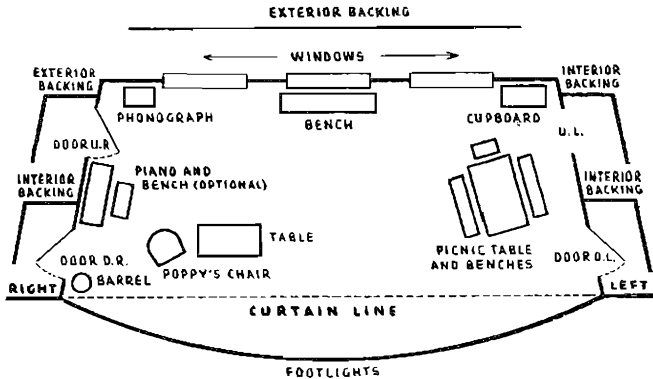
## STAGE POSITIONS

*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.

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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.

## STAGE CHART



## PROPERTIES

GENERAL: Picnic table and benches; smaller bench with back; cupboard; assortment of dishes, glassware, napkins, cutlery, etc., in cupboard; foghorn on cupboard; bench by windows, smaller table; terrarium on table; Poppy's chair; phonograph; upright piano and bench (optional); sheet music on piano; records by phonograph; old flour barrel; articles in flour barrel; broom; oil lamps on picnic table, cupboard, piano; curtain over kitchen doorway; miscellaneous articles about room. ACT ONE, SCENE ONE: on picnic table—typewriter, paper, pencil, spoons, bowl or pan of frosting; crackers, cookies; chocolate cake in kitchen; articles for dinner in kitchen, including carrots; pail of water and encyclopedia on cupboard; band aid in kitchen; bouquet of flowers in vase in kitchen; six pails in kitchen; match swab in kitchen. ACT ONE, SCENE TWO: cookies on cupboard, box of jello with red label on picnic table; two cups, pot of coffee, jello in bowl to mix, stove wick in box, small strainer of garbage, all in kitchen. ACT TWO, SCENE ONE: cook book, cake batter, cake pan, ingredients for baking, all on picnic table; paint brush and stick on cupboard; Jimmy John's elastic band in barrel; picture



of Poppy on piano. ACT TWO, SCENE TWO: record to play, near phonograph (if piano not used); pile of bills, checkbook, pencil, on picnic table; Jimmy John's cane by barrel; knife in kitchen; small sewing bag on table D R C.

MOTHER: Several packages, brief case, papers, letters (including doctor's bill), pencil.

POPPY: Mail, with one particularly large envelope; newspaper; large watch on chain; letter in coat pocket.

TEENSIE: Bathing suit.

TROT: Bathing cap and swim suit, large bag of groceries.

JOEY: Baseball bat, swimming trunks, five-dollar bill, suitcase, matches.

JANEY: Scarf, gallon-size can of paint.

MISS WINSTON: Brief case with notebook, pencil, case files, etc.; watch.

BETTY: Swim suit.

JIMMY JOHN: Cane or crutches (leg braces are assumed to be hidden by trouser legs); Poppy's watch.

GEORGE: Gallon-size can of paint.

RESCUED WOMAN: Dollar bill.

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# ACT ONE

## Scene One

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SCENE: *The living-room and dining-room of the Pumpkin Shell, a small summer cottage on the New Jersey coast. It is essentially a lived-in cottage, where wholesome fun takes the place of expensive pastimes. Across the back wall are as many windows as possible, preferably casement, extending to the floor. These windows open on a broad beach with the ocean beyond. In the R wall, upstage, is a door which leads to the beach and a neighbor's cottage off R. Off L are the public pump and the highway, although it is possible to enter directly from off R in coming from the highway and the mailbox. A door D R leads to a sleeping porch, the "Boys' Porch." In the L wall, upstage, is a curtained entrance to a small kitchen. A door D L leads to another sleeping porch, the "Girls' Porch." At L C, running upstage and downstage is a large picnic-type wooden table with long benches on either side of it. Upstage of the table is a smaller bench with a back to it. In the U L corner of the room is a cupboard. The upper part has doors, while the lower part is covered with a curtain. In and on the cupboard is a mixed assortment of dishes, glassware, and cheap cutlery. At D R C is a smaller table. Right of it is POPPY'S chair, large and overstuffed, and not in keeping with the rest of the house. On the smaller table, serving as a centerpiece, is a small terrarium, affectionately called the "snake pit," filled with greenery and supposedly containing a small tortoise and a small garter snake. Well D R is an old flour barrel. Behind this barrel is a small hole in the floor. (This can be assumed.) Against the R wall, between the doors D R and*

