



PHOTO BY HENRY GROSSMAN

Barbara Bel Geddes, Barry Nelson, Beatrice Straight and other members of the cast of "Everything in the Garden" in a scene from the New York production. Set designed by William Ritman.

EDWARD ALBEE'S

EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN

FROM THE PLAY BY GILES COOPER



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DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

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From the play "Everything In The Garden" by Giles Cooper

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TO THE MEMORY OF

GILES COOPER

EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN was first presented by Theater 1968 (Richard Barr-Clinton Wilder) at the Plymouth Theatre, in New York City, on November 29, 1967. It was directed by Peter Glenville; the setting and costumes were by William Ritman; and the lighting was by Tharon Musser. The cast, in order of appearance, was as follows:

JENNY Barbara Bel Geddes
 RICHARD Barry Nelson
 JACK Robert Moore
 MRS. TOOTHE Beatrice Straight
 ROGER Richard Thomas
 BERYL Mary K. Wells
 CHUCK Whitfield Connor
 LOUISE M'el Dowd
 GILBERT Tom Aldredge
 PERRY Charles Baxter
 CYNTHIA Augusta Dabney

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Edward Albee was born in 1928, and began writing plays thirty years later. His previous plays are, in order of composition, THE ZOO STORY (1958); THE DEATH OF BESSIE SMITH (1959); THE SANDBOX (1959); THE AMERICAN DREAM (1960); WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? (1961-1962); THE BALLAD OF THE SAD CAFE, adapted from Carson McCullers' novella (1963); TINY ALICE (1964); MALCOLM, adapted from James Purdy's novel (1965); and A DELICATE BALANCE (1966).

THE PLAYERS

RICHARD, a pleasant-looking man, 43.

JENNY, his wife, an attractive woman in her late thirties.

ROGER, their son, a nice-looking boy, 14 or 15.

JACK, a neighbor, a pleasant-looking man, about 40.

MRS. TOOTHE, an elegantly dressed, handsome lady, 50 or so.

CHUCK and BERYL.

GILBERT and LOUISE.

CYNTHIA and PERRY, friends and neighbors, very much like Richard and Jenny.

THE SCENE

The livingroom and sunroom of a suburban house, a large and well-kept garden visible through the glass doors of the sunroom. This was an old house and the sunroom is clearly an addition to the existing structure, though not jarring. There is no wealth evident in the set; taste and ingenuity have been used instead of money.

EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN

ACT ONE

Scene One

Stage empty, sounds of lawnmower (hand) out picture window. Richard passes window, mowing, stops, mops, goes on. Jenny enters room from hall, looking for a cigarette, finds pack on mantel, finds it empty, is about to throw it away, remembers, removes coupons, then is about to throw pack in wastebasket when she spies another empty pack therein, shakes her head, stoops, takes it out, un-crumple it, removes coupons.

JENNY. (*Shakes her head, under her breath.*) Honestly! (*Louder, but Richard cannot possibly hear.*) You might remember! (*Richard passes window again, mowing, Jenny opens glass door, speaks out to him.*) You might remember! (*He goes on mowing, irritated.*) Richard! (*He stops.*)

RICHARD. (*We really don't hear him.*) Hm?

JENNY. You might try to remember! (*Turns, comes back in, leaving glass door open.*)

RICHARD. (*Follows her in, mopping neck with handkerchief.*) I might what?

JENNY. You might remember. (*Leaves it at that.*)

RICHARD. (*Thinks.*) All right. (*Pause.*) I might remember what?

JENNY. (*Still looking for a cigarette.*) When you throw them away.

RICHARD. (*Considers that.*) Um-hum. (*Pause.*) May I go back out now? Somebody's got to get the damn lawn mowed, and I don't notice any gardeners out there waiting for me to tell them what . . .

JENNY. (*Finding every cigarette box empty.*) I've told you two

thousand times: well, I've told you *two* things two thousand times: please keep cigarettes in the house . . .

RICHARD. (*Used to it, but airy.*) You're running it.

JENNY. (*Something of the strict schoolteacher creeping in.*) When you finish a pack, do two things—I've told you . . .

RICHARD. —two thousand times—

JENNY. (*Closes her eyes for a moment, goes on.*) . . . first, when you finish a pack, look to see if it's the last one—the last pack . . .

RICHARD. (*Bored, impatient.*) Yes, ma'am.

JENNY. (*Undaunted.*) And if it is, put it down to get some more, or tell me . . .

RICHARD. (*Ibid.*) O.K.; O.K.

JENNY. Whenever you *do* finish a pack, don't forget to take the coupons off. Please? The coupons? We save them?

RICHARD. Did I forget?

JENNY. You *always* forget. We smoke these awful things just to get the coupons . . .

RICHARD. (*Offhand.*) O.K.

JENNY. (*After a small pause.*) Do you have any?

RICHARD. Coupons?

JENNY. (*Not amused.*) Cigarettes!

RICHARD. (*Feels.*) Um-hum. (*Suddenly aware.*) Want one? (*Offers her the pack.*)

JENNY. (*Sees the pack.*) Why, you dog! Those aren't . . . What are you—how dare you smoke *those* cigarettes, those don't have coupons, you . . . Do you mean I sit in here, ruining my lungs, piling up coupons, while you're sneaking around . . .

RICHARD. (*Giggles at being caught.*) Caught me, huh?

JENNY. You little . . . twerp!

RICHARD. (*Lighting for her.*) Big twerp. Good, aren't they?

JENNY. (*Rue.*) Yes. (*Pause.*) How's the lawn?

RICHARD. Growing.

JENNY. Remember what I told you: watch out for the tulips.

RICHARD. (*Exaggerated contrition.*) Well, I gotta confess I got carried away, zooming along with the mower, (*Fast shiver sound.*) br-br-br-br-br-br-br-br, mowed 'em down; by the time I got control of myself must have chopped up a good two dozen of 'em. (*Afterthought.*) Sorry.

JENNY. (*Nods knowingly.*) Well, it wasn't funny that time you

did. (*More-or-less to herself.*) Honestly, a grown man running a lawnmower through a tulip bed.

RICHARD. (*Jaunty and proud.*) I rather liked it. Besides, what do you mean, "How's the lawn?" What do you care about the lawn? It could turn into one big dandelion patch for all you'd care so long as it didn't interfere with your hollyhocks and your tulips and your pink Williams, or whatever they are.

JENNY. (*Superior, but friendly.*) We all do what we're equipped for. Some of us are fit for keeping a lawn cut, and others . . . well, how green is my thumb.

RICHARD. (*Looks at it all.*) Looks good. Your scrambled eggs are a mess, but you sure can keep a garden.

JENNY. (*Sweet-and-sour.*) I'm just an outdoor type.

RICHARD. (*Kisses her forehead.*) Yes. You are. (*Collapses in an easy chair, groans with fatigue.*) OOOOOHHHHhhhhhhhhhhhh, God!

JENNY. Hm?

RICHARD. (*Sincere and sad.*) I wish we could afford things.

JENNY. (*Muted, ironic.*) Keep smoking! Save those coupons!

RICHARD. Roger call? He get to school O.K.?

JENNY. Yes, he has three roommates this year, and they're going to let him have his bike.

RICHARD. (*Very young again.*) I wish they'd let me have a power mower.

JENNY. Well, you can't have one, so just . . . (*Leaves it unfinished.*)

RICHARD. I am probably the only natural-born citizen east of the Rockies who does not have a power mower.

JENNY. Well, you cannot have one, so let it be.

RICHARD. (*Points vaguely around, suggesting the neighborhood.*) Alan has one; Clinton, Mark! Mark's got one he trades in every . . .

JENNY. (*Surprisingly sharp.*) No! (*Silence.*)

RICHARD. (*To himself.*) Forty-three years old and I haven't even got a power mower. (*Silence.*)

JENNY. Do you want something? Some tea, or a sandwich?

RICHARD. (*Sharp.*) Can we afford it?

JENNY. (*Through her teeth.*) Barely.

RICHARD. (*Gets up, paces, offhand.*) You, uh . . . you want to

get a divorce? Get married again? Someone with money? Somebody with a power mower?

JENNY. (*Weary, matter-of-fact.*) Not this week; I'm too busy.

RICHARD. (*Abstracted.*) You let me know. (*Back to her.*) How much?

JENNY. Hm?

RICHARD. How much do you spend? On, on seeds, and manure, and shears, and . . .

JENNY. (*Gets up.*) Oh, for God's . . .

RICHARD. . . and, and bulbs, and stakes to hold the damn plants up, and . . .

JENNY. (*Angry, but, still, rather bravura.*) Plow it up! Plow the whole damn garden under! Put in gravel! And while you're at it, get rid of the grass!

RICHARD. (*Shrugs.*) Everybody has grass.

JENNY. (*Furious.*) EVERYBODY HAS A GARDEN! (*Still angry, but softer.*) I am willing; I am willing to scrimp, and eat what I don't really want to half the time, and dress like something out of a forties movie . . .

RICHARD. (*Regretting the whole thing.*) All right; all right . . .

JENNY. . . and not have a maid, and only have my hair done twice a month, and not say let's go away for the weekend . . .

RICHARD. All right!

JENNY. . . to pay and pay on this god-damned house . . .

RICHARD. (*Soft, reasonable, but infuriating.*) . . . everybody has a house . . .

JENNY. . . and the bloody car . . .

RICHARD. . . . we need a car . . .

JENNY. . . . and Roger's school . . .

RICHARD. (*Tre up a little.*) When the public schools in this country . . .

JENNY. . . . and all the insurance . . .

RICHARD. We die, you know.

JENNY. . . . and everything else! Every money-eating thing!

RICHARD. Don't forget the government; it's hungry.

JENNY. I'll do it all, I'll . . . I'll smoke those awful cigarettes, I'll . . . but I will not. I will not give up my garden.

RICHARD. (*Gentle, placating.*) I wouldn't ask you to.

JENNY. We live beyond our means, we have no right to be here,

we're so far in the hole you'll have to rob a bank or something, we've . . .

RICHARD. I love your garden.

JENNY. (*Quieting down some.*) There are some things I will just not do: and first in line is I will not give up my garden.

RICHARD. No; of course not.

JENNY. I love my garden.

RICHARD. Yes.

JENNY. The way the florist charges, if we had to buy cut flowers . . .

RICHARD. I know, I know.

JENNY. Now, if we had a greenhouse . . .

RICHARD. A greenhouse!

JENNY. Yes, well, a small one, just enough to raise some orchids in . . . (*Sees Richard rise, move off shaking his head.*)

. . . Where are you going?

RICHARD. I'm going out to kill myself.

JENNY. But why!?

RICHARD. (*Losing control.*) Do you know how much a greenhouse costs!?

JENNY. (*Getting mad.*) I'M TRYING TO SAVE MONEY!

RICHARD. (*Dismissing her.*) You're insane.

JENNY. Do you know how much cut flowers cost?

RICHARD. (*Mimicking her.*) Do you know how much a greenhouse costs?

JENNY. I am trying to save money.

RICHARD. (*Tiny pause, then.*) Then why don't you go to Paris and buy Christian Dior!? That way you won't have to pay for your dresses. (*Silence.*)

JENNY. (*Preoccupied.*) Do you want some tea? Or a sandwich? (*Richard shakes his head, silence. A little sad, wistful, but reassuring.*) We will have a greenhouse, someday. I'll make it nice; you'll have a livingroom full of flowering plants; you'll like it very much.

RICHARD. (*Mildly ironic, sad.*) Can I have a power mower first?

JENNY. (*Nice.*) You can have everything.

RICHARD. (*Sighs.*) That will be nice.

JENNY. (*Wistful.*) And so can I, and everything will be lovely.

RICHARD. (*After a silence.*) The thing I don't like about being poor . . .

JENNY. (*Correcting by rote.*) . . . about not having money . . .
 RICHARD. The thing I don't like about being—about not having money . . .
 JENNY. (*A little embarrassed, as if someone might overhear.*) We're not starving.
 RICHARD. No, we eat, but if we didn't belong to the, the (*Points out the window.*) club we'd eat a lot better.
 JENNY. (*Patient agreement.*) Yes.
 RICHARD. If we didn't try to live like our friends we might put something away sometime.
 JENNY. (*Ibid.*) Um-hum.
 RICHARD. Friends we didn't have, by the way, until we moved here, took this place . . .
 JENNY. But friends.
 RICHARD. Oh, yeah, well, you find them. (*Tossed-off, but sincere.*) We don't live right.
 JENNY. (*Throws her head back, laughs.*) Oh God!
 RICHARD. We don't!
 JENNY. Poor baby.
 RICHARD. (*As if in a debate.*) You live in a forty-thousand-dollar house and you have to smoke bad cigarettes to get the coupons so you can afford a good vacuum so you can clean it; you belong to the club so you can pay back dinner invitations from people you wouldn't even know if you hadn't joined the club in the first place, and you *joined* the club, *and* learned how to play tennis, because you decided to move into a neighborhood where everybody belonged to the club.
 JENNY. (*Noncommittal.*) Except the Jews and the tradespeople.
 RICHARD. Hm? You're up to hock in your eyebrows . . . (*Realizes what he has said, tries to fix it, retaining dignity.*) . . . up in hock to your . . . in hock up to your eyebrows, and why!
 JENNY. (*Calm, nonplussed.*) Because you want to live nicely.
 RICHARD. I do?
 JENNY. (*Eyes closed briefly in martyrdom.*) Because *we* do, because we want to live nicely; because we want to live the way a lot of people manage . . .
 RICHARD. Yes; people who can afford it!
 JENNY. No! The way a lot of other people *cannot* afford it, and

still do. Do you think the mortgage department of the bank stays open just for us?
 RICHARD. Look at Jack!
 JENNY. Jack is rich! Look at everybody else.
 RICHARD. (*Pause, glum.*) I don't feel I belong anywhere.
 JENNY. (*Slightly patronizing commiseration.*) Awww; poor Richard.
 RICHARD. It *does*, by the way.
 JENNY. (*Very straightforward, even a little suspicious.*) What does what?
 RICHARD. The bank; the mortgage department; stays open just for us.
 JENNY. (*Laughs a little.*) You don't want a sandwich, or something?
 RICHARD. (*Preoccupied.*) No.
 JENNY. (*Clear they've had this before.*) I'm still able-bodied . . .
 RICHARD. (*Firm.*) No.
 JENNY. Lots of wives do it.
 RICHARD. No.
 JENNY. Just part-time, only from . . .
 RICHARD. You may not get a job!
 JENNY. It would make all the difference in . . .
 RICHARD. (*Out of patience, now.*) No, now! (*Softer after thought.*) I'm not going to have a wife of mine trying to work at some job, *and* running a house, *and* looking after Roger when he's home from school . . .
 JENNY. Roger is fourteen, he doesn't need any looking after.
 RICHARD. No! Besides, he's fifteen.
 JENNY. And if I took a job, then we could afford a maid, and . . .
 RICHARD. I said no.
 JENNY. (*Exasperated.*) Well, it wouldn't be taking in laundry, for God's sake!
 RICHARD. (*Slightly nasty.*) No? What would it be?
 JENNY. (*She, too.*) Well, that may be all you think I'm good for . . .
 RICHARD. (*Voice rising.*) I didn't say that.
 JENNY. Well, you *inferred* it!
 RICHARD. Implied; not inferred. And I did not.
 JENNY. Yes you did, for God's sake.

RICHARD. I said nothing of the sort.

JENNY. (*Snottily, exaggerated imitation.*) No? Well, what would it be? What could you do? (*Anger.*) Is that all you think I'm good for?

RICHARD. (*Trying patience now.*) I didn't say that all you could do was take in laundry; I merely meant that . . .

JENNY. (*Starting to cry.*) I'm sorry you think so badly of me.

RICHARD. (*Eyes to heaven.*) Oh, for Christ's . . .

JENNY. (*Sniffing, the whole act which is not an act.*) I'm sorry you think that's all I'm good for. I try to help you; I try to run a decent house . . .

RICHARD. It's a lovely house . . .

JENNY. . . . and bring up your son so he won't be some . . . some ruffian . . .

RICHARD. . . . our son

JENNY. I try to look nice; I try to take care of myself, for you, for your friends . . .

RICHARD. What, what is this everything mine all of a sudden! Most of the time it's yours; all yours!

JENNY. (*Real tears again.*) I try! I try!

RICHARD. Oh, Lord! (*Comes over, comforts her.*) You do a lovely job; you run everything just . . . lovely; you look . . . you look good enough to eat. (*Snarls, tries to bite her neck.*)

JENNY. (*Martyr.*) Don't, now. (*Richard repeats snarl, bite.*) Just don't! (*Richard moves away.*) Just . . . just go away.

RICHARD. (*Pause, subdued.*) I didn't mean to . . . say anything to upset you.

JENNY. No, but you meant it!

RICHARD. (*Anger rising.*) I did not mean it!

JENNY. (*Angry, too.*) Then why did you say it!?

RICHARD. (*Eyes narrowed.*) What?

JENNY. (*Cold.*) If you didn't mean it, then why did you say it?

RICHARD. I didn't say what . . . you implied that I . . .

JENNY. Inferred!

RICHARD. SKIP IT! (*Silence.*)

JENNY. (*Great soft-spoken dignity.*) I was merely trying to suggest that I might be able to help at the hospital one or two afternoons a week . . .

RICHARD. (*Snorts.*) And make enough to pay a maid out of that?

JENNY. (*Trying to stay calm.*) Or open a hat shop . . .

RICHARD. You're mad! You're absolutely mad!

JENNY. (*Very sincere plea.*) I just want to help? (*Silence.*)

RICHARD. (*With her again, nicely.*) I know you do. And you do as much as anyone; you do more than your share.

JENNY. No, no, I don't do anything to help you.

RICHARD. (*Nuzzles.*) You do everything.

JENNY. You think I'm worthless.

RICHARD. (*To make light of it.*) No, I imagine I could sell you for about . . . oh . . .

JENNY. (*Won't go along.*) You think I'm a drag; I'm not a helpmeet. Lots of women have part-time jobs, just to help out, it . . .

RICHARD. (*Final.*) No!

JENNY. (*After a silence, sighs.*) Money, money, money.

RICHARD. That's how it's always been. That's how it is.

JENNY. (*Comforting.*) You earn more than you used to.

RICHARD. Earn: yes. Taxes. Beware the steady man! Beware the slow rise through the respectable ranks. (*Jack appears in the french doors, enters, observes, lolls, speaks to the audience, becomes a part of the action only when he speaks directly to one or another of the characters.*)

JENNY. I know; Mother told me I should marry a real-estate speculator.

RICHARD. (*Going to the liquor cupboard.*) Yes; well, well you should.

JENNY. (*One more try.*) So, if I had just a little job . . .

RICHARD. (*Looking among bottles.*) No!

JACK. (*To the audience, while Richard hunts among the bottles.*) Are they arguing about money? Poor things; they always do. They're very nice, though. Richard is decent, and Jenny is . . . good. Damn it; wish she weren't.

JENNY. (*Unaware of Jack.*) What are you looking for?

RICHARD. (*Ibid., not looking up from the bottles.*) The vodka.

JENNY. There's some right there; right there in from of you.

RICHARD. Not my kind; not the Polish, only party stuff—American.

JENNY. ("Get you.") Oh; well, sorry.

RICHARD. It's empty anyway.

JACK. (*To the audience.*) You see? That's it. The Polish vod is eight bucks a fifth. That's what makes the difference: taste; and

taste is expensive. Poor children. (*A confidence.*) I find Jenny so attractive. Not that I'm going to jump her, or anything. My litch is in the mind; is, generally.

RICHARD. (*To Jenny.*) Decent vodka is not a luxury.

JENNY. Nor is a greenhouse.

RICHARD. Yes it is.

JACK. (*To the audience.*) My uncle died and left me three-and-a-quarter mill. Which is very nice. Which maens I can have a greenhouse, and the Polish vodka, plus the thirty-year scotch, plus . . . never worry—which is the nicest of all, don't you think? (*In the action now.*) Hello, children!

RICHARD. Hm?

JENNY. (*Piqued and pleased, her reaction to Jack is always a combination of maternal and coquettish.*) Oh, for God's sake, Jack.

RICHARD. (*His reaction to Jack is a combination of slight mistrust, discomfort, and natural friendliness.*) Well, hello there, Jack.

JACK. (*Sees they are a little embarrassed.*) Ah, when I am wandering, footsore and loose, where do I always come? Here. And why? Well, for a warm and toasty welcome. How are you, children?

RICHARD. Poor.

JENNY. Fine!

JACK. Don't go together.

RICHARD. How've you been?

JACK. (*Kisses Jenny on the forehead.*) Stopped by the club to watch the heart attacks, looked in on the poker game and dropped a couple of hundred. (*To Jenny.*) You . . . smell . . . lovely.

JENNY. (*Pleased.*) Thank you.

JACK. And . . . thought I'd come over the fence and see you two.

RICHARD. (*Nice, but an undertone.*) I'll bet you'd like a drink.

JENNY. (*To cover.*) Ummm; me too!

JACK. Love one. Polish vod?

RICHARD. (*A look at Jenny.*) Fresh out.

JENNY. (*To Richard.*) Why don't you make us all a nice martini?

JACK. (*Clucks, false disapproval.*) Drink drink drink.

RICHARD. No vermouthe either.

JACK. Such hospitality; I tell you.

RICHARD. I'll go get some.

JACK. Perfect! That way I get to be alone with your wife.

JENNY. Oh, Jack!

RICHARD. (*To suggest, "If you are, I'll go get some."*) You staying long?

JENNY. (*Cheerful admonition.*) Richard!

JACK. Well, what I thought I'd do is have one final drink with the two of you. You see, I've settled a quarter of a million on each of you, and after I had my drink I thought I'd go down in the cellar and kill myself.

JENNY. Awwwwwww.

RICHARD. (*A little grim.*) You ought to do it somewhere else; we might have trouble getting the money if . . . (*Leaves it unfinished.*)

JENNY. (*Playing the game.*) Yes . . . they might . . . you know . . . ask questions.

JACK. (*To the audience.*) He's right there, you know. Good mind. (*Back into action.*) Oh. (*Pause.*) Do you think? Yes; well, all right. I'll just have the drink, then.

RICHARD. (*Slight, uncertain pause.*) O.K. (*Pause.*) Well, I'll go get some.

JACK. Go, bucko; go.

JENNY. (*Giggles.*) Oh, honestly, Richard; I'll be all right.

JACK. You have a faithful wife, Richard; never fear. (*To the audience.*) He has, too. She's rare; she's a good woman.

RICHARD. (*Moving to exit, through hallway.*) I know; it's the only kind I ever marry.

JACK. (*Genuine surprise.*) You been married before?

RICHARD. (*Surprise.*) No. I was just . . . (*At a loss for words.*) . . . it was just a . . . something to say. (*To Jenny.*) You, you want anything? At the store?

JENNY. (*Shakes her head.*) Unh-unh. Hurry back. Oh! Cigarettes!

RICHARD. (*About to exit, a little bitter.*) Which kind?

JENNY. (*A giving-up sigh and smile.*) The ones we like. Hurry, now. (*Richard exits.*)

JACK. (*To the departed Richard.*) By-ee! (*To Jenny, almost Groucho Marx.*) Quick! He'll be fifteen minutes even at a dog trot! Where's the guestroom?

JENNY. (*Laughs.*) Oh, come on, Jack! Besides, you aren't even a guest.

JACK. (*Seemingly surprised.*) No? What am I?

JENNY. A . . . uh . . . a fixture.

JACK. Something from the neighborhood? Bothersome Jack, here-he-comes-again-probably-drunk-and-time-on-his-hands-so-why-not-waste-everybody-else's-afternoon-while-he's-at-it?

JENNY. Mnnnnn.

JACK. (*To the audience.*) Am, too. Like that, I mean. Time, time. God, the ambition you have to have to overcome good fortune. I haven't got it. (*Back to Jenny.*) Let me paint your picture.

JENNY. (*Cheerful, but it's clear they've had this before.*) No.

JACK. Won't cost you a penny.

JENNY. No.

JACK. (*To the audience.*) I'm not a bad painter. Flattering portraits of the rich? (*Back to Jenny.*) What is it, then?

JENNY. I . . . just want to be different.

JACK. (*Mild lechery.*) Oh, you are, Jenny.

JENNY. Every, every house I go into, every time Richard and I go out, there it is! Sybil, Grace Donovan, Junie, Mrs. what's-her-name, Beachcomber, or something; over the mantel, badly framed, the lady of the house; your portrait.

JACK. (*Axiom.*) Ladies like to be painted, I paint ladies, ladies hang pictures.

JENNY. (*Apologetic.*) It isn't proper.

JACK. (*Brief laugh.*) Tell 'em in Newport; put me out of business. (*Digging.*) Besides, I bet I make more money in three good months up there than Richard does in a whole . . .

JENNY. Oh, money!

JACK. (*Waits a moment, quietly, smiling.*) Yes? Money?

JENNY. I just don't . . . I don't want to look at myself, that's all.

JACK. (*Very elegant.*) If I were you . . . I would. (*Normal tone.*) What's the matter, love?

JENNY. Oh . . . (*Very sincere, even plaintive, for a joke.*) Would you do it, Jack? Go down in the cellar? I mean, leave Richard and me a quarter of a million each and then go kill yourself somewhere? I mean that nicely.

JACK. I'd do almost anything for you. (*Afterthought, but not*

flip.) Unless it got in the way of what I wanted to do for me. (*Jenny laughs ruefully.*) What is it, puss?

JENNY. (*Not going to talk about it.*) Tired. Just . . . tired.

JACK. Want a shoulder to cry on?

JENNY. Nope; just a quarter of a million and an easy mind.

JACK. (*Shakes his head knowingly.*) Wouldn't help. Money's hungry, lonely, wants more of itself. Stay poor; you're better off.

JENNY. (*Snorts.*) Crap! (*The doorbell rings, Jenny goes toward the hallway.*)

JACK. Really; you are.

JENNY. (*Going.*) You'd know.

JACK. I watch. (*Jenny has gone, Jack addresses the audience.*) I have, it does, money always wants more to keep it company. And a little money is a dangerous thing. Don't aim for a million: that's the danger point. If I were to die . . . I wouldn't leave them a quarter of a million each. Bad. I'd leave 'em the whole damn three. As a matter of fact, that isn't a bad idea at all. With three mill plus, they wouldn't have to worry. I think I'll do it. Yes; consider it done. (*Considers.*) I am healthy, though. They might not get it till it's way too late. Still . . . consider it done.

JENNY'S VOICE. (*From the hallway.*) No, of course not, don't be silly. (*Jenny appears, followed by Mrs. Toothe.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Entering.*) I should have phoned before just appearing at your door, but I thought that on . . . Ah, this must be your husband. How do you do, I'm Mrs. Toothe, and your wife has been kind enough to . . .

JENNY. (*A little laugh.*) Oh, no, this isn't Richard—my husband, I mean . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Ah. Well.

JENNY. (*A little lame.*) This is just . . . Jack.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Extends her hand to Jack.*) No matter. How do you do, just the same.

JACK. (*Takes hand, does curt little formal bow.*) Mrs. Toothe.

JENNY. (*Lame, and embarrassed by it.*) Jack was just . . . passing by.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Noncommittal.*) A friend of the family; of course.

JENNY. Yes.

JACK. (*To Mrs. Toothe.*) Not at all: a secret admirer of lovely

Jenny. I only come round when Richard's out. We have a signal—panties on the laundry line.

JENNY. Jack!

MRS. TOOTHE. How divine!

JENNY. (*To Mrs. Toothe, embarrassed and furious at being.*) There isn't a word of truth to what he says. There isn't a word of truth to anything he says, ever.

JACK. (*Still to Mrs. Toothe.*) White panties if we've got one hour, yellow if we'll have to hurry, pink for those special occasions . . .

JENNY. Jack! Please!

JACK. (*Shakes his head, sadly.*) I must confess it, madam, I am only what she says: a friend of the family. . . dropping by. Damned attractive, though. Wish it were true.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Pleased and sympathetic.*) Ahhhh.

JENNY. Why is everybody standing? Please sit down, Mrs. . . . uh . . . Toothe.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Sits.*) Thank you.

JENNY. Jack, don't you think you should be . . . ?

JACK. (*Makes it obvious he has gotten the signal.*) By gum, I must be moving on! Different lines, more panties. There is no rest for the wicked in the suburbs. Mrs. Toothe, it's been . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. A great pleasure. And don't get your signals mixed. (*Jenny accompanies Jack to the doors to the garden.*)

JACK. Tell Richard I'll be back for that martini another day. (*Sotto voce.*) Who is she, your fairy godmother?

JENNY. Will you go?

JACK. (*Pecks her on the forehead.*) Bye. (*To the audience, a wave before quick exit.*) Bye. (*Jack has gone; Jenny returns to Mrs. Toothe.*)

JENNY. You mustn't believe a thing Jack says, Mrs. . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. (*A hand up to silence her.*) Oh, really. I can tell a lover from a friend.

JENNY. (*Maybe even a little offended.*) Oh? How?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Laughs.*) Because in this country they're very seldom the same.

JENNY. You're English.

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes. Very. (*Small silence.*)

JENNY. Would you like some tea . . . or a drink?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Very efficient.*) No thank you; this is business. Strictly business.

JENNY. (*Pause.*) Oh?

MRS. TOOTHE. I'm told you need a job?

JENNY. (*Somewhat confused.*) Who, who told you that?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Airy.*) Oh, one of your friends. A woman.

JENNY. (*Curious, still puzzled.*) Oh? Who?

MRS. TOOTHE. No matter. Am I mistaken?

JENNY. (*A little ill-at-ease.*) Well, no . . . that is, I was thinking about getting a job . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes, well, I thought so.

JENNY. Not a . . . a career, you understand, just something . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. . . . part time, something to bring a little extra money in.

JENNY. Well, yes; you know how it is: my son's away at school, and I have the spare time. Besides, one can always use money, can't one?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Looking about, noncommittally.*) Yes; one can.

JENNY. These days, with taxes, and the private school . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Oh, yes; yes; quite. What does your husband do?

JENNY. (*Uncomfortable, as if being interviewed.*) Well, he . . . he's a research chemist, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. . . . and that, as so many good things, pays less than it should.

JENNY. (*Protecting Richard.*) Well, he doesn't do too badly; I mean . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. (*The laugh again.*) Of course not! But, still; you would like a job.

JENNY. (*Looks to the hallway, guilty—Richard might come back.*) Well, yes; one . . . one likes to feel useful.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Looking into her handbag.*) Yes; useful. (*She takes out a thick bundle of bills, shows them to Jenny.*) Money. (*Jenny just looks at it, her mouth falling open a little.*) For you. (*Makes to give it to her.*)

JENNY. Yes, but . . . (*Laughs a little, astounded.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Nods her head.*) Yes, money. For you. A thousand dollars. Here, take it.

JENNY. (*Withdrawing a little from it.*) Well, no, I . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Count it if you like. Here; a thousand dollars.
(Tries to force it on her.)

JENNY. (A little panicked.) No!

MRS. TOOTHE. Very well. (As calm as can be, rises, goes with the money to the fireplace, throws it on the burning logs.)

JENNY. (Reflex, runs to the fireplace, almost puts her hands into the fire, makes a little yell, straightens up, holds on.) Oh—I think you'd better go, Mrs. Toothe.

MRS. TOOTHE. (Enigmatic smile.) Not yet. Let's begin again. (She takes another bundle of money from her handbag, makes as if to throw it in the fire, Jenny holds out her hand, Mrs. Toothe quietly hands her the money, resumes her seat, Jenny stays standing.)

JENNY. (Never taking her eyes off Mrs. Toothe.) You're quite mad.

MRS. TOOTHE. No. Very rich.

JENNY. (Looks at the money, almost weighs it.) Look, you . . . you can't just . . . give me money like this. I can't just . . . take money from you.

MRS. TOOTHE. (A little laugh.) You have. It's yours. Isn't there something you'd like to buy? For yourself, for . . . what is his name? . . . Richard?

JENNY. People can't just give people money. I want to work.

MRS. TOOTHE. Good then. That's an advance of salary. You can work for me.

JENNY. But I haven't said I'd take a job at all. Richard is very much against it, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. (Daring her to refuse.) I was told you needed money.

JENNY. Yes, but Richard wouldn't approve of anything like this, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Like what? (Indicates the money.) Wouldn't he approve of that?

JENNY. (Looks at the money in her hands.) I'm sorry; I didn't mean to be rude, but it's all so vague, isn't it? And . . . and so unexpected.

MRS. TOOTHE. (Shrugs.) It's a job.

JENNY. (Nervous laughter in her voice.) Well, you'll have to tell me what it is. I mean, money isn't everything.

MRS. TOOTHE. No? What isn't money? Here we are; this

house is money, that garden, that lovely garden, those clothes you're wearing, it's all money, isn't it?

JENNY. The job?

MRS. TOOTHE. What are your husband's hours?

JENNY. He leaves at eight and gets home from town at seven-thirty, but . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Very good. You'll come in town, four afternoons a week, from one to five, say. You'll come to my address—lovely street: psychiatrist's office, doctors . . .

JENNY. Is this a . . . uh . . . a receptionist's job?

MRS. TOOTHE. Receptionist?

JENNY. Making, making appointments, and so on?

MRS. TOOTHE. I make appointments. For you.

JENNY. (Tiny pause.) For me? Who with?

MRS. TOOTHE. Clients.

JENNY. (Innocent.) What for?

MRS. TOOTHE. For a hundred dollars.

JENNY. No, I mean . . . A hundred dollars?

MRS. TOOTHE. More, sometimes—if they're generous.

JENNY. But these clients . . . who are they?

MRS. TOOTHE. Some businessmen, some visitors. All gentlemen; all rich.

JENNY. (The knowledge is there but not admitted yet.) What . . . exactly . . . what exactly would I do . . . for this money? (Mrs. Toothe laughs lightly, Jenny's jaw drops with the admission; pause. Jenny picks up the bundle of money, holds it out to Mrs. Toothe, even, hard.) Get out of my house. (Mrs. Toothe does nothing, Jenny drops the money on the table.) I'll call the police.

MRS. TOOTHE. (As calm as anything, a little superior.) Whatever for?

JENNY. (Quivering.) You know what for!

MRS. TOOTHE. (Smiles.) I've said nothing.

JENNY. You know what you've suggested!

MRS. TOOTHE. (Shrugs.) That you make money.

JENNY. THAT WAY!

MRS. TOOTHE. You have a friend who does.

JENNY. Who!

MRS. TOOTHE. Oh, no; we're very discreet.

JENNY. (Through her teeth.) I don't believe you, not a word!

People around here wouldn't do that sort of thing; you don't realize; you don't know what we're like.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Unconcerned.*) Have it your way.

JENNY. One of the tradespeople, maybe; you're thinking of someone like that.

MRS. TOOTHE. I'm thinking of a friend of yours; a very nice woman with a lovely house, who keeps it nicely—much more nicely than this, by the way—a woman who has no more worries about money, who is very happy. So could you be.

JENNY. You're a filthy woman! IT'S DISGUSTING!!

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Very calm.*) Nothing is disgusting, unless one is disgusted.

JENNY. YOU'RE EVIL!!

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes, yes . . .

JENNY. I'LL TELL THE POLICE!

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Stands up, stretches a little.*) Good. Then perhaps they'll arrest me.

JENNY. I hope they put you in prison!

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes, well, they probably will, and then I shall admit everything.

JENNY. Everything?

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes, how you approached me, and we discussed it, but the terms didn't suit you. The money wasn't enough.

JENNY. THAT'S NOT TRUE!

MRS. TOOTHE. Perhaps not. I think it would be believed, though. By enough people.

JENNY. GET OUT OF HERE!

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Takes a calling card from her handbag.*) Here is my card; address; telephone; let me know what you decide.

JENNY. (*Change of tone; almost tearful.*) Please? Please go?

MRS. TOOTHE. No police then; good. (*Sees Jenny will not take the card, puts it down next to the bundle of money on the table.*) Don't telephone me before ten, though, please. I do like my sleep.

JENNY. Please? Go?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Smiles.*) I'll see myself out. It's been very nice to meet you. (*Looks one final time at the garden.*) What a lovely garden. Do you have a greenhouse? (*Smiles, exits, leaving Jenny standing in the center of the room. Jenny looks after Mrs. Toothe for a long moment, not moving. Then she looks down at the table whereon sit the bundle of money and Mrs. Toothe's card. She*

picks up the card, reads it, moving her lips, then, with a grimace, rips the card in half and, as if she were carrying feces, takes it over to a wastebasket and drops it in. She comes back to the table, stares at the money, picks it up, looks at it with detached fascination, doesn't know quite what to do with it, finally, rather firmly, puts it in desk drawer, locks drawer, keeps key, starts toward french doors, looks back at locked drawer, goes, stands at french windows looking out.)

RICHARD'S VOICE. (*From the hallway.*) Hell-oo-oo. (*He enters, with a paper bag of liquor.*) Oh, there you are. And who the hell was that tripping down our path, that bit of old England? "How do you do?" she . . . Where the hell is he—Jack?

JENNY. (*Sort of vacant.*) Oh. Hi.

RICHARD. (*Puts liquor down, starts taking bottles out of bag.*) Well, who was she—your fairy godmother?

JENNY. (*Some alarm.*) My what?

RICHARD. The woman; the lady. Who was she?

JENNY. (*Still preoccupied.*) Oh. Mrs. Toothe.

RICHARD. Mrs. what?

JENNY. Toothe; Toothe.

RICHARD. You're kidding. Where's Jack?

JENNY. It's a perfectly proper English name. (*Pause.*) I guess. Jack? He went.

RICHARD. Figures. Send me out to buy up the liquor store and off he goes.

JENNY. It was your idea to go.

RICHARD. (*A little cross.*) Who was she?

JENNY. Mrs. Toothe? (*Tosses it off.*) Oh . . . committee; wants me for the hospital.

RICHARD. Free? Or pay?

JENNY. (*Pause; casual.*) Pay.

RICHARD. No!

JENNY. (*Pause, softly.*) All right.

RICHARD. (*Looks at the liquor.*) Well, with all your rich guests gone, there's just us for drinks. What do you want . . . a martini?

JENNY. (*Very sincere.*) Yes, I think that would be nice.

RICHARD. O.K. (*Starts to make one; the ice is already there.*)

You know what Tom Palmer said the other day?

JENNY. (*Preoccupied, and not exactly unpleasant, but not pleas-*

ant either.) No, I don't. I didn't see Tom Palmer the other day. What did Tom Palmer say?

RICHARD. (*Looks up at Jenny for a moment, quizzically, then back to his work.*) He said Jack was at the club, at the bar . . . soused as usual . . .

JENNY. Jack isn't always drunk.

RICHARD. (*A little annoyance.*) He's always drinking.

JENNY. (*Dogmatic.*) That does not make him drunk.

RICHARD. I am merely repeating what Tom Palmer said.

JENNY. Tom Palmer's an old woman.

RICHARD. (*Quite annoyed.*) I do not want to argue!

JENNY. All right! (*Contrite.*) I'm sorry, darling. (*Pause.*) You're a good, decent man and I love you.

RICHARD. (*Grudging.*) Well, you're a good, decent woman, and I love you, too. As a matter of fact, I shall give you a house-special martini to show you how much I love you.

JENNY. Oh, I would like that. (*She comes for her drink, takes it from him, they put arms around each other, move toward the sofa, he kisses her on top of her head.*)

RICHARD. I think you smell even nicer than Jack does.

JENNY. (*Purring.*) When have you smelled Jack?

RICHARD. Than Jack thinks you smell.

JENNY. Oh. (*Richard tries to nip her neck.*) Ow! Now stop that; I'll spill my martini. (*They sit on the sofa, relax.*)

RICHARD. (*A little bitter.*) You want to know something really funny?