U R, is an old upright piano, with a bench in front of it. (This piano is optional.) There is a bench U C, by the windows, and an old phonograph U R. Oil lamps are on the picnic table, cupboard, and piano. Scattered about the room are bathing suits, tennis shoes, tennis rackets, balls, seashells, books, and almost anything denoting a room fully lived in by children.]

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: It is about five-thirty of a beautiful afternoon in late June. MOTHER is seated at the lower end of the bench left of the picnic table. She is pecking away at a typewriter on the table. She stops and turns to the bench at her left, where she begins to stir a bowl of chocolate frosting. As the curtain comes full up, JOEY dashes across back of the windows U C and comes full gallop to the door U R. He is carrying a baseball bat.]

JOEY [as he whams open outside door U R]. Poppy's missed the five-five! [Comes in U R.]

MOTHER [looking up from her stirring]. Not again?

JOEY [stripping off T shirt, which he tosses on floor just downstage of door U R]. It's getting so he's late all the time now. [Comes to above table D R C and places the baseball bat on table.] We're goin' to grab a swim. [Dashes toward "Boys' Porch," D R.] Coming?

MOTHER [still stirring]. No, I'll wait for Poppy.

JOEY [coming to right of picnic table, bending across]. What are you making?

MOTHER. Chocolate frosting. [JOEY picks up spoon, tastes frosting as MOTHER speaks.] Janey loves it so—and she's leaving tomorrow.

JOEY. She's been here two weeks already? Quiet kid. [Puts down spoon, crosses D R, and goes out hurriedly.]

[TROT crosses back of the windows, also on the run. As she enters U R, she is untying her wrap-around skirt, which she throws in the general direction of the chair D R C, and misses.]

TROT. Poppy's late again!

MOTHER [*who continues stirring unless otherwise indicated*].  
Joey told me.

TROT [*coming toward table to look on benches*]. We're going swimming. Have you seen my bathing cap? [*Looks.*]

MOTHER [*motioning to barrel*]. Did you look in the barrel?

TROT [*kneeling in front of cupboard U L, looking through it*].

I cleaned my stuff out of there yesterday—four buckets' worth.

MOTHER. It might be in your room—although I haven't the *slightest* idea who would have dropped it there.

TROT [*dubiously, but with good nature*]. Maybe the dog. I could look. [*Crosses D L.*]

MOTHER. Trot, first, will you turn the wick down under the hamburgers? Poppy hates them overdone.

TROT. Sure. [*Goes into kitchen and then reappears, coming to upper end of picnic table.*] Ummmmm! What's that? Cake?

MOTHER [*indicating bowl*]. With chocolate frosting. It's Janey's last night.

TROT [*taking spoon, also testing frosting*]. She won't get much of that at the Home.

MOTHER. I hate to have them take her back. I don't feel that we've done anything for her.

TROT [*who has been dabbing some chocolate frosting on a cracker which she has picked up from table, now going to table D R C, jokingly, as she leans over terrarium*]. Want a taste of chocolate frosting, Cleopatra? [*She pops the cracker in her own mouth.*] Mother, where is Myrtle the Turtle?

MOTHER. Teensie put Myrtle in the pail for a swim. [*She indicates a small pail under the table.*]

TROT. Oh. But, Mother, Janey still doesn't go near the ocean. She says the waves act so hungry.

MOTHER. She never saw an ocean until two weeks ago, Trot.

TROT [*arranging greenery in the terrarium*]. When Joey'd been here two weeks, he could swim.

MOTHER. Poppy spent a great deal of time with Joey.