JENNY. I don't think so. What?

RICHARD. I was in the liquor store . . .

JENNY. That's a riot.

RICHARD. Hush. I was in the liquor store, and Grady, who owns it, do you know what he told me?

JENNY. No; what?

RICHARD. He's getting a second car? Not trading one in; getting a second car.

JENNY. So?

RICHARD. Guy who owns a crummy little liquor store can have two cars? And we have to get by with . . .

JENNY. Did you bring the cigarettes back with you?

RICHARD. Hm? (*Gets them out.*) Oh, yes; here.

JENNY. (*Takes one, so does he, he lights them both.*) I wonder which kills more people: liquor or cars?

RICHARD. Well, when you put them together it's pretty good. What's for dinner? (*Pause.*)

JENNY. Let's go out for dinner.

RICHARD. Where?

JENNY. (*Expansive.*) Let's . . . let's go to Le Cavalier.

RICHARD. (*Snorts.*) You must be out of your mind.

JENNY. No! Let's!

RICHARD. It'll cost twenty-five dollars each. After a drink, the wine, it'll cost twenty-five each! (*Pause.*)

JENNY. (*Cautiously.*) I've got some money.

RICHARD. (*Half bearing.*) Hm?

JENNY. I said, I've got some money.

RICHARD. (*Vaguely interested.*) How?

JENNY. (*Very offhand.*) Oh, I've . . . put a little aside out of household. I keep a little bit each week.

RICHARD. (*Mildly.*) Well, I'll be damned.

JENNY. Come on; let's go out; it'll do us good. Let's go to Le Cavalier. Let's live it up.

RICHARD. Let's pretend we can afford it?

JENNY. Sure! Come on; it'll do us both good.

RICHARD. You ingenious thing. How much have you got?

JENNY. Oh . . . enough. Come on now.

RICHARD. You clever girl. (*Rises.*) I'd better wash up. Really? You have enough?

JENNY. (*Rises.*) Yes. Better put things away in the garden before you get cleaned up.

RICHARD. Right. (*Moves to the french doors.*) You very clever girl. (*Goes outside. Jenny sees he is out of sight, goes slowly to the desk, unlocks the drawer, takes out the bundle of money, strips off several bills, puts them on the table, hesitates a moment, as to reconsider, then puts the rest of the money back in the drawer, locks it again, keeps the key. Stands for a moment, looks at the wastebasket, lifts it onto the table, takes the two halves of Mrs. Toothe's card out, fits them together, looks at the card. Richard pokes his head inside, Jenny doesn't flinch or try to hide the card, knowing that Richard either can't see it or won't ask what it is.*) Jenny?

JENNY. Hm?

RICHARD. (Sort of wistful.) Darling? How much does a greenhouse cost? You know . . . a little one?

JENNY. Why?

RICHARD. I just wondered.

JENNY. (Looks up.) Quite a bit.

RICHARD. I just wondered. (Returns outside.)

JENNY. (Looks at the card again, shakes her head, some rue.) Quite a bit.

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

Scene Two

Six months later, scene the same, early afternoon, Richard at the desk, paying bills, shakes his head occasionally, despair. Sound of front door opening, closing. Jenny comes in, with bundles.

JENNY. (Cheerful.) Hello.

RICHARD. (Glum.) Hello.

JENNY. On Saturday you're supposed to rest; why aren't you out working in the garden? (Richard laughs glumly.) Or, or just . . . lying around?

RICHARD. (Wan smile.) Paying bills.

JENNY. Oh. (Puts bundles down.) It figures, doesn't it: I go to the store and I forget half of what I want.

RICHARD. Didn't you make a list?

JENNY. Of course; I got everything on the list; I just didn't remember to put everything on the line.

RICHARD. Like what?

JENNY. Like what? Like . . . like root beer, and extra milk, and stuff for cookies, and . . .

RICHARD. What for?

JENNY. We have a son. Right?

RICHARD. (Preoccupied.) Um-huh.

JENNY. (Pause.) He's coming home today!

RICHARD. (Puzzlement, pleasure.) Roger? Today? Coming home?

JENNY. (As if he were addled.) Yes. Vacation.

RICHARD. Well, I'll be damned.

JENNY. Mmmmmmm. And cornflakes and stuff, I suppose.

RICHARD. No camp this year.

JENNY. Hm?

RICHARD. No camp this year. For Roger. No camp. Can't afford it.

JENNY. (Noncommittal; her mind on something else.) Oh. Really?

RICHARD. Really.

JENNY. (Making her list.) Well, afford or not, I thought it'd be nice if he was around here this summer. Get to know him.

RICHARD. (Adamantly grouching.) Well, nice or not . . . necessary.

JENNY. Help you, help me . . .

RICHARD. While you're at it, get some more envelopes.

JENNY. There are some.

RICHARD. No, just that . . . that paper thing goes around them.

JENNY. (Notes it down.) All right. He can help you in the garden.

RICHARD. Mmmm. Or maybe we can get him a magazine route.

JENNY. (Mild disgust and indignation.) Really!

RICHARD. Well, you're so keen for everybody to be working around here . . .

JENNY. He's just a child!

RICHARD. He's probably going steady already—got some local girl up at school—probably skips out at night, shacked up . . .

JENNY. (Protesting, embarrassed.) Richard!

RICHARD. Kids grow up early nowadays.

JENNY. Roger is fourteen years old!

RICHARD. Well, if everything's functioning properly, there's no reason why he can't be getting laid, is there? Besides, he's fifteen.

JENNY. That's enough now.

RICHARD. Well, it's better that than lots of other things.

JENNY. ALL RIGHT! (Silence.)

RICHARD. (Shakes his head, finally, a little sadly, smiles.) I

knew a girl once, when you and I were dating—not so as to say set the alarm for seven, or anything like that, but . . .

JENNY. (*A little stony.*) Don't regale me.

RICHARD. No; really. And I wasn't in on the good times, 'cause I was counting on you . . . (*Jenny snorts.*) and you met her, I think, but I won't tell you who she was, cause she still is . . . but she had the reputation as a proper put-out . . .

JENNY. (*Some bored annoyance.*) Please, Richard.

RICHARD. No. *More than proper*: something of a dedicatee, guest bedrooms at parties, drawing blood, literally . . .

JENNY. Let the poor woman *alone*.

RICHARD. (*Slight edge.*) I'm not *touching* her. (*Silence.*) I was planning, though, to compare her to you.

JENNY. (*Sarcastic.*) Really.

RICHARD. To your advantage.

JENNY. (*Dripping irony.*) Oooohhhh.

RICHARD. Socially—by which I mean out of bed, which is a euphemism for trash heaps and coal bins—you'd think she was the Queen Mother. Staid? She practically used the royal We. So proper; you'd never know.

JENNY. (*Not nice.*) And what does that have to do with me?

RICHARD. Oh. It came up when I said Roger was probably going steady.

JENNY. Getting laid is what you said.

RICHARD. Same difference.

JENNY. Tell *that* to the sociologists.

RICHARD. *They* know. And I said Roger was probably going steady and you came on all funny and red and . . .

JENNY. I didn't see any need for you to shout the house down, and . . .

RICHARD. (*Angry.*) Who's going to hear? The footmen?

JENNY. Don't you yell at me!

RICHARD. (*Pause, shake of head, laugh-whimper.*) All I wanted to do was say you're such a funny, silly, wonderful little . . .

JENNY. Nuts.

RICHARD. You are! You're a good wife and you're nice in bed, but you're funny and . . . prim.

JENNY. Prim!?

RICHARD. Yes! Prim!

JENNY. I'm sorry.

RICHARD. And then I thought about, oh, what's-her-name, who came on like the Queen Mother, and how she was ridiculous and you were just a little silly about it, and . . . (*Mumbles.*) aw, for Christ's sake, forget it. (*Pause.*) I was just trying to pay you a compliment! I was trying to be *nice*!

JENNY. (*Thinks about it, dismisses his reasoning.*) I don't see why you brought her up in the first place.

RICHARD. (*Frustrated anger.*) NEITHER DO I! (*Silence.*)

JENNY. I suppose I could learn a few dirty jokes, or start telling people about a couple of your peculiarities when it comes to . . .

RICHARD. Forget it! (*Silence.*)

JENNY. (*Trying to hold back a smile.*) Who was she? (*Richard pouts, shakes his head.*) Come on; who was she?

RICHARD. No, no.

JENNY. (*Tickles him a little.*) Oh, come on!

RICHARD. (*Happier.*) No; now, stop it. (*She tickles more, he grabs her, they wrestle, giggling, a little on the sofa, playing, ending in a kiss, then another, which prolongs, is far more serious.*)

JENNY. Unh-unh; not now.

RICHARD. Oooooohhhh . . .

JENNY. No; Roger'll come in, and . . .

RICHARD. Well, he'll be able to tell his friends we're still alive.

JENNY. Now, come on. No.

RICHARD. (*Leans back, sighs.*) All right.

JENNY. (*Pause.*) Who was she?

RICHARD. (*Shakes his head.*) Unh-unh. I promised.

JENNY. (*Eyes narrowing.*) Who?

RICHARD. Myself. Self-discipline.

JENNY. (*Disentangling.*) Oh, honestly!

RICHARD. Well, a little doesn't hurt.

JENNY. (*Looking at herself in the mirror, appraisingly, approvingly.*) Did you see the paper today?

RICHARD. (*Preoccupied.*) Mmmmm.

JENNY. They had an ad.

RICHARD. (*Back to the desk.*) What are they doing, giving away money? I can sure use some, if they . . .

JENNY. (*Still appraising.*) No, for a greenhouse, all-aluminum frame, curved glass . . .

RICHARD. (*Slams a sheet of paper down.*) For Christ's sake,

Jenny! *(Pause, as she looks at him, a little haughtily.)* I just finished telling you Roger isn't going to camp this year because we can't afford it, and . . .

JENNY. *(Slight airy contempt.)* Oh, money-money-money.

RICHARD. Yes. Money. *(Shows bills.)* Oil. The car. Con Ed—the bastards. An estimate on the attic—the leak. *(Doorbell rings.)*

JENNY. Doorbell.

RICHARD. *(Back to work.)* Yes. Why don't you get it?

JENNY. *(Tiny pause.)* Why don't you?

RICHARD. Hm?

JENNY. Why don't you get it?

RICHARD. *(Slight whine.)* Because I'm working, darling; can't you see I'm . . .

JENNY. What if it's for you?

RICHARD. *(Slight bewilderment.)* Then you can tell me who it is. Or what.

JENNY. *(Pause, hesitates.)* Oh. Yes, that's true. *(Doorbell again.)*

RICHARD. *(Throws pen down, gets up, goes out.)* Oh, for God's sake! *(Maybe, offstage, we hear Richard saying "Yes?" and then "Oh, O.K." While he is offstage Jenny moves about the room a little, practicing unconcern. Richard re-enters, with a small package: brown paper, wrapped with twine, lots of stamps, special delivery, etc.)*

JENNY. Who was it?

RICHARD. *(Looking at package, with some curiosity and distaste.)* Package.

JENNY. Oh, for me?

RICHARD. No. For me. *(Shakes it, looks at it again.)*

JENNY. *(Pause.)* Well. *(Pause.)* Open it.

RICHARD. *(Putting it down on the table, stares at it, hands on hips.)* Wonder what it is.

JENNY. *(Little laugh.)* Well, open it and see.

RICHARD. *(Picks it up again, looks it over.)* Special delivery, doesn't say where from.

JENNY. Well, open it, for heaven's sakes.

RICHARD. *(Tries to break twine, can't.)* It's . . . tied up so . . . *(Takes a pocket knife, saws through twine, begins to unwrap. Jenny keeps a distance. Richard reveals contents. Slow awe in movements.)*

JENNY. *(Trying for unconcern.)* What, what is it?

RICHARD. *(Wonder.)* Jenny! Look!

JENNY. Hm?

RICHARD. Jenny! It's money!

JENNY. It's what?

RICHARD. IT'S MONEY!!

JENNY. *(Feigning disbelief and childish pleasure.)* Money. It's money?

RICHARD. *(Subdued, awe.)* Jenny; it's money. It's a great deal of money.

JENNY. *(Taking a step closer.)* Well, for . . . for heaven's sake.

RICHARD. Jenny, it's ten-dollar bills, wrapped in packages of five hundred dollars each.

JENNY. *(Beautiful bewilderment.)* Well . . . how much? How much is there?

RICHARD. *(Starts counting, aloud then silently.)* One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine . . .

JENNY. *(During his counting. Pauses between.)* How . . . how incredible. I've . . . How absolutely incredible.

RICHARD. And wait . . . Here are hundred-dollar bills. One, two, three, four . . . *(Slight confusion.)* Forty-nine hundred dollars.

JENNY. *(Some confusion.)* Forty-nine?

RICHARD. Jenny, there's almost five thousand dollars here. Four thousand, nine hundred dollars. Jenny! Four thousand, nine hundred dollars!

JENNY. Well, that's incredible! Not five thousand?

RICHARD. *(Sudden suspicion something's wrong.)* I don't get it.

JENNY. Aren't you . . . aren't you pleased?

RICHARD. *(Wry comment on her word.)* Pleased!? I don't know whether I'm pleased or not.

JENNY. *(Still not near the money.)* Is it real? Is it real money?

RICHARD. *(Looks at a bill.)* Yes; of course it's real: real used hundred-dollar bills.

JENNY. *(A kind of satisfaction.)* My God.

RICHARD. But . . . but why? I mean, there's no sense to it.

JENNY. *(A protective step forward.)* Yes, but it is money.

RICHARD. *(Looks at it glumly.)* It's money, all right. Too bad we can't keep it.

JENNY. What do you mean?

RICHARD. (*No great enthusiasm.*) I mean we can't keep it. I'll take it to the police.

JENNY. No!

RICHARD. I have to, Jenny. There's something wrong here.

JENNY. What!

RICHARD. (*At a loss for words.*) Well . . . I mean . . .

JENNY. It's addressed to you, isn't it? It came special delivery; it's not as though you found it, for God's sake.

RICHARD. Yes, I know, but . . .

JENNY. (*As offhand as likely.*) Well, it seems to me someone wants you to have it. I . . . I can't think of any other reason for someone to send it to you.

RICHARD. Wants me to have it. Yes, but who?

JENNY. I . . . I don't know. (*Sbrugs.*) Someone.

RICHARD. Look, it could be something awful like . . .

JENNY. Like what?

RICHARD. Like, like the Mafia, or something, or bank robbers, or . . . sent it here for safekeeping, and . . .

JENNY. (*Laughs gaily.*) Don't be ridiculous.

RICHARD. (*Thinks about it, subdued.*) You think someone sent it to me?

JENNY. (*The most obvious thing in the world.*) Of course.

RICHARD. Yes, but who?

JENNY. Well . . . maybe . . . somebody you did something for.

RICHARD. Those sort of things don't happen. . . not to me.

JENNY. Well, *this* has happened.

RICHARD. (*Holds the money out to her, quite childlike.*) Don't you want to . . . touch it, or anything?

JENNY. Oh. Yes, of course. (*Goes to him, touches the money, smiles faintly.*) I wonder who sent it to you.

RICHARD. I . . . I don't know. There's a man I sit next to on the train a lot. He seems very interested in me; older fellow, banker type. Keeps asking me about my work, how I manage. Maybe, maybe he's a millionaire, and maybe he's sort of crazy.

JENNY. (*Unlit cigarette out.*) Match.

RICHARD. Hm? Oh, yeah. (*Is about to hand her the matchbook, thinks better of it, lights her cigarette.*) It could come from somebody like him.

JENNY. (*Slightest doubt.*) Well, yes, it could.

RICHARD. (*Puzzled, a little deflated.*) And then again it couldn't. I mean, probably didn't.

JENNY. (*Comforting.*) Yes. But someone.

RICHARD. Yes. (*Considers, gives her a bill.*) Here. For you.

JENNY. (*Tiniest pause.*) Thank you. You're . . . you're not going to turn it over to the police, then.

RICHARD. (*Pause, slight guilt, but bravura.*) No, I don't think so. (*Pause.*) I guess someone wants me to have it. Someone must.

It'd be silly not to keep it. (*Pause.*) Don't you think so?

JENNY. (*Nice smile.*) Yes. I think so.

RICHARD. I mean, it would be stupid to just . . . throw it away.

JENNY. Yes; it would be. (*Cheerful.*) Let's have a drink: to celebrate?

RICHARD. (*The sky has cleared.*) Yes! Let's.

JENNY. (*Moves toward hall.*) I'll get the ice.

RICHARD. (*Moves toward the liquor cabinet.*) Good— And I'll make us a four-thousand-nine-hundred-dollar martini.

JENNY. Super! (*Exiting.*) Call it five thousand even; sounds so much nicer. (*Jack enters through the french doors after Jenny exits and Richard follows.*)

JACK. (*Sauntering into the room, addresses the audience.*) The months turn; people live and die, but I just . . . wander around. I tell you, there are days when I admit to myself that I don't think I'm alive—never have been. *Un voyeur de la vie* . . . that's me. Look on; look in. (*Propounds a great truth, with nothing other than objectivity.*) I've never felt really alive. It can't be only the isolation, the isolation of money, do you know? Naw, can't be that. I know lots of people with much more than I've got, and they've been alive . . . killed themselves and everything! Oh, by the way, I did what I said I was going to. (*Nods.*) I made my will—remade it, to be technical—and left the whole ka-boodle to Jenny and Richard here. Three million plus. I'd better not tell them, though. It's hard enough to like me as it is. I mean, I'm likable and all, but . . . (*Spies the money on the table.*) My goodness. (*Speaks loudly, is now in the action.*) My goodness! Look at all that money!

RICHARD. (*Enters from kitchen.*) DON'T TOUCH THAT!

JACK. (*Feigned affront.*) I'm sorry!

RICHARD. (Still stern, advances toward the money.) Just don't touch it.

JACK. Well. Shall I go back out and knock?

RICHARD. (Sighs, laughs a little.) I'm sorry, Jack. (Jenny re-enters, with the ice bucket.)

JENNY. Here we go, five thousand dollars' worth of ice, an . . . oh, Jack.

JACK. (Sees they are both ill at ease. To audience.) My goodness.

JENNY. (Tiny pause, show of great bonhomie.) Hi!

RICHARD. Join us.

JACK. (Smiles, waiting to have things explained.) O.K.

RICHARD. (To Jenny.) Jack, uh, noticed the money here, and . . .

JACK. (Very pleasantly.) . . . and practically got my head snapped off.

JENNY. Oh. Well; there it is; money.

JACK. (Looks at it.) Did you steal it, or make it in the basement on your own little press?

RICHARD. Neither, we . . .

JENNY. It arrived; it just . . . arrived.

RICHARD. (To explain further.) In the mail.

JENNY. Yes.

RICHARD. (Ibid.) Special delivery.

JENNY. Yes.

JACK. (Tiny pause, clearly, there must be more explanation.) Well, that's very nice.

JENNY. Someone sent it to Richard.

JACK. Oh?

RICHARD. Yes.

JACK. Who?

JENNY. Well, we don't know, someone, we figure, who . . . well, appreciates him. Admires him, maybe.

JACK. You mean you have no idea where it came from.

JENNY. No.

RICHARD. None.

JENNY. Absolutely none.

JACK. Is there a lot? Can I touch it?

RICHARD. (Involuntary gesture to protect money, withdraws it.) Sure.

JACK. (Touches it with one finger, looks at finger.) Perfectly dry.

JENNY. Of course; it's real.

RICHARD. (Sudden, none-too-happy thought.) Jack . . . you didn't do this, did you?

JACK. Do what?

RICHARD. You didn't. You didn't send us this money, did you?

JACK. (Tiny pause, then a laugh.) Christ, no!

RICHARD. You're sure, because if you did . . .

JACK. I'm sure; I'm absolutely sure. (To audience.) I didn't, by the way; I didn't send it to them. (Back to them.) How much is there?

JENNY. Nearly . . .

RICHARD. Five thousand.

JACK. Well, that should prove it to you. I never deal in small amounts.

RICHARD. (Defensive.) It might seem a small amount to you, but, to some people . . .

JENNY. (To change the subject.) Why don't we all have a nice martini?

JACK. Splendid! (Richard sets about to make them. Jenny straightens up the room.) I didn't mean to ridicule your . . . your windfall.

JENNY. Oh, now . . .

JACK. It's just splendid. (To the audience.) And damned peculiar too, if you ask me. (Back into the action.) Well, I do hope you're going to give a party. (Richard and Jenny look at one another, enthusiasm first.)

JENNY. Why, yes; we could!

RICHARD. (Hesitating.) Well, I don't think we ought to announce that . . .

JACK. No, just a party for the hell of it. Live it up a little! Get some caviar! Serve champagne! Hire a butler! Give a garden party!

JENNY. (Entranced.) A garden party!

RICHARD. (Giving over to it.) Sure! Why not!

JACK. Sure! Why not! (To the audience, shrugs.) Why not?

JENNY. What a super idea. When?

JACK. Now.

JENNY. Well, no . . . Next week, and . . .

RICHARD. (*Wistful, a little sad.*) You know . . . people make plans, and . . .

JACK. No; *now*. This very minute: white heat. Get on the phone. Give a blow-out; just for the hell of it! (*Gentler.*) Do something wild, and out-of-the-ordinary, and . . . the sort of thing you've always *wished* you could do.

JENNY. Yes! Let's! I'll call . . . who shall I call?

RICHARD. Well . . . Chuck and Beryl . . .

JENNY. (*On her fingers; enthusiasm.*) Yes, Chuck and Beryl, and Cynthia and Perry, too, of course . . .

RICHARD. . . . yes . . .

JENNY. . . . and . . . and Gilbert and Louise. Who else?

RICHARD. (*Little laugh.*) Hey, come on now. Let's not spend it all in one place.

JENNY. Is that enough? Six? Oh, and Jack; you'll come, Jack.

JACK. No, my darling; I've got a serious game of backgammon at the club.

JENNY. . . . oooohhhh . . .

JACK. No; *very* serious. High stakes. Wouldn't miss it for the world.

JENNY. (*A colt.*) I'll go call. O.K.?

RICHARD. (*Amused.*) O.K.

JENNY. (*To Richard.*) You figure out what we need, how much liquor and all . . .

RICHARD. Not champagne?

JENNY. Yes! Of course! But some people don't like it. I'll go call. (*Starts out of the livingroom.*)

RICHARD. What time?

JENNY. Oh . . . six, six-thirty. What is it now?

RICHARD. Four.

JENNY. (*Momentary pause.*) Oh. (*Resolve.*) Well, better hurry. (*As she goes.*) Bye, Jack!

JACK. Bye! (*To Richard.*) Does that mean I'm supposed to be gone by the time she gets back from phoning?

RICHARD. (*Merely laughs, hands Jack his martini.*) Here.

JACK. (*Takes it.*) Ice-cold, juniper-berried heaven. Thank you. (*We will hear Jenny faintly from the other room, talking to people on the phone. We will hear her enthusiasm.*)

RICHARD. She's so excited. Cheers.

JACK. Double. Well, why shouldn't she be? Quite marvelous *getting* money this way.

RICHARD. Yes.

JACK. No tax, I mean. Tax-free?

RICHARD. Hm?

JACK. Well, you won't declare it, of course . . . and that way there's no tax.

RICHARD. (*He'd never thought of that.*) You're right! Free and clear. God!

JACK. And maybe there'll be *more*.

RICHARD. (*A little puzzled.*) More? Why?

JACK. Well, good God . . . if someone's sending you money like this, why should they stop with one bundle? Maybe you'll get it every week.

RICHARD. (*Almost blushes.*) Oh, come on.

JACK. No; I mean it!

RICHARD. (*Worried frown.*) Jack, you won't . . . you won't tell anybody about this, will you?

JACK. (*Jaunty.*) My dearest Richard . . . it'll fly out of mind in thirty seconds. No, of course I won't say anything. I don't want to screw it up for you.

RICHARD. I mean not even casually, or reference to it, you know, at the club, or . . .

JACK. . . . or when I've had a drink or two? No, Richard; I won't. I promise.

RICHARD. Thanks.

JACK. (*Lolling.*) Money is a curious thing, isn't it, Richard?

RICHARD. (*Small boy.*) I don't know; I've never had too much.

JACK. No: the thing and the symbol. It's a piece of paper, with ink on it . . . and the ink and the paper together aren't worth a quarter of a cent—less . . . yet if we didn't have it, the world would stop.

RICHARD. We could go back to barter.

JACK. Yes, I suppose we could. It's like painting. A stretch of canvas and some paint. Worth what? Four dollars? Five? Yet put a value on it. Let *me* do it, and it sells for a certain sum, or someone else, and ten times more . . . a hundred! A certain Picasso for half a million? Not a bad painting, *worth* it, maybe. Money. How much does a cow sell for?

RICHARD. I don't know . . . two hundred dollars?

JACK. Maybe. Let's say. One Picasso painting for twenty-five hundred cows. All that milk. How many gallons does a cow give off in a day?

RICHARD. Fifteen?

JACK. (*Some astonishment.*) Gallons?

RICHARD. No. Quarts. I think I read it.

JACK. O.K. (*Figures in his head.*) That comes to . . . fifteen times twenty-five hundred is . . .

RICHARD. You want a pencil and paper?

JACK. (*Figures, waves him off.*) . . . figuring three hundred and sixty days a year, giving the cows holidays off. Thirty-seven-five times thirty-six and carry all those zeros . . . comes to . . . good God! Thirteen and a half million quarts of milk in a year.

RICHARD. You're kidding!

JACK. No; I'm not. Thirteen million and a half quarts of milk in one year.

RICHARD. That's incredible!

JACK. It is, isn't it. How much does milk go for wholesale?

RICHARD. Ten cents?

JACK. No, less. There's all that awful mark-up before it gets to us. Let's say five cents. Thirteen-five by twenty . . . this is even more fascinating! Nearly seven hundred thousand dollars a year for the milk alone!

RICHARD. What are you getting at?

JACK. Which would you rather have? The Picasso or the cows?

RICHARD. (*Thinks, shakes his head, genuine.*) I don't know. Another drink?

JACK. (*Gulps his down, simultaneously shaking his head.*) No. I've got to get to the club. Old Digby's waiting, panting at the backgammon board.

RICHARD. Oh. O.K.

JACK. (*Both have risen, stops.*) Now that's the interesting thing. Old Digby. Do you know that he's eighty-seven, by the way? He adores money . . . and not as a symbol . . . as a thing in itself. I'll bet he's got sixty million if he's got one, but it's all a thing with him. It doesn't become Picassos or cows or . . . anything but just the paper as paper. Money as money.

RICHARD. (*Pause, almost apologetic.*) Money is money, you know.

JACK. (*Apologetic, gentle.*) I know it is.

RICHARD. (*Quietly dogmatic.*) It's paying for this house, and a good education for Roger, and something every once in a while to make Jenny happy . . .

JACK. I know, I know.

RICHARD. (*Indicates the money on the desk.*) So, when something like this comes along . . . well, it means something.

JACK. I wasn't making fun of you.

RICHARD. Don't tell Jenny, but I might be able to get her some kind of greenhouse, a small one . . .

JACK. I told you: not a word about anything. Money? *What* money? I've got to go. (*Starts out french doors.*) It just occurred to me that I don't think I've ever used the front door in this place. Is it nice?

RICHARD. The front door?

JACK. Mmm.

RICHARD. (*He'd never really thought about it before.*) Well, yes . . . it's all right, I guess.

JACK. I must do it someday.

RICHARD. Jack? (*Jack stops, half out.*) Nothing.

JACK. (*As Richard turns away, to the audience.*) He's right; and I wasn't making fun of him. Money . . . is . . . money. See you. (*Exits.*)

JENNY. (*Bounces back in.*) Are you two . . . ? Oh. Is Jack gone?

RICHARD. Um-hum.

JENNY. (*Sort of breathless.*) Chuck and Beryl are coming; they were going to just sort of sit around; and I got Cynthia and Perry, or I got Cynthia, rather, and they had to get out of something, but they'll be here, too, and I'm trying Gil and Louise but their line keeps being busy, so I'll go back and finish that up.

RICHARD. O.K. You want a martini now?

JENNY. No; when I come back. (*As she goes again.*) Roger should be arriving soon. He'll have to take a taxi from the station.

RICHARD. A taxi!?

JENNY. (*Pauses her flight momentarily.*) Yes; a taxi. (*Indicates the money.*) Don't you think we can afford one?

RICHARD. (*It sinks in, he laughs sheepishly.*) Oh. Hunh! Yes, I guess we can. (*Jenny exits. Richard looks at the money, straightens it out, reaches in his pocket for a cigarette, finds none, looks*

around for one. Finds a cigarette box empty, looks some more. Half calling.) Jenny, where did you put the cigarettes? Never mind, I can find them. (Hands on hips for a moment, pondering. Goes to—what? a side table, maybe, opens a drawer, looks in, rummages, suddenly halts, frozen. Puts his hand on something, slowly brings it out. It is a bundle of money. He looks at it, looks over to the pile on the table, looks back at the money in his hand, drops the new bundle down on a chair, or the sofa, whichever is handier, and looks around the room, spies Jenny's sewing basket—say—and goes over to it, hesitates just a moment, then opens it, reaches in, takes out yet another bundle of money which he regards with a curious intensity as he takes it over and dumps it down where he put the last. Spies a box on the mantel and goes to it, opens it, and comes up with a fistful of money. He lets it fall, like confetti, all around him.)

JENNY. (Re-enters.) Well, that's done. Gilbert and Louise are coming, too, so that makes . . . (She stops, sees what he has found.) . . . everybody we asked.

RICHARD. (In a kind of a fog.) Jenny; look. What is it?

JENNY. Money, Richard.

RICHARD. But . . . is it . . . is it yours?

JENNY. There isn't time to tell you now, I . . .

RICHARD. Yes. There is. You must.

JENNY. We have so much to do before . . .

RICHARD. Wait! (Points to the money on the table.) Did you send me that package?

JENNY. Actually, yes . . . well, I had to; there was so much, and I couldn't think of any way to . . .

RICHARD. Have you been . . . have you been gambling?

JENNY. (Jumping on that.) Yes!

RICHARD. Where? On what? Who through?

JENNY. There's . . . there's this man.

RICHARD. Called?

JENNY. What does it matter so long as I've been winning?

RICHARD. (Steelier.) Called?

JENNY. Desorio.

RICHARD. That's a lie.

JENNY. Don't you talk to me like that!

RICHARD. Isn't it a lie?

JENNY. Well . . . sort of.

RICHARD. THEN IT'S A LIE!

JENNY. (Sbrugs.) Yes.

RICHARD. How much is there here? There's thousands!! Where did you get it?

JENNY. (Defensive.) I didn't steal it.

RICHARD. (Steely.) Where did you get it!?

JENNY. I earned it.

RICHARD. A job! You've got a job!

JENNY. Sort of.

RICHARD. I told you I didn't want you to take a job. No! You couldn't have earned this at a job. There's too much! There's thousands of dollars here, and . . .

JENNY. Six months!

RICHARD. (Laughs ruefully and half hysterically.) No, look, darling; look. Tell me. Did . . . did someone leave it to you? Did someone die and you haven't told me?

JENNY. Nobody died. I earned it. (Slight pause.) In the afternoons.

RICHARD. Look; sweetheart: even if you worked full-time you couldn't have earned this kind of money. Come on now; tell me.

JENNY. (Miffed and playing for time.) Oh? Really? I guess not if all I'm supposed to be good for is a domestic or something.

RICHARD. (Gritting his teeth.) Where did you get it?

JENNY. (Sighs, rattles it off.) I make two hundred dollars an afternoon, four days a week, sometimes more. I've spent a little on clothes, but there hasn't been time to spend the rest, and . . .

RICHARD. Nobody pays that sort of money! I mean you've no training.

JENNY. You don't need any.

RICHARD. (Bewildered, and getting angry at the mystery.) What do you need?

JENNY. Where's my martini? You promised me an ice-cold, super-special . . .

RICHARD. (Grabs her arm.) Now tell me!

JENNY. Ow! Now let go of me! (He does; she rubs her arm as they glare at each other. Subdued.) There's nothing worth telling.

RICHARD. By God, you tell me or I'll make a bonfire of this money in the middle of the lawn!

JENNY. (Pleading underneath.) Don't be ridiculous! It's money!

RICHARD. I want to know where it comes from!
 JENNY. (*Her voice rising, too.*) It comes from a job!
 RICHARD. What kind of a job!?
 JENNY. (*Wild bunting.*) A . . . a receptionist.
 RICHARD. For *that* kind of money? (*Snorts-sneers.*)
 JENNY. It's a very expensive place!
 RICHARD. What *sort* of expensive place?!
 JENNY. A . . . a doctor's office.
 RICHARD. You expect me to believe you sit behind the desk at some god-damn doctor's office a couple of hours in the afternoon, and you get two hundred dollars a day for it?! You must think I'm crazy!!
 JENNY. It's a very special and very expensive place!
 RICHARD. (*A little fearful, a little disgusted.*) What, what is it, some kind of . . . of abortionist office, or something?
 JENNY. My God, you're disgusting!
 RICHARD. Why! I've read in the paper of a man found out his wife worked for an abortionist, brought him patients, as a matter of fact.
 JENNY. You're disgusting!!
 RICHARD. Well, I'm sorry; but if you're going to be so damned secretive, what am I *supposed* to think? Hunh?
 JENNY. (*Trapped and furious.*) Think what you like!! (*Quite cutting.*) Don't you want the money?
 RICHARD. (*Both furious now.*) The money's got nothing to do with it!
 JENNY. Oh yes it has! You don't think I do it for pleasure, do you?
 RICHARD. Do what!? Sit behind a desk!?
 JENNY. Yes; sit behind a desk!
 RICHARD. What's the name of this place?
 JENNY. (*Daring him.*) No name; just a number.
 RICHARD. Yeah? Well, what's the number?
 JENNY. It's confidential!
 RICHARD. I'm your husband!
 JENNY. I'm your wife. Do you tell me everything?
 RICHARD. I like being told the truth!
 JENNY. How much do you talk about *your* job? To *me*.
 RICHARD. It's a dull job!
 JENNY. So's mine!

RICHARD. The money isn't! The money isn't so damn dull! Christ! It's four times what I get. (*Contemptuous.*) Sitting behind the desk in a doctor's office . . . sounds more like a high-class whorehouse!
 JENNY. I don't like that word.
 RICHARD. Whorehouse! Call house! Cat house! (*There is a silence. Jenny looks out toward the garden. Richard begins to realize he's bit on it.*) No; look; come on; what is it really?
 JENNY. (*Looking away, sort of wistful, sad.*) Just a place.
 RICHARD. A place.
 JENNY. Where they pay me.
 RICHARD. (*Grabs her arm again.*) For God's sake! What do they pay me for!?
 JENNY. It's *me* they pay! (*Long pause, sort of lost.*) Don't you want the money?
 RICHARD. (*Lets go of her arm, backs away a little, shakes his head, stuttered, almost laughing disbelief.*) I, I don't . . . I don't believe it. I, I don't believe it.
 JENNY. (*Quite light.*) Then don't.
 RICHARD. (*Backs a bit further away, same confusion.*) I, I can't believe it. I CAN'T.
 JENNY. (*Coming toward him, nicest smile.*) Darling, it's going to make such a tremendous difference.
 RICHARD. (*Laughing mirthlessly at the irony.*) Oh, by God it is!
 JENNY. (*Still happy, occupied.*) All the things we've been wanting for years . . .
 RICHARD. We!
 JENNY. We can have a second car, and . . .
 RICHARD. There's no . . . I don't believe this!
 JENNY. There's no what?
 RICHARD. Room in the garage. (*Incredulous.*) How could you do such a thing!? (*Pause.*) Come on, it isn't true, is it? (*Jenny nods, slowly.*) No; is it? Really?
 JENNY. (*Dogmatic, impatient.*) It is for *us*, for everything we want!
 RICHARD. (*Between set teeth, quiet rage, letting it sink in firmly.*) You are my wife; and Roger's mother; and you are a common prostitute!?
 JENNY. That's a horrid way to put it.
 RICHARD. HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO PUT IT!?!?

JENNY. I'm not the only *one*, you know. I'm not the only person in the world who . . .

RICHARD. You're the only one who's married to *me*!

JENNY. (*Triste reasoning.*) But it doesn't make any difference to *us*, and . . .

RICHARD. (*Hard.*) Doesn't it? (*Walks over to her, slaps her hard across the face.*) Doesn't it? How much do you charge for that? (*She just stares at him, firm but maybe near tears way underneath. So he slaps her again, just as hard.*) I said: how much do you charge for that!! (*Jenny says nothing, really, maybe a kind of growl-cry as she slaps him back, just as hard as he hit her. Richard, cold, after a moment's pause.*) Get out. Pack up and get out of here.

JENNY. (*Equally cold.*) Where!

RICHARD. Anywhere! Or I will. No, by God, I won't! It's my house, I paid for it. I stay here!

JENNY. (*Curiously unemotional.*) I can't . . . just like that.

RICHARD. I said get out!

JENNY. A lot of things here are mine.

RICHARD. Take them! Take them!

JENNY. (*Through her teeth.*) You certainly don't expect me to get everything together right now and . . .

RICHARD. I'll send it after you! Just . . . just get out!

JENNY. No, no, you wouldn't. I know you: you can never manage anything like that. I'm the one who has to get the movers and arrange everything and . . .

RICHARD. CRAP!!

JENNY. Well, it's perfectly true. When your aunt what's-her-name wanted her big, ugly breakfront back, you said you'd take care of it, and *weeks* went by and you didn't do a damn thing.

RICHARD. (*Quietly, with controlled rage.*) Get your things together and get out of this house!

JENNY. (*Tired of it all.*) Oh, don't be silly.

RICHARD. (*Fury and disbelief.*) Don't be *what*!?

JENNY. I said, don't be silly. Give me a cigarette.

RICHARD. You god-damn wanton bitch!

JENNY. I am not wanton! I told you: it's for the money! The money you don't make! The money we *need*! You think I get any enjoyment out of it?

RICHARD. Think!? I, I, I, I. I don't think anything! I *can't*! I'd

go stark raving mad if I thought! Men kill their wives for this sort of thing!

JENNY. (*Giggles.*) Oh, darling . . .

RICHARD. (*Mocked, becomes uncontrollable.*) You don't think they do? (*Starts toward her with serious intent.*) Read the papers and find out! By God, read tomorrow's papers and find . . . (*They are both stopped by the sound of the front door slamming. Roger enters, from the hallway.*)

ROGER. Hi! I took a taxi; do you have any money?

JENNY. (*As if she'd forgotten all about him and is sorry.*) Roger!

ROGER. The taxi driver says he wants five dollars over the fare because it was such a long way.

RICHARD. (*Fury turned on driver.*) Oh, he does, does he? Well, I'll fix that son of a bitch. (*Richard exits, maybe pushing Roger to one side as he goes.*)

ROGER. (*Looks at Richard's exit, confused; back to Jenny; genuine affection.*) Hi, Mom.

JENNY. (*Embarrassed, but covering.*) Darling! You're so . . . so terribly early.

ROGER. (*Statement of fact.*) The train was on time.

JENNY. (*A little flustered.*) Oh? Was it? Well, then . . . our clock must be slow.

ROGER. Must be. (*Goes to a chair, stands on its seat, looks out through french windows over fence.*) How's the tennis?

JENNY. What tennis?

ROGER. (*Points.*) At the club. (*Angry voices from outside front door.*)

JENNY. (*Looks off apprehensively.*) Oh, I . . . I don't pay much attention.

ROGER. Dad been playing? I hope the cab driver doesn't kill him.