TROT. With all of us, Poppy used to get out early enough for a swim.

MOTHER. He says he can't roll through things the way he did before he was sick.

TROT [*crossing, picking up spoons which she and JOEY have used to taste frosting*]. At least next week he's vacationing. [*Goes into kitchen and comes right back in.*]

MOTHER [*looking worried*]. He's promised to. . . . [TROT goes out D L.] Oh, Trot, we mustn't let him get run down again.

[*As TROT goes out, TEENSIE comes tearing along back of the windows and in U R.*]

TEENSIE. Mom, we're goin' swimmin'! [*Kicks off shoes as she tears D L. Then she turns and crosses to pail under table.*] I'm going to take my turtle swimming. [*Takes pail, dashing D L again.*]

MOTHER. I don't believe I would, Teensie. You can drown a turtle, you know, and you have had it in that pail of water a long time already.

TEENSIE. All right, I won't. [*Takes pail back to table.*] I'll put him back in the terrarium while we swim in the ocean. [*Forgetting turtle, she crosses to right of picnic table, opposite MOTHER, and kneels on bench.*] Mother, can I scrape the bowl? [*Grabs spoonful, eats it.*]

MOTHER. It isn't ready yet, Teensie.

TEENSIE. Tastes good to me. [*Gives spoon final lick and dashes out D L.* MOTHER smiles after her, looks at frosting. Apparently it needs more stirring. She continues pecking at typewriter and becomes fully absorbed.]

[*At this moment, JANEY enters U R. She is hesitant, unsure of herself—on the defensive. She crosses D R, along the R side of the room, giving the table D R C, which contains the "snake pit," a wide berth. MOTHER looks up.*]

MOTHER. Why, Janey, I didn't hear you come in.

JANEY [D R, her shoulders hunched together as though to

*draw away from terrarium on table*]. I guess nobody listens much to what I do. [*Speaks self-pityingly.*]

MOTHER [*rising, taking a spoonful of chocolate frosting, walking toward JANEY*]. Here, I'll give you a spoonful of chocolate.

JANEY [*tempted by bait, starting toward her, below table which contains terrarium*]. All right.

MOTHER. Now, open your mouth. [*JANEY suddenly recoils.*]  
Why, what's the matter?

JANEY [*backing away*]. I don't want to look at that. [*Indicates terrarium.*]

MOTHER. The new centerpiece? [*JANEY nods.*] There's nothing in there but greenery—and a harmless little six-inch garter snake.

JANEY. It makes me think of things I dream about.

MOTHER [*approaching her*]. Well, this won't. [*Puts spoonful of frosting into JANEY's mouth.*]

JANEY [*savoring it and coming out of her mood for a moment*]. It tastes too good to be true.

MOTHER [*returning to her place at typewriter*]. Aren't you going down to the beach with the gang?

JANEY [*without interest*]. I guess so. [*Seats herself on right arm of POPPY's chair, as far as possible from terrarium.*]

MOTHER [*sitting down to typewriter again*]. Then hop into a bathing suit.

JANEY. It's silly.

MOTHER. Why, Janey?

JANEY. I only sit on the sand.

MOTHER. Try sitting in the water—just a little. [*Starts typing.*]

JANEY. They're coming to take me away tomorrow. There's no use scaring myself into bad dreams with something I'll never learn to do. [*Rises, moves toward MOTHER, carefully avoiding terrarium.*] Are you writing a report?

MOTHER. No, it's a story about young people. I hope to sell it to *Children's Magazine*.

JANEY [*kneeling on bench right of picnic table*]. The Superin-

tendent at the Home writes on a typewriter, too. She writes reports.

MOTHER. What are they about?

JANEY [*sitting back on her haunches*]. Us, I guess. She's always writing reports.

MOTHER. What's she like?

JANEY. I dunno. I don't hardly ever see her. She's too busy writing reports to be bothered with us. [*JOEY enters D R. He carries swimming trunks.*]

JOEY [*starting U R, seeing JANEY*]. Come on, Janey.

JANEY. I'm not goin'. I can't swim.

JOEY [*running to her, taking her hand, persuasively*]. You'll never learn in the house.