JENNY. (*Calling off, worried.*) Richard? (*To Roger.*) Get down off that before your father sees you!

ROGER. O.K. . . . (*Jumps down, sees the money.*) Wow! Is that money?

JENNY. (*Preoccupied, defensive.*) Yes, now . . . just leave it be.

ROGER. What is it, the sweepstakes?

JENNY. Just . . . don't concern yourself, now.

ROGER. Can I have a bunch?

JENNY. (*Sudden anger.*) No! Now let it alone!

ROGER. (*Hurt, some.*) I'm sorry. (*Heavy-handed irony.*) Gee, am I glad I came home.

JENNY. (*Apologetic.*) Oh, Roger, darling, I'm . . . (*Richard reappears, a little mussed.*)

RICHARD. (*Vengefulness and pride.*) I hit him!

ROGER. (*Shy.*) Hi. Dad.

RICHARD. (*To Jenny, since she caused it.*) I hit the son of a bitch!

JENNY. (*Quite rebuking.*) Did you say hello to your son?

RICHARD. Hm?

ROGER. (*Sby, pleased.*) Hi.

RICHARD. (*Really sees Roger for the first time, sadness and pride.*) Hi. (*Back to Jenny, quiet fury and glee.*) I hit that son of a bitch.

JENNY. (*Quietly desperate.*) Why!

RICHARD. Why!!? He wanted nine dollars. The bastard wanted the regular fare and five dollars extra because . . .

JENNY. That is no reason to hit anyone!

RICHARD. WHO AM I SUPPOSED TO HIT! (*Less loud, but no less intense.*) Who am I supposed to hit!

ROGER. (*To fill a tiny silence.*) How's the tennis, Dad?

RICHARD. (*To Roger.*) What?

ROGER. (*Intimidated.*) Tennis. How is it?

RICHARD. (*Confused.*) I, I haven't . . . I, I, I, haven't played.

ROGER. Un huh . . .

JENNY. You'll get a lawsuit on us, you know.

RICHARD. (*Deflated, embarrassed, even.*) I only hit him on the shoulder. We . . . we just scuffled a little.

JENNY. (*Pause, disappointment and relief.*) Oh.

RICHARD. (*A sneer.*) Not what I wanted to do. (*Roger has gone up on the chair again.*)

ROGER. Wow! Right in the crotch!

RICHARD. Who! What!

JENNY. Roger, don't use words like that.

RICHARD. (*Scoffs.*) Oh, Jesus!

ROGER. Serve took a bad bounce, hit him right in the . . . what word shall I use?

RICHARD. Don't ask your mother, she's too ladylike. (*Realizes where Roger is.*) GET THE HELL OFF THE GOD-DAMNED FURNITURE. (*Roger does so.*)

ROGER. (*Subdued, unhappy.*) Sorry.

RICHARD. You think we're made of money?

ROGER. (*Defensive, indicates money all over.*) It looks like it. (*This sets in an embarrassed silence.*)

RICHARD. (*To change the subject.*) Did you have a good term?

ROGER. All right.

RICHARD. What's your average? What did you end up with?

ROGER. C plus.

RICHARD. What did you start out?

ROGER. C plus.

RICHARD. (*Bitter.*) Keep it up: by the time you're eighteen we won't even be able to get you into an agricultural college!

JENNY. Be nice! (*Richard's mouth drops open, but he doesn't say anything.*) Set the clock right.

RICHARD. It is right.

ROGER. It's twenty minutes slow.

RICHARD. (*Furious.*) Then you set it right!

JENNY. Richard!

RICHARD. Shut up! (*Roger goes to the mantel clock, takes it down.*)

ROGER. What do I do?

RICHARD. Turn the knob; turn the god-damn knob!

JENNY. Richard, if you can't be . . .

RICHARD. (*Between clenched teeth.*) I told you to shut up! (*To Roger.*) No! Too far! That's tooo . . . DON'T TURN IT BACK. (*Disgust, takes the clock, none too gently, from Roger.*) Here; give me the god-damn clock. NEVER TURN IT BACK! Don't ever turn a clock back!

ROGER. (*Flustered, confused.*) I'm sorry, I . . .

JENNY. Roger, darling, why don't you take your bag upstairs, and . . .

RICHARD. (*Concentrating excessively, on the clock, to himself as well as Roger.*) You never turn a clock back; never.

JENNY. Why don't you go unpack?

ROGER. (*Sullen.*) O.K. You've got so much money, I don't see why you don't go buy a clock.

RICHARD. ALL RIGHT!

JENNY. Go unpack and then you can come down and help us.

ROGER. You want me to go upstairs, or would you rather I turned around and went right back to school?

RICHARD. GET UPSTAIRS!!

ROGER. (*Under his breath.*) Christ!

RICHARD. And don't say that!

ROGER. (*Standing up to him.*) Why not! YOU do! (*Exits. Small silence. Richard hurls the clock down on the floor.*)

JENNY. (*Calm, displeased.*) That helps.

RICHARD. (*Intense, pounding his chest with his fingers.*) It helps me! ME!!

JENNY. (*Closes her eyes for a moment, then all business.*) I wish you'd make a list of what we need, what liquor we need.

RICHARD. (*Stares at her quietly.*) Whore.

JENNY. (*Ignores it.*) We'll have champagne, but there are always some people don't like it, and . . .

RICHARD. (*Ibid.*) Whore!

JENNY. . . . and so you'd better check. If we're going to have fresh caviar, and I think we should, then I've got to go down to Blaustein's and get some . . .

RICHARD. (*Ibid.*) Filthy, rotten, no-good little whore!

JENNY. (*Quite savage.*) Be quiet! You've got Roger in the house!

RICHARD. (*Top of his voice.*) I'VE GOT A ROTTEN, FILTHY WHORE IN THE HOUSE!

JENNY. (*Tiny pause, continues quietly.*) Now make a list. They'll be here in about an hour . . .

RICHARD. (*Laughing in disbelief.*) A party! We're going to have a party!

JENNY. (*Level.*) Yes; we are.

RICHARD. (*The tears that finally come, tears of rage and despair, are incipient; we notice what is coming by a quivering in the voice.*) What, what shall we do? Make the announcement? Break it to the neighborhood? Tell them to tell their friends where they can go to get it? Hunh?

JENNY. Make a list.

RICHARD. Hunh? Is that what we should do? Is it? Whore? (*Tears nearer now.*)

JENNY. You can phone for the liquor, but we have to know what we need.

RICHARD. (*Tears even nearer.*) Or, or maybe they already know. Maybe . . . maybe Chuck and Perry and Gil . . . do they . . . do they know already?

JENNY. List.

RICHARD. L, l, list? We . . . all, all right, we need . . . (*Crying commences now.*) v, v, v, vodka, and . . .

JENNY. (*Gentle.*) American or Russian?

RICHARD. (*Looks up, pleading.*) Both?

JENNY. Both, then.

RICHARD. . . . and . . . and . . . sc, sc, sc, scotch, and . . . bourbon, and . . . (*Full crying now.*) . . . and gin, and . . . gin, and . . . gin, and . . . (*The word gin takes a long time now, a long, broken word with gasps for breath and the attempt to control the tears.*) . . . g—i—i—i—n, and . . . (*Final word, very long, broken, a long howl.*) G—i—i—i—i—n—n—n—n. (*Curtain falls slowly as the word continues.*)

ACT TWO

Set the same, one hour later. Richard alone on stage, sitting facing out at audience. It might be interesting if he looked the people in the audience right in the eye, but absently, seeing them, but thinking of something else. No attempt to set a new convention (with Richard), but it will give quite a few people an interesting sensation. Jenny enters, followed by Roger, both laden with glasses, etc.

JENNY. (*Pleasantly incredulous.*) What are you doing?

RICHARD. Hm?

JENNY. What are you doing? Roger, put those over there and be careful you don't break them.

ROGER. (*Embarrassed at being warned.*) O.K.

JENNY. (*Puts her things down.*) I asked you what you thought you were doing. You've got guests coming over in about ten minutes, and . . .

RICHARD. (*Ugly but quiet, a threat of explosion.*) What am I supposed to do?

ROGER. (*Breaks a glass.*) Damn!

JENNY. Oh, Roger . . .

RICHARD. That's right! Break the house up!

ROGER. It's only a glass, for God's sake, it . . .

RICHARD. We're not made . . . Do you know how much those things cost?

ROGER. (*Standing his ground.*) No. How much?

RICHARD. (*To Jenny.*) How much do they cost?

JENNY. Well, they're new, and . . .

RICHARD. (*Hint of hysteria, incipience.*) They're new!?

JENNY. (*Calm.*) Yes, and they're crystal, and I suppose they . . . well, I think they were about four-fifty each . . .

RICHARD. (*After a pained look at Jenny, to Roger, shaking his head and sneering.*) Four-fifty each. You broke a god-damn glass and they cost four . . .

ROGER. (*Digs into his pocket.*) Well, here. Take it out of this.

RICHARD. (*Unpleasant joy.*) Give it to your mother.

JENNY. (*Laughing, covering.*) Don't be silly, darling. No, Roger, no.

ROGER. (*Hand out of pocket again.*) Anything to keep peace in the house.

RICHARD. Don't be fresh!

JENNY. (*Mollifying, to Roger.*) Darling, go upstairs and change. People will be here soon, and I'll want you to help.

ROGER. Do I have to put on a tie?

RICHARD. (*Furious.*) Yes!

JENNY. (*All on Roger's side.*) I'm afraid so, darling. Run along upstairs now.

ROGER. Tie?

RICHARD. Yes; and a shirt, and trousers, and socks, and shoes . . .

ROGER. (*Going, shaking his head.*) Wow.

RICHARD. And don't hang out the window watching the tennis. Change.

ROGER. (*Sloppy salute.*) Yes, sir! (*Exits.*)

RICHARD. And don't salute!

JENNY. (*After a tiny pause, reasonable, calm.*) It was only a glass.

RICHARD. (*Turns on her, quiet wrath.*) What have you been doing: buying things behind my back? Crystal? Gold goblets? Clothes?

JENNY. Just a little.

RICHARD. Just a little what!

JENNY. (*Sighs.*) A few clothes; those glasses; nicer sheets. Didn't you notice?

RICHARD. (*Still furious.*) Notice what!

JENNY. (*Quietly happy.*) The nice sheets. I thought they'd . . .

RICHARD. No! I didn't notice the nicer sheets, and by God I won't sleep on them! I won't sleep in the same room with you!

JENNY. (*Cool.*) And where are you going to sleep?

RICHARD. What?

JENNY. I said, where are you going to sleep? Roger's home, there's no mattress in the guestroom . . .

RICHARD. Why not! Where is it!

JENNY. You threw it out. When you had the hepatitis and you

slept in there you said it was awful—the mattress—so we threw it out.

RICHARD. Well, why didn't we get another one!

JENNY. (*Sbrugs, starts arranging things.*) Oh . . . money, or something.

RICHARD. WELL, WE CAN DAMN WELL AFFORD ONE NOW!

JENNY. (*Quiet, precise.*) I don't see the need. You've told me to get out.

RICHARD. (*This stops him for the briefest instant only.*) WELL, WHEN ARE YOU GOING!?

JENNY. (*Stops what she is doing.*) Right now. Right this very minute.

RICHARD. You've got a party! You've got people coming over!

JENNY. (*Pretending this complicates things.*) Oh. Yes. Well then, I'll leave right after the party, right after everybody goes.

RICHARD. Fine.

JENNY. (*Quietly withering.*) Or shall I stay and clean up first?

RICHARD. (*Can think of nothing for a moment, finally.*) Tramp.

JENNY. There's no need for that now.

RICHARD. I can't hold my head up in front of those people; I won't be able to look any of them in the eye. I might scream, or cry, or something.

JENNY. You'll hold your head up. In fact, I should think you might be able to look Chuck and Perry and Gil straight in the eye, maybe for the first time.

RICHARD. Why! Because my wife is a whore?

JENNY. (*Sort of cajoling.*) No . . . well, because for once you won't be the poor relative, so to speak; you can talk about the new car you're going to get, and why don't we raise the dues at the club to keep the riffraff out, and Jenny and I were thinking about Antigua this winter—all those things.

RICHARD. (*Some disgust.*) You're hopelessly immoral.

JENNY. Not at all! I'm talking about money—that thing that keeps us at each other's throats; that standard of judgment; that measure of a man's worth!

RICHARD. There are other standards!

JENNY. Well, not in the circles we move in! Not in our environment.

RICHARD. There are kinds of money!

JENNY. Yes! Three! Too little, too much, and just enough!

RICHARD. Corrupt!

JENNY. Too much money corrupts; too little corrupts. Just enough? Never.

RICHARD. It's how! *How!*

JENNY. Oh, don't tell me about how! Perry and that real estate he sells? Ten thousand for an acre out near, uh, near the track, and he doesn't even tell the god-damn fools there isn't any city water? Gilbert and his fancy publishing house? What's his advertising budget on trash? Thousands! How much does he spend on a halfway decent book . . . nothing!

RICHARD. All right, all right . . .

JENNY. And you in your research laboratory. All those government contracts? A little work on germ gas maybe?

RICHARD. I told you that in . . . I told you not to say a word about anything I told you . . .

JENNY. You told me in confidence? Well, I'm telling you *back* in confidence! You all stink, you're all killers and whores.

RICHARD. (*Nods several times rapidly.*) That's quite a performance.

JENNY. You're damned right.

RICHARD. (*Great sarcasm.*) Bra-vo!

JENNY. At least! Come on! More!

RICHARD. With your theories on money, you should have married Jack.

JENNY. (*Self-mocking rue.*) Unh-hunh, you may be right.

RICHARD. Though I don't necessarily think he'd take any better to having a whore for a wife than I do.

JENNY. (*Comforting.*) Well, if I'd married Jack none of it would have happened.

RICHARD. (*As Roger re-enters, starts to go for her.*) Why, you . . .

ROGER. I'm dressed. (*They both pause, for Roger's tone has a curious impersonal disapproval to it.*)

JENNY. (*Recovering.*) And in good time, too. They'll start coming any second. My, don't you look nice and grown-up.

ROGER. You've seen me in a tie before. (*To Richard.*) Were you going to hit her?

RICHARD. Mind your own business.

ROGER. (*Mildly puzzled.*) I thought it was.

RICHARD. Well, it's not. I don't suppose you washed.

ROGER. Well, I didn't have time for a sit-down bath, if that's what you mean. Why *isn't* it my business?

RICHARD. Because it *isn't*! Are your fingernails clean?

ROGER. (*To Jenny, the same mildly disapproving curiosity.*) Was he going to hit you? (*Looks at his nails.*) Relatively.

JENNY. Don't be silly, darling; your father doesn't hit people bigger than he is. Come help me with things, now. Those glasses over there . . .

ROGER. (*Grumbling, sort of.*) People always hit each other when other people are out of the room.

JENNY. (*Decidedly offended.*) Roger!

RICHARD. (*Snarl.*) Little monster.

ROGER. I wasn't complaining; I was just stating a fact.

RICHARD. Keep your facts to yourself.

JENNY. Nobody hits anybody around here.

RICHARD. Anyway, not above the belt.

JENNY. ("Not in front of Roger.") Richard!

RICHARD. (*Subsiding.*) Sorry! Very sorry. Sorry about everything. Every single thing.

ROGER. (*An aside, to Jenny.*) What's the matter with Dad?

JENNY. (*Richard can hear them both, of course.*) Oh, nothing; parties upset your father, that's all.

ROGER. (*Goes to Richard: genuine.*) I'll help.

RICHARD. (*Looks at him for a moment, then, with a headshaking laugh that could be confused with mockery, but isn't.*) Oh, boy! Thanks!

ROGER. (*Withdraws a little; stung.*) I'm sorry.

RICHARD. (*Quite furious.*) Roger! I mean it! Thank you!

ROGER. (*A little bewildered.*) O.K. (*Doorbell rings.*)

JENNY. (*Sighs, girds herself.*) Well. Here we go.

RICHARD. (*Little boy.*) I'm going to hate this.

ROGER. Hey, what shall I drink?

RICHARD. Ginger ale.

ROGER. Awww.

JENNY. (*Exiting.*) I'll go.

RICHARD. Roger, do me a favor.

ROGER. Sure. What?

RICHARD. Grow up right. (*Sounds of greeting from hallway.*)

ROGER. (*Offhand.*) O.K. Got any ideas?

RICHARD. Just . . . be good.

ROGER. As the twig is bent, as they say. (*Jenny re-enters with Chuck and Beryl.*)

BERYL. (*To Jenny, as they enter.*) No, it's been lovely, but I would love some rain. Our lawn is all brown and splotchy.

JENNY. Oh? Well, we manage ours.

BERYL. Green thumb, my darling.

CHUCK. Won't be any rain till we take off for . . . Hello, Richard!

RICHARD. (*Shy.*) Hi, Chuck; Beryl?

BERYL. Are we too early? I told Chuck we'd be first here.

JENNY. Don't be silly.

CHUCK. And I said, so what? First to come, last to leave; no breeding. Roger!

ROGER. Hello.

BERYL. (*To Roger, some wonder.*) Do you grow each time I see you?

ROGER. Probably; I don't see you very much.

JENNY. He grows fresher each time you see him, I can tell you that.

CHUCK. (*Formality.*) How's school, Roger?

ROGER. Fine.

CHUCK. Back for vacation? Now, that's a silly question. Got any silly answers?

ROGER. I keep those for exams. (*Some laughter.*)

RICHARD. How true. Hey! How about a drink? Champagne or proper stuff?

CHUCK. (*Hearty.*) Champagne!

BERYL. (*To Chuck.*) You know what it does. (*To Jenny.*) Keeps him up all night; bent double. Gas?

CHUCK. (*To Richard, ruefully.*) I guess I better have some scotch.

RICHARD. Right. Beryl? (*Goes to her.*)

ROGER. Can I help?

BERYL. (*Examining caviar, to Jenny.*) Fresh, how nice. Do you get yours in the city?

JENNY. No, Blaustein's has the fresh.

BERYL. (*To Richard.*) Gin, darling, and a little ice. (*Back to Jenny.*) Well, fresh caviar can't keep, and I don't trust Blaustein's.

JENNY. (*A tiny bit of pique.*) Oh, it's perfectly fresh.

BERYL. (*Slight laugh.*) I'm sure it is. I just think Blaustein's

cheats a little . . . keeps it on ice a day or two more than they . . .

JENNY. Would you like some caviar, Chuck?

CHUCK. Sure would. (*Goes to it.*) Toast? Toast?

JENNY. No; crackers.

BERYL. (*Moving away from caviar, looks at garden, expansive.*) How do you keep it? How do you battle the weeds, and prune and dust . . . ?

JENNY. (*Proud.*) Green thumb.

CHUCK. Cheers!

THE OTHERS. (*Nearly simultaneously.*) Cheers!

BERYL. While I've got you now, I need you for the blood bank.

JENNY. Richard can't.

BERYL. Why?

JENNY. Hepatitis. And Roger shouldn't, either; he needs all he's got.

ROGER. I don't mind giving blood.

JENNY. (*Light, but firm.*) I don't think you *should*, Roger.

BERYL. Well, Jenny, then you'll have to give for the whole family.

RICHARD. I don't think she should.

BERYL. Why ever not?

JENNY. Yes. Why not?

RICHARD. (*Dogmatic.*) I just don't think you should.

JENNY. (*A little annoyed.*) Well, do you have a reason? Or are you just hoarding everybody's blood.

RICHARD. (*Too much attempt at a joke, only Jenny will see what he means.*) Well, no; you . . . you might have some awful disease for all you know.

BERYL. (*As Chuck laughs.*) Oh, Richard! Really! (*Doorbell.*)

ROGER. Shall I go?

JENNY. (*Exiting, a quick look at Richard.*) I'll go. Help yourselves to the . . . (*Leaves it unfinished, exits.*)

RICHARD. (*The tiniest mockery.*) How's high finance, Chuck? How's the old market?

CHUCK. Oh, just like marriage . . . up and down, up and down. (*Beryl and Richard laugh flimsily.*)

ROGER. What does that mean?

RICHARD. Nothing.

ROGER. Then why did he say it?

RICHARD. (*Annoyed.*) You know perfectly well what it means, so why did you ask?

ROGER. (*Shrugs.*) I thought it was polite. You told me to help. (*Jenny re-enters, with Gilbert and Louise.*)

JENNY. Richard! It's Gilbert and Louise!

RICHARD. Well! Come on in! You know Beryl and Ch . . .

LOUISE. Yes, I think we've met at the club.

GILBERT. Yes, of course we have.

BERYL. How nice to see you both again.

CHUCK. Drinks are over here. There's champagne *and* the real stuff.

LOUISE. How nice you were to ask us. Oh, will you look at your garden! And the lawn! *How* do you do it?

BERYL. I was commenting before. I *don't* know how they do it.

GILBERT. Who's your gardener? Shropie?

RICHARD. Who?

GILBERT. Shropshire; he has a whole team, and . . .

JENNY. No, we've been doing it ourselves.

LOUISE. We have Shropshire, and they send two men, but we have six acres, too, so that makes a difference.

GILBERT. Charge an arm and a leg.

BERYL. But are they *good*. Chuck and I were thinking of using them, and . . .

CHUCK. Not going to get me mowing weekends.

JENNY. It sort of spoils the fun to farm it out—the work . . .

RICHARD. (*A little tentative.*) We, we could have someone in, though.

JENNY. (*Secret smile.*) Oh? Well, why don't we?

RICHARD. (*Bitter at being caught.*) Spoils the fun.

JENNY. (*To the others.*) We thought we might put a greenhouse in, though.

RICHARD. Did we!

LOUISE. Oh, you must. We're so glad *we* did.

JENNY. I've always wanted one.

CHUCK. You must be in the chips, Richard old boy: greenhouse, champagne, caviar . . .

RICHARD. (*Laughs lightly.*) No; just . . . (*Shrugs, leaves it unfinished.*)

JENNY. No, just not scrimping.

BERYL. (*Her eyes narrowing slightly.*) Oh, I'm glad.

ROGER. (*Weary of asking.*) Can I help?

LOUISE. Roger, dear! I didn't even say hello to you. Gilbert! Roger's here.

GILBERT. Roger, my boy. Home from school?

ROGER. (*False heartiness.*) Yes, Sir!

GILBERT. Doing O.K.?

ROGER. Holding my own, as they say.

GILBERT. Good boy; good boy. Hey, Rich; this is good caviar. Where'd you get it?

RICHARD. Jenny got it; it's Jenny's.

JENNY. I got it at Blaustein's, just as fresh as if you'd gone into town and . . .

GILBERT. Damn smart little kike, that Blaustein, putting in caviar and . . .

ROGER. We don't use words like that around here. (*Everybody looks at him, not quite sure of what he means.*) At least, not in the family. (*Doorbell again.*)

JENNY. (*Glad of the chance.*) I'll get it! (*Exits. Beryl and Louise, both just to say something.*)

BERYL. I still say if you get it LOUISE. The first year we in town it's bound to be had our greenhouse, I was fresher. amazed.

RICHARD. Drinks now! Come on, kids; the bar's open.

GILBERT. (*To Richard as they approach the bar.*) What did I say?

RICHARD. Nothing, nothing. CHUCK. Your kid's sort of a wiseacre, hunh?

GILBERT. (*Hurt.*) What did I say?

(*Simultaneous.*)

RICHARD. Nothing; forget it. BERYL. But aren't they a terrible chore?

CHUCK. I don't get the champagne. What for? What gives? LOUISE. Well, no; not if you remember things, like water, and air, and heat, and . . .

(*Simultaneous.*)

RICHARD. What gives? Nothing. BERYL. (*Laughs.*) Ah, just a few things like that!

CHUCK. Looks pretty festive to me. LOUISE. It takes getting used to, that's all.

ROGER. (*If anyone cares.*) I apologize. (*Jenny re-enters, with Cynthia and Perry.*)

JENNY. The stragglers. Cynthia and Perry Straggler.

PERRY. Hi, folks.

ROGER. (*To himself.*) Folk.

GILBERT. Well, if it isn't old Perry! Hi, Cyn!

CYNTHIA. (*Generally.*) Hello there!

RICHARD. Bar's here, kids.

CYNTHIA. Well, will you look at all that!

CHUCK. Is it true what I heard, Perr?

PERRY. Probably. What?

CHUCK. You been selling lots to the black folk twice the going price? (*Some laughter, for this is a joke.*)

PERRY. Not a word of it! Three times the going price, and at that I don't let 'em have clear title. (*More laughter.*)

ROGER. There are two Negro boys at school, on scholarship.

GILBERT. (*None too pleasant.*) Oh yeah? (*To Richard.*) You ought to send your boy to Choate, Dick. That's a good school.

ROGER. There are Negro boys there, too.

GILBERT. You're kidding.

ROGER. Why not? I mean, why am I kidding?

BERYL. (*Not snobbish.*) It is getting to be a problem.

CYNTHIA. I know.

LOUISE. (*Very serious.*) Well . . . it's a time of change.

JENNY. It's time for a drink, that's what it's time for! Cynthia? Louise?

ROGER. Actually, there won't be any solution to the color problem—whatever that is—until we're all coffee-colored.

BERYL. Roger!

JENNY. Darling!

GILBERT. Where'd you pick up that theory?

ROGER. A book.

PERRY. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, Roger.

CHUCK. Theories that come out of books ought to stay in books.

RICHARD. (*To Roger.*) Why don't you pass the caviar? I thought you wanted to help.

ROGER. I've been asking! I've been standing around on my two hind feet asking if I could be any help and everybody's been ignoring me!

RICHARD. (*Put out.*) You've been standing around on your two

hind feet insulting everybody, that's what you've been standing around doing.

ROGER. (*Something of a pout.*) That was after.

CYNTHIA. Oh, let him alone, for heaven sake! He's a sweet boy. How old are you, Roger, dear?

ROGER. I'm twelve.

JENNY. You're fourteen!

RICHARD. He is not; he's fifteen.

JENNY. I ought to know how old my own son is.

RICHARD. You ought; yes.

CHUCK. Where are you going to put the greenhouse, Dick?

RICHARD. Hm? Oh . . . out there. (*Gestures vaguely.*)

JENNY. (*Rather pointed.*) Show them where, darling.

RICHARD. (*Trapped.*) Hm?

LOUISE. Oh, I'd love to see! Show us!

CYNTHIA. Yes! And I want to look at Jenny's roses. (*Cynthia and Louise start out through french doors; Perry automatically follows.*)

CHUCK. Well, into the garden we go. Somebody bring a bottle of champagne.

GILBERT. (*Following Chuck.*) Nobody's drinking champagne.

CHUCK. Well . . . bring a bottle of scotch. (*The two men laugh, follow the others out.*)

JENNY. (*To Richard.*) Well . . . ?

RICHARD. (*Getting it straight.*) Show them where we're going to put the greenhouse.

JENNY. (*Dazzling if mirthless smile.*) Yes. (*Doorbell rings; Jenny starts.*) Who's that? We didn't ask anyone else.

RICHARD. (*Exiting to garden.*) It's your party; you figure it out.

JENNY. (*To Beryl.*) I can't imagine who it is. Roger, darling . . . go see. (*Roger exits through archway.*) Unless it's Jack Foster. He always drops in, and . . .

BERYL. (*Starts exiting to garden.*) Well, if it is, I'll leave the two of you alone.

JENNY. (*Annoyance showing through.*) And what is that meant to mean!

BERYL. (*Throaty laugh, as she exits.*) Nothing, darling; nothing at all. (*We will probably see one or more of the people out in the garden while they admire it and while Richard improvises where*

the greenhouse will be, but their backs will be to us, and they will not see inside until they return.)

ROGER. (*Re-entering.*) It's a woman to see you. (*Mrs. Toothe enters; Jenny stares at her, open-mouthed.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. Good evening, my dear. (*Jenny just stares.*) I said, good evening, my dear.

JENNY. (*Still staring at her.*) Roger, go in the garden.

ROGER. (*Bland.*) Why?

JENNY. (*Turns, snaps.*) I said go in the garden!

ROGER. (*Some disgust, turns on his heel, goes.*) Good God!

JENNY. (*Appalled.*) What do you want?

MRS. TOOTHE. I want to talk. (*Sits.*) Ah! That feels good. I do so hate to walk.

JENNY. You can't come here; you mustn't.

MRS. TOOTHE. I know, my dear, it's very indiscreet, but most important.

JENNY. (*Anger and panic underneath.*) I'm having a party! Guests!

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes, I see; fine, I'm one of them.

JENNY. No! I'm sorry; no!

MRS. TOOTHE. Why not?

JENNY. They're friends; Richard thinks you're on the hospital committee, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Fine, I'm on the hospital committee.

JENNY. But these are local people, and Beryl is on the hospital committee, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Beryl?

JENNY. Yes, and Louise is too . . . and, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Well, you'll just have to make up something: I'm not from here, I'm from . . .

JENNY. Please! Leave!

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Firm, coldly polite.*) I told you, my dear, it's a matter of considerable importance. Does your husband know?

JENNY. Yes, I told him today. Oh, my God, if he sees you and knows who you are, I don't know what he'll . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Well, he will have to make the best of it. (*Pause, smile.*) Will he not?

JENNY. (*The final supplication of her life.*) Please! Please leave! (*Beryl and Chuck have started back in.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. Your guests are coming back. (*Jenny wheels.*)

BERYL. (*Not noticing Mrs. Toothe yet.*) Jenny, my dear, Chuck and I agree: your husband is an angel; the greenhouse will be absolutely perfect; you'll . . .

JENNY. (*Cutting in.*) Beryl, Chuck, this is Mrs. Toothe; Richard and I met her down in St. Thomas last year, and she's come by to say . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Quiet smile.*) Hello, Beryl, my dear; I have a bone to pick with you.

CHUCK. (*As Jenny watches, openmouthed.*) My God, what's she doing here?

BERYL. (*Cool, calm.*) Oh? You have?

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes; indeed I have.

JENNY. (*Finally, to Beryl, flabbergasted.*) You!?

BERYL. (*As Mrs. Toothe chuckles some, quite calm, with a tiny smile.*) Yes; and you, too, it would seem.

JENNY. (*Awe.*) My God. (*The others are coming in now, Louise, Cynthia, Perry, Gilbert and Richard, Roger is still out-doors.*)

LOUISE. . . . and it seems to me that if you want the afternoon sun, well, then you'll have to make allowance for it, and . . . (*Sees Mrs. Toothe.*)

RICHARD. (*All have seen Mrs. Toothe save Richard, all are staring at her save him.*) It could be swung about, I suppose, though we'd have to dig up someth— (*He sees her, sees the silence, to Mrs. Toothe.*) Hello; I've seen you before, haven't I?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Very nice.*) Yes, but we didn't really meet; I'm Mrs. Toothe. Hello, Cynthia; Louise, my dear. (*They nod.*)

RICHARD. (*Not getting it yet.*) Well, then, you all know each other, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Where were you on Thursday, Beryl dear?

BERYL. I had, I had a headache, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Well, that will cost you a hundred dollars. Someone was disappointed.

RICHARD. (*Not quite dawn yet.*) You, you all know each other?

MRS. TOOTHE. Well, yes, I know all these ladies, and I've met their husbands, but I've known them, well, how shall I say . . . I don't think we've all known before that we all know each other.

JENNY. (*Lame and unhappy.*) This is . . . Mrs. Toothe, darling.

GILBERT. (*Rather pleased.*) Perry, you never told me.

LOUISE. Cynthia, dear, I'm surprised we haven't run into each other in town.

RICHARD. (*Piecing it together.*) Look, now, does this mean . . .

PERRY. (*He, too, rather pleased.*) Well, my God.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Richard.*) And isn't it charming that all my suburban ladies should be under one roof.

RICHARD. All your ladies, and . . . (*To the women.*) All of you? (*To the men.*) And you've known about it?

GILBERT. (*Not quite pleasant.*) Well, of course.

PERRY. (*Slightly condescending.*) Yes, naturally.

BERYL. But how absolutely marvelous none of us has known about the other.

CYNTHIA. (*To Louise: mock chiding.*) You and your shopping trips.

LOUISE. (*Giggles a little, to Beryl.*) And all that museum-going.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Businesslike.*) Well. Here we all are.

RICHARD. (*Backing off a little, quietly, as if facing a wall of strange shapes.*) I don't believe it, I . . . I don't believe it, I . . .

JENNY. (*Quietly pleading.*) . . . Richard . . .

CHUCK. (*Shakes his head, chuckles.*) Oh, boy! Oh, Jesus Christ! (*Full laughter.*)

RICHARD. (*To Perry.*) You've . . . you've known? All the time?

GILBERT. (*Slightly patronizing.*) What did you do, just find out?

RICHARD. (*Tiny pause, a real scream.*) YES!!!! (*Pause.*)

CHUCK. (*Calm, fairly stern.*) Get yourself a drink, boy. Quiet down. (*Chuck pats Richard on the shoulder, makes for the bar.*)

RICHARD. (*Softer, great loss in it now.*) Yes!

GILBERT. (*Matter-of-fact.*) Well, now you know; and now we all know. (*Roger enters.*)

ROGER. Hi! You know, Venus is up already? The sun isn't even down yet, and . . .

JENNY. Roger; go get something.

ROGER. M-m'am?

JENNY. Richard? Do something.

PERRY. (*Digs into his pocket.*) Roger, be a good fellow and run over to the club and get me some pipe tobacco, will you?

ROGER. (*Senses the silence.*) Well . . . sure.

PERRY. And get yourself a Coke, or something.

JENNY. That's a good boy.
 ROGER. (*Puzzled, slightly reluctant.*) O.K. . . . what, what kind?
 PERRY. What?
 ROGER. What kind of pipe tobacco?
 PERRY. Ben at the desk; Ben knows; tell him it's for me.
 ROGER. (*Suspicion, confusion over, bounds out.*) O.K. Be back!
 RICHARD. Please, all of you, get out.
 MRS. TOOTHE. As I said, I'm sorry I've had to come, but there's been trouble.
 BERYL. What kind of trouble?
 MRS. TOOTHE. So that I daren't use the phone; daren't call you.
 PERRY. Police?
 MRS. TOOTHE. Yes.
 JENNY. (*Quiet panic.*) Oh, my God.
 MRS. TOOTHE. A man named Lurie, detective, I think.
 CHUCK. Can't you buy him off?
 MRS. TOOTHE. Won't be had.
 GILBERT. *That's damned odd.*
 MRS. TOOTHE. Yes; well; nonetheless, he won't. (*Richard watches all of this from a distance, maybe sits.*)
 PERRY. Asking questions?
 MRS. TOOTHE. No . . . telling me to clear out.
 LOUISE. He didn't ask for names.
 MRS. TOOTHE. It wasn't a *raid*. Besides, he wouldn't get them.
 BERYL. (*Sighs with relief.*) Well.
 GILBERT. Yes; there is *that*.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*Brightly.*) I don't believe I've been asked what I would like to drink. (*Pause.*) *Have I?*
 JENNY. (*Quite preoccupied, mostly with what Richard is thinking.*) Oh, no; I don't guess you have.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Richard.*) Unless you have an objection to my . . . wetting my lips in your house.
 RICHARD. (*Almost a monotone, a stunned quality.*) No, you go right ahead; have what you like; there's champagne and . . .
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*A little laugh.*) Oh, heavens, no, I don't think so. (*To Chuck, who is still near the bar.*) Is there whiskey?
 CHUCK. Sure. Neat?
 MRS. TOOTHE. Very, and one cube.

CHUCK. No sooner said. (*To Richard, an afterthought.*) O.K. if I . . . do the honors?
 RICHARD. (*As above.*) No, you go right ahead.
 CYNTHIA. I think I'd like one, too. Perry?
 PERRY. Right. (*Some general movement to refill, hand drinks, etc.*)
 GILBERT. (*To Mrs. Toothe, asking more than just his question.*) I . . . I suppose you'll have to . . . move out.
 MRS. TOOTHE. I'm gone! I've left already. There'll be a psychiatrist moving in.
 BERYL. (*Giggles.*) That'll be a surprise for the regulars.
 CYNTHIA. (*Laughing, too.*) Oh, Beryl! Really!
 PERRY. (*Stretching, breathing out.*) Well, I guess you'd better hold off on that greenhouse, Dick.
 CYNTHIA. Yes, and put away the caviar.
 LOUISE. What a shame. (*Afterthought.*) What a shame for all of us!
 RICHARD. (*Barely registering.*) Hm?
 GILBERT. (*Fairly sententious.*) Yes . . . things are going to be a little harder for *all* of us.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*Sipping her drink.*) Why? (*Good spirits.*) This sort of thing happens. It's never the end.
 BERYL. It's rather different for you: you're used to it.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*Speculative.*) Ohhhh, one can get used to anything . . . I should say. (*To Richard.*) Wouldn't you say?
 RICHARD. Oh, God.
 LOUISE. Yes, but one can't get used to the idea of jail, not to mention the newspapers and . . .
 CHUCK. *Cops* are on to you.
 PERRY. Where will you go?
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*Tiniest pause.*) Why not . . . out here?
 SEVERAL. (*Jones of shock, disbelief.*) Out here!
 MRS. TOOTHE. Why not?
 LOUISE. (*Quite grand.*) Surely you're not serious.
 MRS. TOOTHE. *Very* good train service; respectable . . . countryside . . .
 CHUCK. (*Not sure.*) Yes, there's very good train service, but . . .
 MRS. TOOTHE. If one could find some suitable property. (*Looks at Perry.*) Do you think?

PERRY. No, no, this wouldn't do at all . . .

GILBERT. Absolutely not.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Makes as if to get up and go, very business-like.*) Well, then; I shall just have to find a more congenial city; somewhere where the police are fast asleep or . . . amenable. I shall miss you ladies, though.

BERYL. (*Tentative.*) Of course . . . (*Stops.*)

PERRY, CYNTHIA, GILBERT. (*More or less simultaneously.*) Yes?

BERYL. (*A little embarrassed, and pleased by the attention.*) Well, I was going to say . . . it . . . it couldn't be right here: I mean right here: it could be . . . nearby

JENNY. (*She hasn't spoken for quite a while.*) Well, yes; it would be . . . (*Leaves it unfinished.*)

RICHARD. (*As if hearing through fog.*) What did you say, Jenny?

BERYL. (*Naked and embarrassed, but if you're in a nudist colony . . .*) I was going to say . . .

RICHARD. Yes. Go on.

JENNY. (*If Jenny can physically blush, yet be resolute, fine.*) I was going to say that if it could be out here then . . . then it would be handy.

RICHARD. What was that last word?

JENNY. (*Tiniest pause.*) Handy . . . it would be handy.

RICHARD. (*Nods, chuckles.*) Um-hum. Oh, yes. (*Chuckles some more.*) Oh, God, yes. (*A few defeated tears in the words.*) Especially with Roger home: you could make it back and do the jelly sandwiches—now that he's not going to camp, 'cause we want him here, not 'cause we can't afford it.

MRS. TOOTHE. I think we'd best keep this to a business discussion. Don't you think?

PERRY. Yes, I think.

CHUCK. Good idea.

MRS. TOOTHE. Something to be talked about amongst us men. Jenny, why don't you go out and show the girls your roses?

JENNY. (*Occupied with observing Richard.*) Hm?

MRS. TOOTHE. Show the girls your roses.

BERYL. (*Leading the way.*) Yes, why don't we see the garden again? There's so much there; so very much to see.

CYNTHIA. Yes; coming, Louise?

LOUISE. (*Gravely approving the proposition.*) Of course.

MRS. TOOTHE. Jenny?

JENNY. (*Loath to leave Richard, but going.*) Well, all right . . . I . . . all right. (*Exits. The men are left now, with Mrs. Toothe.*)

RICHARD. (*From where he sits, little emotion.*) You're a little high-handed, aren't you?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Cheerfully soothing.*) It's so much easier without them.