JANEY [*pulling back from him, not rising*]. Them big waves. They reach for you—like dragons with their mouths open. [*BETTY enters U R, carrying a swim suit.*]

BETTY [*seeing JOEY*]. Aren't you ready yet? [*Comes to c.*] Hello, Mrs. Rose.

MOTHER [*rising, beating frosting*]. Hello, Betty.

JOEY [*not moving*]. Sure, I'm ready.

BETTY [*moving to POPPY'S chair*]. You ought to have come for me—now that we're going steady. [*Sits.*]

JOEY [*moving back of BETTY, teasingly*]. Now that we're going steady, I don't have to.

BETTY [*to MOTHER*]. I'd try to make him jealous, but he won't even notice.

MOTHER [*laughing and going into kitchen with frosting*]. I'm afraid you'll not find Joey a very spectacular boy friend.

BETTY [*looking affectionately up at JOEY, who is behind her chair*]. I don't care. I like the kind you can count on. [*JOEY starts for door U R, followed by BETTY. BETTY turns at the door and speaks to JANEY.*] Aren't you coming, Janey?

JANEY [*not stirring from her bench*]. I don't like the waves. They keep coming and coming and coming. [*MOTHER re-enters from kitchen with bowl again and sits at the typewriter again.*]

BETTY [*crossing to JANEY*]. George told me to be sure to bring you.

JANEY [*without moving*]. Why?

BETTY [*holding out her hand*]. I guess he thought it would be fun.

JANEY. Me? Fun?

BETTY. Of course.

JANEY [*taking BETTY'S hand, rising*]. All right—I'll come down and look for a while. [*Goes half way to door U R, then turns toward MOTHER.*] But the sides of that ocean are too far apart. [*JOEY goes out U R, followed by BETTY and JANEY. They cross back of windows.*]

[*TROT comes in D L, swinging her bathing cap and carrying a swimming suit.*]

TROT [*walking briskly toward door U R*]. Teensie was collecting sea shells in it.

MOTHER. Trot. [*TROT returns to above table D R C, fastening her bathing cap.*] Try to get Janey to wade just a little. I hate to have them take her away tomorrow when she's never even had her feet wet.

TROT [*still working on bathing cap*]. She's sort of scared of everything. But I like her. She's one of the best we've ever had visit us from the Home.

MOTHER. Better than Joey?

TROT [*going toward door U R*]. Nobody could be as nice as Joey. [*Goes out U R.*]

[*TEENSIE catapults in D L, waving her bathing suit.*]

TEENSIE. Can I scrape the bowl? [*Starts toward MOTHER.*]

MOTHER. It isn't ready yet—but, if you want to miss your swim—

TEENSIE. You keep it for me. I guess I'll swim. [*Hustles out U R and across windows at back. MOTHER looks after her a moment, smiling tenderly. Then she puts bowl in kitchen and starts back to typewriter. On the way, she looks around room and begins to gather up odds and ends off floor into a*



*huge bundle. As she is about C, with her arms full, there is a knock on the door U R.*]

MOTHER [*stooping for another shoe*]. Come in.

[*MISS WINSTON, whom we have seen passing the windows, enters U R. She is a worried-looking woman who carries a brief case.*]

MISS WINSTON [*troubled*]. Oh, may I? The drive out has been quite exhausting. [*Sits on bench above picnic table.*]

MOTHER [*still picking things up*]. Janey wasn't expecting you until tomorrow.

MISS WINSTON [*studying her wrist ruefully*]. I was able to arrange my schedule more efficiently by taking her today.

MOTHER [*crossing to barrel with armload of "loot" which she has gathered*]. Janey isn't going to take at all kindly to your accelerated schedule. [*Dumps load into barrel, notices MISS WINSTON'S bewildered look, and says laughingly.*] This is the pump.

MISS WINSTON. The pump?

MOTHER. Our water barrel. [*Starts demonstrating by holding up a shoe, a shirt, etc., from barrel.*] For every mislaid article that's bailed out of it, one bucket of water must be poured into the water tank. It's quite a walk to the public pump. [*Notices MISS WINSTON studying her wrist.*] What happened to your wrist?