RICHARD. This is my house.

GILBERT. Oh, come off it, Richard.

CHUCK. We're lucky we're not all in jail.

MRS. TOOTHE. No, it won't come to that. Who will give me another drink?

PERRY. (*Takes her glass.*) Whiskey and ice?

MRS. TOOTHE. Yes. Thank you. One cube.

GILBERT. (*To Chuck.*) How much do you stand to lose?

CHUCK. (*Rueful laugh.*) Too much, damn far too much.

GILBERT. (*Mulling.*) Yeeesss. Tax-free? Be able to retire early if you wanted to? If it kept up? Louise and I talked it over.

RICHARD. (*Coming in now, a neophyte.*) You did? You talked it over? Just . . . talked it over?

GILBERT. Of course. Oh, I know how you feel, I felt that way . . . for a little.

CHUCK. Wanted to break the place up.

PERRY. (*Returning with Mrs. Toothe's drink.*) I did break the place up. Gave us an excuse to redecorate.

CHUCK. (*Settling.*) Funny how quickly you get used to the idea.

PERRY. Yes.

CHUCK. And, there is the money.

GILBERT. It's going to be a little tough to manage without it . . . now.

PERRY. I can't take Martin away from his school at this stage . . .

GILBERT. Same with Jeremy; and there's Jennifer's pony. I'm paying through the nose to keep it at that damn stable, but I can't sell it . . . she'd kill me.

CHUCK. (*Fairly grim.*) Anybody want to buy a nearly paid for Aston-Martin?

PERRY. That's the trouble: we're all involved in things. We can't . . . just stop.

GILBERT. And just between us, I don't mind admitting Louise and I get along together much better these days.

PERRY. So do Cyn and I. Most of our arguments were over money.

CHUCK. Yes.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Richard.*) Do you begin to understand better now?

RICHARD. (*Still rather numb.*) Oh yes; I understand.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Hears the women talking in the garden.*) Listen to them. The girls chattering away.

PERRY. (*Smiles.*) Yes.

MRS. TOOTHE. Shall we talk business?

GILBERT. Right! Richard? Will you be chairman?

RICHARD. (*A haze.*) Will I what?

GILBERT. Be chairman. We want a proper business meeting.

CHUCK. (*Moving in.*) Here you are. Besides, it's your chair.

GILBERT. Who will propose him?

CHUCK. I.

PERRY. Seconded.

GILBERT. Carried.

CHUCK. Call the meeting to order, Richard.

RICHARD. (*Brief hesitation, then.*) Meeting come to order. (*Pause.*) Well?

PERRY. Mr. Chairman, there is a property in our office that might suit Mrs. Toothe's needs, and ours, very well indeed.

GILBERT. Not *here*.

PERRY. No, two stops up. Big house, pretty cheap, too: it's only a couple of minutes' walk from the station.

MRS. TOOTHE. Sounds very good. How many rooms?

RICHARD. How many bedrooms, you mean, don't you?

MRS. TOOTHE. *Will* you be quiet! (*Back to normal tone.*) If the price is reasonable . . .

PERRY. Thirty-six.

MRS. TOOTHE. Twenty-eight. Yes, that will be all right. I shall look at it tomorrow. I don't want there to be too much of a gap in . . . *Smiles.*) our services. (*Richard snorts.*) Look here: I've spent time, and money, and energy building up this enterprise, with a first-class clientele and . . .

RICHARD. (*Mumbled.*) All right, all right, all right . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. Well, are there any questions?

CHUCK. (*Satisfied.*) Fine.

GILBERT. Seems good.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Richard, none too pleasant.*) You?

RICHARD. (*Again, an attempt at sarcasm.*) Oh, a couple.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Impatient, but not hurried.*) Well, let us have them.

CHUCK. (*Chiding.*) Oh, Dick . . .

RICHARD. Doesn't it seem to bother any of you . . . Christ, everybody's going to know! Inside of two weeks it'll be all over the . . . doesn't that *disturb* any of you?

MRS. TOOTHE. We don't advertise in the local paper.

RICHARD. There's a thing called word-of-mouth.

MRS. TOOTHE. Your wives will know if there is any danger. Believe me . . . I know what I'm doing.

RICHARD. There's such a thing as messing on your own doorstep, isn't there?

GILBERT. That's a pretty rotten thing to say.

RICHARD. True.

GILBERT. Any other business?

CHUCK. (*Guesses.*) No . . .

PERRY. No . . .

RICHARD. (*Heavy sarcasm.*) Well, in that case, I declare the meeting closed.

MRS. TOOTHE. There is one other thing . . .

GILBERT. Mm?

PERRY. What is *that*?

MRS. TOOTHE. It's important that you carry on normally. You shouldn't talk about all this any more. I mean, even among yourselves.

GILBERT. We should forget it, you mean.

PERRY. Yes. We should forget it.

CHUCK. Quite right.

RICHARD. (*A little quivering laugh—rage in this.*) I don't quite see how we can . . . just forget it.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Wise counsel.*) Oh, yes you can. One can forget. If something isn't good to live with, or convenient, one can forget. After all, there are things you *have* to forget if you want to live at all.

RICHARD. Yes, but . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. But you all know this. You're men of family and education. You're not fools.

CHUCK. No, of course we're not.

PERRY. Quite right.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Rises, moves toward garden.*) I think I'll go collect my ladies. (*Stops, to Richard.*) One other thing for you to remember—one thing which might help you forget; two things: we do nobody any harm . . .

RICHARD. And the other?

MRS. TOOTHE. There's very little chance your wife will ever take a lover behind your back. (*She exits.*)

GILBERT. (*After a small pause.*) Well, then, it's all set.

CHUCK. (*Going to the bar.*) Shall we drink on it?

PERRY. (*Raises his glass.*) Yes; here's to us.

GILBERT. To us. (*Notices Richard is just looking at his glass.*) Richard? To us? To all of us?

RICHARD. (*Pause, self-deprecating little laugh, raises glass.*) Sure; to us.

GILBERT. (*Older brother.*) You'll be all right, old man; you will be.

CHUCK and PERRY. (*Softly.*) Cheers.

RICHARD. (*Little boy, something lost.*) Cheers. (*The ladies start coming back in.*)

BERYL. I find it quite hopeless to try to grow azaleas here, and I don't know why.

JENNY. It's the lime in the soil, I think, but you can take care of that.

BERYL. Ah, well; your thumb.

MRS. TOOTHE. Who will tend my garden? Are there local people?

CHUCK. Yes, good ones . . . but expensive.

MRS. TOOTHE. Ah, well, there will be enough . . . if everything works out. Jenny, dear, may I use your telephone?

JENNY. Of course; let me show you. (*Jenny and Mrs. Toothe exit.*)

BERYL. Well, let us ladies all have another drink, and then we must go. It's all arranged, I understand.

CHUCK. (*Moving to the bar.*) I'll do the honors. Yes, all fixed.

PERRY. Perfect set-up.

LOUISE. Fine.

CYNTHIA. I couldn't be happier.

BERYL. Richard, no one is drinking your champagne, what a shame; but I *will* have some of your caviar, crackers and all.

RICHARD. (*Sarcasm intended.*) The champagne will keep; perhaps we can use it to christen Mrs. Toothe's new house. (*General laughter as response, sarcasm not seen.*)

CYNTHIA. (*Giggling.*) Oh, Richard; really! (*Jenny returns.*)

JENNY. What did I miss?

LOUISE. (*Her laughter dying.*) Oh, nothing; Richard said something funny.

JENNY. (*Relieved.*) Oh. How very nice. (*Roger and Jack appear in the doorway to the garden; Jack is quite drunk, but, even so, he is exaggerating it.*)

JACK. Hullo! Hullo! The gate-crasher is here; say hullo to the gate-crasher. Say hullo to the gate-crasher. Say hullo! (*They all turn, look at Jack, complete silence from them.*)

ROGER. (*Giving tobacco to Perry.*) Here's your tobacco; I hope it's right.

JACK. Young Roger found me by the club; well, at it, actually; at the club, and at the bar.

BERYL. (*Cool.*) That's rather evident.

JACK. Ooohhh, honestly, Beryl! (*Generally again.*) Annnddd so, I said to old Roger, how's the party, an' he told me, but I thought I'd come anyway. And here I am, and all my old friends, and isn't it wonderful.

JENNY. (*Uncomfortable.*) I . . . I thought you had a game, or something.

JACK. Backgammon with old Digby . . . well, old Digby died; yes he did. Farnum was kneading away at him on the old massage table, finished up, slapped him gently on the ass and said, "All done, Mr. Digby, sir," and he just lay there. Died horizontal on a metal board, which is as splendid a way as any. Got the good vod out, Richard? Got it hidden?

PERRY. (*As Jack makes for the bar.*) Go easy on the vodka, Jack.

JACK. (*A dare.*) Your house? Your vodka?

PERRY. No, but, still . . .

JACK. Tell you what I'll do, Perr, old thing: next time you give a garden-type party, and I come unasked—which is the only way I'll make it, if old Cyn has anything to say about it, eh, kid?—then . . . I will go easy on the vod. O.K.?

LOUISE. Do you, uh . . . do you bring any other charming news from the club with you, dear Jack?

JACK. Anything other than poor old Digby? Weeeelll . . . Oh! Yeah! They got rid of Harry Burns.

GILBERT. Got rid of him? How?

JACK. Dug back—someone did; found out it was short for Bernstein; asked him to go.

CHUCK. (*Disbelief, but not offended.*) Oh, come on.

JACK. True, true.

LOUISE. (*To Beryl.*) Is Monica Burns Jewish?

BERYL. Well, I suppose.

LOUISE. (*Some wonder.*) I never would have thought.

CYNTHIA. She never let on.

LOUISE. Can you imagine.

JACK. For God's sake, you'd think she was a common prostitute, or something. (*Small silence.*)

BERYL. (*Cold.*) A what?

JACK. (*Wagging his head.*) A prostitootsie. (*Another small silence.*)

CYNTHIA. I can't say that Harry and Monica look . . .

LOUISE. No, no, they don't . . .

BERYL. Funny how you can sort of know, though . . .

JACK. After the fact, you mean.

PERRY. (*Wincing a little.*) Threw him out of the club?

ROGER. Some people say we're all Jews.

JENNY. (*Not offended, startled.*) What?

ROGER. The ten lost tribes.

GILBERT. Some people will say anything.

ROGER. And quite a lot of us are circumcised. (*Silence, save Jack, who laughs softly.*)

RICHARD. (*Short, cold.*) Go to your room.

ROGER. What?

RICHARD. Go to your room!

ROGER. Why!?

JENNY. He didn't mean to say anything.

ROGER. What did I say?

RICHARD. I told you to go to your room!

ROGER. (*Standing his ground.*) I want to know what I said wrong!

RICHARD. (*Feeling foolish, this, though, merely pushes him further.*) Don't you stand there and defy me!!

ROGER. It's not fair! You say much worse things!

RICHARD. I am your father and I tell you to go to your room. You're not fit to associate with decent people.

JACK. (*Laughing, but serious.*) Oh, come on, Richard!

RICHARD. (*To Jack.*) SHUT YOUR MOUTH! This is my house and my son! I tell him what to do! (*To Roger.*) Go on!

ROGER. (*Supplication to the rest of the group.*) But it comes up all the time in the Bible.

RICHARD. So do the Ten Commandments. Do you know the Ten Commandments?

ROGER. Yes.

RICHARD. Say them.

ROGER. Now?

JENNY. Darling . . .

RICHARD. (*Wheeling on her.*) Leave me something! (*To Roger.*) Now!

ROGER. Thou shalt not kill.

RICHARD. That's one. Go on.

ROGER. (*Looks to Jenny for help, but there is none there.*) Thou shalt not . . . (*Falters.*)

RICHARD. (*To them all.*) There; and a liar as well. Go up to your room. (*Roger pauses, gives up, turns, begins going, shaking his head.*)

JACK. The poor bastard didn't say anything.

RICHARD. (*Following Roger.*) Are you going to go to your room, or am I going to have to take you UP there?

JENNY. (*To Richard.*) Darling, let him . . . let him go out, or something. Let him go to the club. Just . . . (*Between her teeth.*) . . . get him out of here.

RICHARD. (*Sighs.*) Oh . . . all right. (*Exiting, calling after Roger.*) Roger? Roger?

BERYL. They do need discipline.

GILBERT. A few licks with a belt from his father never did a boy any harm.

PERRY. Mine kept a riding crop.

GILBERT. And you never resented it, did you?

PERRY. (*Can't recall.*) I . . . I guess not.

JACK. How savage you all are today. Savage . . . and strange. All embarrassed, and snapping. Have I caught you at something? BERYL. What do you mean!

JACK. (*To audience.*) Is there something going on here?

CHUCK. Have another drink, Jack.

JENNY. Yes! Let's everybody! Perry? (*General agreement and movement.*)

JACK. (*Grabbing Jenny by the arm as she moves by him.*) Jenny, my darling! Why do you all hate me? Why are you all trying to get me drunk?

JENNY. (*Artificial little laugh.*) Jack!

JACK. What's going on, Jenny?

JENNY. (*Transparently lying.*) Nothing, Jack. Nothing at all.

JACK. Do you still love me, Jenny?

JENNY. (*Soothing the little boy.*) Yes, Jack; of course. (*Richard re-enters.*)

JACK. Ah! Thank God! (*Rises.*) Kiss and make up. (*He kisses her.*)

RICHARD. I sent him out for a . . . What do you think you're doing!

JACK. I am kissing your beautiful wife.

RICHARD. Then stop it!

JACK. I have stopped.

RICHARD. I don't care for that sort of behavior.

JACK. Oh, come on, Richard. It might have been anyone. Hasn't Jenny been kissed before?

RICHARD. You are not to kiss her!!

JACK. What is the matter with all of you this evening?

BERYL. There is *nothing* the matter with us.

JACK. There is something . . . very wrong. (*Mrs. Toothe re-enters.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. Well, my dear children, my flock, I have made the necessary calls, and I think we . . . (*Sees Jack.*) Ah. (*Her eyes move from one person to another quickly.*) I, uh . . . I do believe we've met before.

JENNY. (*Jumping in.*) Jack, you *do* remember Mrs. Toothe; you met her . . . oh, six-seven months ago, and . . .

JACK. (*Staring at Mrs. Toothe.*) Yes; your fairy godmother.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Jack, very naturally.*) How nice to see you again.

JACK. How nice to see you. (*Turns away, thinking.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. (*To the others.*) I *do* think I should be off now. It was so nice meeting you all . . .

JACK. (*Suddenly remembering.*) Yes! (*Turns around, a smile of fascination.*) You're English, aren't you?

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Playing it cool and natural.*) British, yes.

JACK. And you lived in London . . . some, some time ago.

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Hedging.*) Yes, I . . . well, I *have* lived in London, but . . .

JACK. (*Very pleased.*) I *do* remember you, dear lady. By God, if I were *sober*, I doubt I would. (*Laughs greatly.*) Oh yes! *Do* I remember you!

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Playing it through.*) You must be mistaken. I never forget faces, and . . .

JACK. Oh, lady, I remember you well, I remember your . . . (*Another fit of laughing.*) . . . your ladies, I . . . (*Looks about the room, sees the trapped and embarrassed faces, breaks into more laughter.*) Oh no! No! Tell me it's not true! It is! It is true! (*More laughter.*)

BERYL. I don't know what you're thinking, Jack, but I suspect that you may have had a little too much to drink, and . . .

JACK. Has Madam found herself another group of ladies? (*Laughter as he talks.*) Are we operating in the suburbs now? (*Mock commiseration, laughter.*) Oh, my poor Beryl! Dear Cynthia! Proud Louise! (*Sees Jenny, his tone now is a cross to disappointment and wonder at the future possibilities.*) And oh my darling Jenny!

RICHARD. Stay away from her.

JACK. And all that . . . and all that money lying on the . . . (*Breaks into more laughter.*) . . . "Someone sent it to us in the mail?" (*Laughter.*) Gentlemen . . . I don't know who arranged all this; but if you guys did, you're better businessmen than I ever thought you were. (*Laughs, starts for french doors.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. (*Eyes narrowing.*) Stop him.

PERRY. Where do you think you're going?

JACK. (*Still laughing.*) Hm?

PERRY. I said where do you think you're going?

JACK. Why, I thought I'd go back to the cl— (*Breaks down in laughter again.*)

MRS. TOOTHE. He'll talk. (*This was a command.*)

JENNY. Yes. He will.

MRS. TOOTHE. (Even more clear than before.) He'll talk. (Perry grabs Jack by the arm, Chuck steps in front of him, barring his way.)

PERRY. Hold on, old friend.

CHUCK. Easy now.

JACK. (Panic and anger rising.) Let . . . Let me go. God damn it, let me . . . (He begins to struggle, Richard and Gilbert come to the aid of Perry and Chuck.)

GILBERT. Get him! (They are on him, just restraining at first, but the more Jack struggles, the more they are on him.)

JACK. Let me . . . Get your hands off me . . . Let! Me! God damn it! Let! Me! (They have him down, are on top of him.)

PERRY. Hold him! Hold him down!

JACK. (Really shouting.) STOP IT! STOP IT!

MRS. TOOTHE. (On her feet, but not in a rush, a commander.) He's drunk; he'll talk. You must make him be quiet. (Jack continues to struggle, bites Chuck's hand.)

CHUCK. (In rage and reflex, strikes Jack across the face with the back of his hand.) God damn you!

JACK. STOP! IT!

MRS. TOOTHE. Keep him quiet! (Richard grabs a pillow from the sofa and, together, two or three of them press it over Jack's face. His shouts become muffled as they hold the pillow on his face, stiff-armed. Finally there is silence. The men relax a little, slowly get off their knees, unwind some, look at Jack's prone, still form, they move about a little.)

GILBERT. He's out.

RICHARD. (Grim laugh.) For a while.

MRS. TOOTHE. (Goes over, bends over Jack, examines him for a moment, straightens up.) No. Not for a while. (Begins to walk back to her chair.)

JENNY. (Pitiful, moves toward Jack.) Jack?

MRS. TOOTHE. (Cruelly casual, but serious.) Don't bother. He's dead.

GILBERT. (Offended.) What do you mean he's dead!

MRS. TOOTHE. Look for yourself. He's dead.

GILBERT. (Looks for himself.) Yes. He is. He's dead. (Jenny and Cynthia begins to weep, quietly, Louise turns away, the men look at one another.)

BERYL. (Final, catatonic.) Well.

CHUCK. I, I don't think we did that, he . . . We didn't do that.

GILBERT. No, we were just . . .

PERRY. He must have had a heart attack.

JENNY. (Going to him.) Oh, my poor, darling Jack . . .

RICHARD. Stay away from him, Jenny.

CHUCK. What . . . what shall we do?

LOUISE. (Ordering it.) He can't be dead; it doesn't happen.

CYNTHIA. He would have talked! It would have been all over town.

JENNY. (Defending Jack.) Who says!?

BERYL. You said, for one.

JENNY. (Furious, and near tears.) I did not! I said . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. (Calm.) You said he would talk. You agreed he would.

GILBERT. No one meant to kill him . . .

PERRY. No, it was . . .

RICHARD. (Grim.) I think I'd better call the police, hunh?

CHUCK. (Nodding.) Yeah, yeah.

GILBERT. Yes; you'd better.

MRS. TOOTHE. (Calm, forceful.) Do you think so?

RICHARD. (Sort of disgusted.) What?

MRS. TOOTHE. Do you think you had better call the police?

RICHARD. There's a dead man there!

MRS. TOOTHE. I know; I can see. But what will you tell them? The police.

RICHARD. I'll, I'll tell them . . . we were having a party, and, and Jack came in, and he was drunk, and . . .

MRS. TOOTHE. And so you all smothered him?

RICHARD. (Furious.) No! That he was drunk!

BERYL. . . . he kept on drinking . . .

GILBERT. . . . and he had a heart attack. (Pause, they look to Mrs. Toothe.)

CHUCK. No?

MRS. TOOTHE. You may call the police, if you want to. Do let me leave first, though. I wouldn't want to be listed among those present when the autopsy is done and they find the marks on him and the hemorrhage in the lungs. That happens when people are killed that way, you know; the lungs rupture. (Silence.)

GILBERT. Oh. (Silence.)

PERRY. I see. (*Silence.*)
 BERYL. Well. We can't take that chance, can we. (*Silence. Jenny weeps quietly.*)
 LOUISE. (*Slowly.*) No. We can't.
 RICHARD. (*Quietly loathing.*) What do you suggest we do, then? (*They all look to Mrs. Toothe, save Jenny.*)
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Richard.*) I know you think I'm a monster, so . . . if I ask you a question, it won't matter much.
 RICHARD. (*Waiting.*) Yes?
 MRS. TOOTHE. What . . . what is the purpose of that deep trench you've dug near your brick wall? (*Silence.*)
 RICHARD. (*Calm response, much underneath.*) I've been looking for the cesspool line.
 MRS. TOOTHE. Have you found it?
 RICHARD. (*Still staring at her.*) No.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*After a pause.*) Well, then. Bury him. (*Silence. The guests look at each other, calmly, speculatively.*)
 RICHARD. (*Slowly.*) You can't mean that.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*To all the men.*) Go on; bury him.
 RICHARD. (*Smiling a little.*) No.
 MRS. TOOTHE. All right, then. Call the police. (*Silence, the men look at one another, slowly, steadily. Then, as if it had all been organized, they slowly move to work. They go to Jack, take him by the legs, arms, under the head, and take him out into the garden, disappear from our sight.*)
 JENNY. (*After they have gone, rises, starts after them.*) Jack! Richard!
 MRS. TOOTHE. Jenny! Come here! (*Beryl and Louise go to Jenny, who is helplessly, quietly crying now, and gently bring her back to the group. They all sit.*)
 JENNY. You . . . they just can't . . . do that.
 MRS. TOOTHE. Hush, my dear. Hush. (*This is a wake and the ladies have sorrow on their faces.*)
 LOUISE. (*Sincere, helpless.*) Poor Jack.
 BERYL. Yes; poor Jack.
 LOUISE. At least it wasn't . . . one of us. I mean, someone, well . . . with a family, someone . . . regular. (*Jenny is quietly hysterical.*)
 MRS. TOOTHE. You haven't put up with death, have you,

Jenny? (*Jenny shakes her head.*) I'm sorry to say you get used to it!
 JENNY. N-never!
 MRS. TOOTHE. You should have been in London in the war. You would have learned about death . . . and violence . . . All those nights in the shelters, with the death going on. Death and dying. Always take the former if you can.
 LOUISE. (*Nodding at the sad truth.*) Yes.
 MRS. TOOTHE. You must help your husbands. You'll have to, I think . . . for a while. They may wake up at night; sweat; they may . . . lose heart. You'll have to be the strong ones . . . as usual.
 BERYL. Yes.
 MRS. TOOTHE. I wouldn't try to make them go on as if nothing has happened. For something *has* happened . . . very much so. One of the things that *does* happen . . . one of the accommodations that have to be made. Do you see, Jenny?
 JENNY. I don't know.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*Sweet, gentle.*) You can't go back. You have to make do with what is. And what is leads to what will be. You make the best as you go on. Like our looks, when we age, as we are doing, or will. Some of us have our faces lifted, I suppose, and we convince . . . some people—not as many as we'd like to—but we don't believe it ourselves, do we, Jenny?
 JENNY. (*A little girl at lessons.*) I shouldn't think so. No.
 MRS. TOOTHE. No. We do what will help, which is all we can.
 JENNY. (*Instructed.*) Yes. (*The men come back in, subdued, clothes a little awry, hands dirty.*)
 GILBERT. All done.
 PERRY. Finished.
 CHUCK. You'd never know.
 RICHARD. . . . unless you had a mind.
 CHUCK. Unless you knew.
 RICHARD. Yes. (*Goes to Jenny, in fact, all the men gravitate to their wives.*)
 CYNTHIA. (*Kindly.*) Would any of you like a drink? Darling?
 PERRY. No; no thanks.
 LOUISE. Darling?
 GILBERT. Yes. A quick one.
 RICHARD. (*To Jenny, comforting.*) You O.K.?

JENNY. (*Brave smile.*) Sure. You?
 RICHARD. (*Empty.*) Considering.
 MRS. TOOTHE. Well, you've all done very well. I think it's time I should be getting on.
 BERYL. Yes; well, we all should.
 GILBERT. Yes. What time are Don and Betty coming over?
 LOUISE. Oh, my God! Eight o'clock. You're right, we've got . . .
 CHUCK. Your husband is hungry.
 BERYL. Well, all right then, I'll feed you.
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Perry.*) I'll call you tomorrow and come to see the house?
 PERRY. Yes; fine.
 RICHARD. You're all just . . . leaving?
 CHUCK. (*What else?*) Yes; I think we should.
 PERRY. There's nothing we can do, is there?
 RICHARD. (*Quiet, intense.*) There's a body out there; Jack.
 GILBERT. It's all *right*, Richard.
 PERRY. Really, Richard, it's O.K.
 BERYL. Yes, it is.
 MRS. TOOTHE. Go home, children, it's all right.
 CHUCK. Yes, well, I don't know what more we can do.
 LOUISE. Yes, we do have Don and Betty coming over.
 CYNTHIA. Do you mean Don and Betty Grainger?
 LOUISE. Yes.
 PERRY. I still can't get over Harry Burns.
 GILBERT. Harry Bernstein, you mean. (*The guests have gone.*)
 MRS. TOOTHE. (*To Jenny and Richard.*) The grass will grow over; the earth will be rich, and soon—eventually—everything in the garden . . . will be as it was. You'll see. (*Mrs. Toothe exits, followed by Richard and Jenny seeing her out almost by reflex. Bare stage for a moment. Jack comes in from the garden, his clothes dirty, sod in his hair.*)
 JACK. (*He will speak only to the audience from now on, even when Richard and Jenny return, nor will they notice him, of course.*) Oh, don't get any ideas, now. I'm dead, believe me. I'm dead. It's amazing how dying sobers you up. Well, I certainly never thought it would be *this* way—like this; I'd imagined sliding gently from the bar stool at the club, or crashing into a truck on a curve some night, but never this. Shows you can't tell. God!

Would you believe it? Mrs. Toothe, and Beryl and Cynthia and Louise? And poor Jenny? I wouldn't have; but, then, I'm rather selfish—self-concerned. *Was*. I must get used to that; past tense. Poor Jenny and Richard. They're the only ones I feel badly about—the guilt, and all the rest. That old Madam can take care of herself, and the others . . . who cares? But Jenny and Richard . . . that's a different matter. I worry for them. (*Jenny and Richard re-enter, move about slowly. Jack puts a finger to his lips, to shush the audience, whether necessary or not.*)
 JENNY. (*Timid.*) Well.
 RICHARD. (*Emptied.*) Yes.
 JENNY. (*Trying to be conversational.*) Where did you send Roger?
 RICHARD. To the club. To swim.
 JENNY. (*Genuine.*) That was nice of you.
 RICHARD. Stupid taking it out on him.
 JENNY. Yes. (*Pause.*) I think we'd better clean up—all the glasses and everything.
 RICHARD. All right.
 JACK. (*Watches them for a moment, back to the audience.*) Here's the awful irony of it.
 JENNY. (*Remembering.*) We're to say . . . nothing.
 RICHARD. What will happen? He'll have just . . . disappeared?
 JENNY. Yes; I guess so.
 RICHARD. Roger brought him here.
 JENNY. Yes, but we'll say Jack just stayed for a little, and then went on.
 RICHARD. They'll ask?
 JENNY. Someone will; someone's bound to—insurance people, somebody.
 RICHARD. We must make a story.
 JENNY. Yes. I'll talk to the others.
 RICHARD. All right.
 JENNY. (*So sincere, explaining so much.*) Darling . . . I do love you.
 RICHARD. (*Timid.*) Yes; and I love you.
 JACK. The irony; I was going to tell you the irony. Remember I said I'd made my will over, left it all to Richard and Jenny? Well, it was true; I wasn't kidding. Three and a half million; every penny, and my house here, *and* in Nassau. It's all theirs.

JENNY. Let's put the glasses on the tray here.

JACK. Problem now is, they'll have to wait. If I've just . . . vanished . . . disappeared from the face of the earth, it'll be seven years until I can be declared officially dead. And there'll be an investigation; you can be sure of that. I hope they make it stick—the story they tell. I imagine they will.

RICHARD. What shall I do with the caviar?

JENNY. Give it here; I'll cover it and put it in the fridge.

JACK. But seven years; that's a very long time. So much can happen. With all they're doing, in seven years their lives can be ruined. They have so much to live with. *(To Richard and Jenny.)* You've got to be strong! You've got to hold on!

JENNY. Darling?

RICHARD. Mmm?

JENNY. I was thinking . . . that house Mrs. Toothe is taking.

RICHARD. What about it?

JENNY. I think it ought to be planted nicely, flowers and shrubs and all. Make it look like it's really lived in. It mustn't look like it's been let go. It might draw suspicion. You notice things like that.

RICHARD. Yes; you do.

JENNY. Gardens that have been let go. If people let them go, you know there's something wrong in the house.

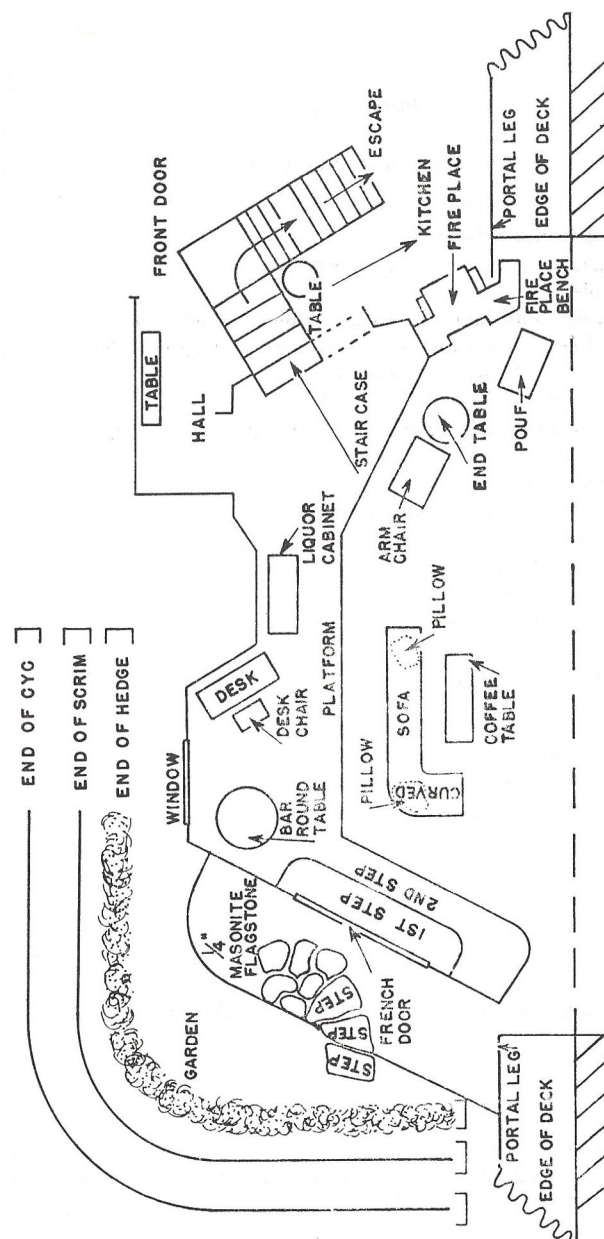
RICHARD. Yes.

JENNY. I think it should be well planted and taken care of; kept up. I think it should look like all the others. Don't you think so?

RICHARD. *(Straight.)* Yes; I think you're right.

JACK. Well . . . I think they'll make it.

CURTAIN



PROP LIST

Act One—Scene One

3 wooden cigarette boxes
 1 hand lawn mower (Richard)
 4 empty cigarette packages with coupons
 1 handkerchief (Richard)
 1 sewing basket with buttons, thread, needles, thimble, etc.
 1 package of cigarettes—different from empty packages (Richard)
 1 empty bottle of American vodka (Richard)
 1 pillowcase with needle and thread (Jenny)
 2 bundles of money—destroyed—of \$1000 each (Mrs. Toothe)
 1 martini pitcher
 2 bottles ginger ale
 1 calling card—destroyed (Mrs. Toothe)
 2 6 oz. glasses
 1 bottle of gin (Richard)
 1 bottle of Polish vodka (Richard)
 1 bottle of vermouth (Richard)
 1 martini strainer
 1 ice bucket with ice (Richard)
 1 metal martini stirrer
 4 martini glasses (Richard)
 1 pack of cigarettes—4 out (Richard)
 1 waste paper basket
 1 box of matches (Richard)
 6 ashtrays
 ½ bottle of scotch
 ½ bottle of bourbon

Act One—Scene Two

Bundles (Jenny)—groceries, box of 4 pairs of socks, can of tennis balls
 1 pen (Richard)
 1 checkbook
 1 shopping list (Jenny)
 Bunch of bills (Richard)
 1 pad and pencil (Jenny)
 1 special delivery package of money (9 bundles of \$10 bills wrapped in packages of \$500 and 4 \$100 bills) (Richard)

1 pocket knife (Richard)
 1 matchbook (Richard)
 1 pack of cigarettes in Jenny's purse
 1 ice bucket with ice (Jenny)
 1 mantel clock (Preset)
 1 pad and pencil (Jenny)
 1 suitcase (Roger)
 1 bundle of money in side drawer
 1 bundle of money in sewing basket
 1 bundle of money in box on mantel

Act Two

1 tray (Jenny) with caviar dish and crackers
 1 plate (Jenny)
 3 old fashioned glasses and 1 breakaway glass on tray (Roger)
 4 champagne glasses (Preset)
 1 bottle of champagne (Preset)
 1 champagne bucket
 1 bottle bourbon
 1 bottle scotch
 1 bottle gin
 1 bottle vodka
 Money (Roger)
 Money (Perry)
 1 pouch of tobacco (Roger)
 10 highball glasses (Preset)
 9 old fashioned glasses (Preset)
 Napkins (Preset)

(All preset)

RUNNING PROP LIST

PRESET—Act I:

Preset on coffee table:

- 2 magazines R. side
 - 1 *New Yorker*
 - 1 *Gardening*
- 1 cigarette box c.
- 1 empty Raleigh cigarette pack on cigarette box
- 2 boxes stick matches
- 2 ashtrays (D. R. and D. L.)

Preset on sofa:

- Richard's cardigan over back of sofa R.
- 2 pillows
- Pillowcase with needle and thread R.

Preset on desk:

- Bills
- Letters
- Pencil and pad
- Pen
- Checkbook
- Envelopes
- Ashtray D. R. corner
- Box of stick matches

Preset on liquor cabinet:

- Cigarette box D. L. corner
- Ice bucket U. C. with ice
- 4 martini glasses U. R. corner
- 1 6 oz. highball glass
- Ashtray D. R. corner with stick matches
- 1 stirrer

Preset in liquor cabinet:

- Martini pitcher
- Empty bottle of American vodka
- ½ bottle of bourbon
- ½ bottle of scotch
- 2 bottles of ginger ale
- 2 6 oz. highball glasses

In R. drawer:

- Metal strainer
- Opener

Preset in waste basket:

- Empty cigarette pack with a coupon

Preset on table L. of sofa:

- Cigarette box with a little tobacco
- Empty cigarette pack in cigarette box
- Ashtray
- Box of stick matches

Preset sewing basket L. of pouf containing:

- Needle, thread, thimble, buttons, ball of yarn, scissors, pin cushion, lady's handkerchief

Preset on mantel:

- Ashtray U. corner
- Clock c.
- Empty cigarette pack with a coupon c.
- Box containing bundle of money

Preset on bar table:

- Lamp
- Ashtray
- Box of stick matches

Preset off R.:

- Lawn mower (Richard)
- Pack of cigarettes with 3 in—different kind than on set (Richard—personal prop)
- Box of stick matches (Richard—personal prop)
- ½ glass of water
- Pitcher of water
- Cigarette case with 5 in (Jack—personal prop)
- Cigarette lighter (Jack—personal prop)

Preset off L.:

- Calling card (Mrs. Toothe)
- 2 packages of money (Mrs. Toothe)
- 2 cigarettes
- Full bottle Polish vodka (Richard)
- Full bottle gin (Richard)
- Full bottle vermouth (Richard)
- 1 package cigarettes open with 2 out (Richard) and box of stick matches

CHANGE—Act I—Scene 1 to Act I—Scene 2:

Strike from cabinet:

- 1/2 full ginger ale bottle into cabinet
- Martini pitcher with ice into cabinet
- 1 bottle Polish vodka into cabinet
- 1 bottle gin into cabinet
- 1 bottle vermouth into cabinet
- Put strainer into r. drawer cabinet
- Strike stirrer
- Strike ice bucket
- Strike American vodka bottle from waste basket
- Put martini glass and ginger ale glass from table L. of sofa into cabinet
- Strike lawn mower
- Reverse magazines on coffee table
- Put martini glass from coffee table into cabinet
- Empty ashtrays on coffee table
- Strike pack of cigarettes
- Strike sewing basket and handkerchief
- Strike torn money and torn calling card
- Bring on 2 martini glasses—place on cabinet r.
- Bring on 1 martini pitcher—place on cabinet r.
- Set Richard's jacket on back of desk chair

Preset off L.:

Package of money—(brown paper special delivery tied with string to be opened every performance)

Contains:

- 9 banded packages of 50 \$10.00 bills
- 4 loose \$100.00 bills
- Plus a pocket knife (all for Richard)
- Stick matches
- Suitcase (Roger)
- Bag with groceries—red shopping bag with 2 paper bags of groceries, tennis balls, list on top (Jenny)
- Box of 4 pairs of socks with labels (Jenny) tied with string
- Jenny's purse with:*
 - Pad and pencil
 - Mirror
 - Comb
- Ice bucket with ice (Jenny)
- Metal stirrer (Richard)

CHANGE—Act I—Scene 2 to Act II:

Strike:

- Pad and pencil from coffee table
- Clock
- Groceries
- Purse
- Tennis balls
- Tennis socks
- Martini pitcher and stirrer
- All glasses
- Ice bucket
- Magazines
- Money
- Pack of money behind books
- Lamp from bar table
- Empty, clean, and reset ashtrays

Preset on bar table:

- Larger top
- Scotch
- Gin
- Bourbon
- Polish vodka
- Ice bucket with ice
- 6 highball glasses
- 6 old fashioned glasses
- Ashtray
- Cocktail napkins

Preset on desk:

- Bottle of champagne in bucket with ice (unopened)
- 4 champagne glasses

Preset on liquor cabinet:

- 4 highball glasses
- 2 ginger ale bottles and opener

In cabinet:

- 2 6 oz. highball glasses

Preset off L.:

- Wooden tray with 4 glasses, 1 breakaway (Roger)
- Pouch of tobacco (Roger)
- Tray with caviar in dish
 - 2 packs of open cigarettes on plate
 - 3 boxes of crackers unopened on plate
- Plate

Spoon for caviar
5 cigarettes in cigarette case and lighter (Chuck)
5 bills (money) (Perry)
Cigarettes in purse (Louise)
2 dollar bills and some change (Roger)
Cigarettes for Mrs. Tootie
Round wooden tray (Jenny)

FURNITURE LIST

Sofa
Coffee table
Bar round table
Desk and chair
Armchair
End table
Liquor cabinet
2 pillows
Lamp for desk
Pouf
Fireplace equipment:
 Andirons
 Logs
 Screen
 Etc.
Books—above fireplace
½ dozen potted plants
Light brackets
Oriental rug on platform
Runner for stairs
Runner for hallway
Lamp for bar table