MISS WINSTON [*flexing wrist*]. A child we're placing at the Bensons' for short-term boarding home care. He didn't want to go, so he bit me!

MOTHER [*crossing rapidly into kitchen*]. Let me get you a band aid. [*Offstage.*] I hope there's one left, although I don't know why there should be. Joey, who aspires to be a doctor, put one on the dog yesterday, and Teensie has been using them for mosquito bites. [*Re-enters with one, which she puts on MISS WINSTON'S wrist.*] There, that ought to fix you up—unless, of course, he has rabies.

MISS WINSTON [*horribly concerned*]. Rabies! I shall have him tested at once. [*Enters it efficiently into notebook, despite her*

*fear.* MOTHER *has picked up broom and is sweeping floor, guiding her pile of dust over toward the barrel. As MISS WINSTON writes, she speaks in a most efficient tone.*] Quite a complicated case. An orphan, crippled in polio. He's had to live in an orthopedic hospital practically his entire life.

MOTHER. Oh, no!

MISS WINSTON [*leafing through her case record*]. But he's had very good care.

MOTHER [*looking out the window*]. But imagine having spent your entire life smelling a hospital! [*She takes a deep breath.*]

MISS WINSTON. It's a very clean smell.

MOTHER [*absently, still looking out window*]. Is it?

MISS WINSTON. You see it's taken ten—[*She leafs through her case record.*]*—no, twelve operations to get him so he can walk—with braces.*

MOTHER. Polio?

MISS WINSTON. Yes. It has been recommended that we find a home where he can have some family life before he goes back for his other operations. But he has such a dreadful temper. [*She looks at the adhesive on her wrist.*]

MOTHER. More—after twelve?

MISS WINSTON. Oh, yes—several. They transplant live nerves to take the place of those which have been injured and operate on the bones besides.

MOTHER. Then he's been hurt practically his entire life.

MISS WINSTON. They use sedatives, you know.

MOTHER [*ignoring this*]. No wonder he has a temper!

MISS WINSTON [*looking at her wrist*]. Unfortunately they can't operate on that.

MOTHER. No, that takes living with others. [*With a quick twist, she sweeps dust into hole. MISS WINSTON looks at her inquiringly again.*] Our house stands on concrete posts. This hole in the floor is my especial patent. It's known as the "Rose Hole." I drop the dust into it—and the wind blows it away. [*Crosses to her.*] How old is the boy?

MISS WINSTON. Thirteen.

MOTHER [*looking over MISS WINSTON's shoulder at the record with great interest*]. Will he ever walk without braces?

MISS WINSTON. He might, if he gets the other operations and has the proper care and exercise afterwards. That's very important. I hope I can get him into the Bensons' without any further expression of his anti-social tendencies. [*She slaps the book shut.*] You can tell Ellen to be ready in about half an hour.

MOTHER. Janey! [*MOTHER finds another article and takes it to barrel.*]

MISS WINSTON. Oh, yes, Janey. [*Begins to put things into brief case.*] I have such a large case load, it's difficult to remember names without the written records before me.

[*POPPY has come into view above the windows—coming from L to R. He looks tired and walks slowly. However, as he reaches the door U R, he straightens up and enters in a mood of apparent good humor. He is singing his favorite song, which from here on becomes a sort of theme song for the play—"Daisy." He is dressed in a business suit, but carries his coat over his shoulder. He also carries the mail and a newspaper.*]

POPPY [*entering, singing*]. "Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer true—I'm half crazy, all for the love of you." Done. [*Breaks off song, approaching MOTHER, who is standing above barrel.*] Hi, Mother.

MOTHER. Hello, dear. You know Miss Winston? [*Indicates her; she is still sitting above table getting paraphernalia together.*]

POPPY. Oh, yes—how are you, Miss Winston? [*Approaches her.*]

MISS WINSTON. All right. [*Looks at her wrist, adds dubiously.*] I hope.

POPPY [*moving above his chair D R C, hanging coat on it*]. Where is everybody? [*Takes out large watch on chain and looks at it.*]

MOTHER [*still examining barrel*]. Swimming.