

BUREAU OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION
FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT
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S 322(6)

" CLASS OF " 29 "

A
Play
in
Three
Acts

By

ORRIE LASHIN and MILO HASTINGS

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C H A R A C T E R S

KEN HOLDEN

TED BROOKS

TIPPY SAYRE

MARTIN PETERSON

LAURA STEVENS

KATE ALLEN

LUCILLE BROWN

BISHOP HOLDEN

STANLEY PRESCOTT

POLICEMAN

CASEWORKER

MISS DONOVAN

ACT ONESCENE ONE

It is Saturday afternoon, about one o'clock.

The room is a large one in an ancient brown stone house. The ceiling is high, the floor ancient. It serves for a sleeping as well as a living room. Off it at one end is a kitchen, at the other a small bedroom.

There is no woman's touch in the place, but in spite of its dilapidation there is a mellow and intellectual air -- lent, perhaps, by the books and magazines that lie scattered about; some old college pennants on the wall; also both architectural drawings and original cartoons. There is a good architect's drawing board in use by a window and a rack containing many rolls of drawings and prints.

TED is sitting on the couch, reading an old book. He wears a once excellent but now threadbare suit.

TIPPY wears shabby old dressing gown, short. He has no trousers on. He is pressing his pants on an ironing board.

Each is silent and preoccupied. Ken makes a finishing touch with color brush, then turns his board down to a more vertical position and backs off, surveying his work.

Ken

Well, take a squint at that Tippy.

(TIPPY carefully turns iron on end and steps over to look at drawing.)

Tippy

H'm. Very charming. Very charming. If Comrade Stalin could see that he would order one for each member of his harem.

Ken

That's a bum joke. Not even Hearst has accused Stalin of irregularity in his private life.

Tippy

Sorry. That comes of my not reading Hearst.

Ken

What's more, this drawing's not intended for the Soviets. It's distinctly American.

Tippy

But Ken, they like it Americanskee. They approve of the way we do our living, if not of the way we get it.

Ken

They like our gadgets. The plans I sent to Moscow were all American inside. But the exteriors were different.

Tippy

(Slaps him on shoulder and returns to pants pressing.)

Well, keep at it, old man. All things come to those who work while they wait.

Ken

Work. I just do this to keep from going nuts.

Tippy

O. K. Keep occupied. American recovery may yet prove speedier than Soviet red tape.

Ken

I've given up hope of hearing from Moscow. It's been five months...

Tippy

Make allowances for bureaucracy, Ken. They're in such a hurry over there they haven't time to do anything.

Ken

(Starts to remove drawing)

I don't want Martin to see this. He'd never forgive me if he knew I'd quit working on stuff for Russia.

Tippy

Hi, Ted! Give a look on your fellow artist's work.

(Ken stands aside. TED rises politely, keeping finger in place in book and looking at drawing briefly.)

Ted

(Indifferently)

It's very nice.

(He goes back to couch and his book, KEN removes drawing and rolls it up. TIPPY finishes pants and cuts off iron. MARTIN'S voice heard in hall, singing.)

Martin

Belaya armeya chornee barone
Snova gotoviyat nam tearskee trone

(MARTIN enters, marching and singing)
No ot tigeo doe bretanskeye Morye

(Stamps and accents each syllable)
Armeya Krasnya vsekh seelnaye.

Tippy
Jesus, Martin, why don't you get Billy Rose to write a new song for the Red Army?

Martin
As soon as Ken learns Krasnaya Armeya I'll teach him the International.

Tippy
I can bellyache the Armeya better now than he can.

Martin
Damned pity you won't study Russian with us. You have a natural gift for languages.

Tippy
The reason Russian is easy for me is because I never learned the alphabet.

Ken
Boy, what an alphabet!

Martin
(Snapping his fingers)
Da, da, da -- ah, be, ve, ge.

Tippy
(Picking up book)
Ya, ya, ya, -- vas ist das? Das ist ein buch.

Ken
Da, da, da, -- chto etto takoye? Etto kneega.

Martin
Fine. Let's go.
(Holds up pencil)
Chto etto takoe?

Ken
Etta karandash.

Martin
(Stands book on table)
Chto?

Ken
Kneega stoeet na stolom.

Martin
(Throws book under table)
Gdye kneega?

1-4
Kneega pod stalom.

Ken

Martin
Great! Now make a sentence of your own.

Ken

(Lamely)
Tovarisch Stalin...
(Stalls)

Tippy

(Cutting in smartly)
Krasnaya Armeya pod stalom.

(TIPPY hangs pants on chair back, and puts
away ironing paraphernalia)

(MARTIN goes to book shelf and gets Russian
reader and dictionary.)

Martin

I've only a few minutes. But we can do half a page. We'll never
get it unless we keep at it eternally.

Ken

For eternity you mean.

Martin

You're doing fine with the reading. It'll help you no end when
you get to Russia.

Ken

God, what faith you have!

Martin

Sure you're going to Russia. They have millions of buildings to
build, and they can't train architects fast enough.

(Finds place in book)
(Ken hesitates)

Ken

I'm not kidding myself. -- I've been doing this more to help you.

Martin

Listen, Ken. Even if you don't go, you should know Russian so you
can read Soviet architectural journals. The years we wasted on dead
languages! -- Russians' alive. They're doing things, new things,
big things! Russian is the language of the next great sweep in
world progress.

Tippy

Sez you.

Martin

You read the New York Times. Where does the real news come from?

Tippy

That depends on who is shooting which.

Martin

Shooting isn't news. War isn't news. War is old -- stavistic, a confession of failure, evidence of retrogression. News deals with new things: progress, science, art, invention, the conquest of nature, That's real news. And where is it coming from today?

Tippy

All right, all right. When you have learned six thousand more verbs, each with a hundred irregular forms, then you can read it in Pravda.

(TIPPY carries board out to kitchen.
MARTIN sits at table. KEN with him.
MARTIN finds place in book and points
to a word.)

Ken

(Slowly, pronouncing all syllables in monotone,
as TIPPY enters.)

Al-yek-tree-feet-see-row-von-nuim...

Martin

(In disgust)

Stuck on the first word.

(Starts thumbing dictionary)

Tippy

Word? It sounded to me like a derogatory sentence.

(Knock on the door. TIPPY sees envelope
that was stuck under it and picks it up.
He is opening envelope when knock is re-
peated. He opens door and KATE enters.)

Kate

Hello, Tippy.

Tippy

Hello, Kate.

Kate

Hi Ted?

Ted

(Closing book)

Hello, Kate.

Kate

(Starts toward him but stops at table.)

Hello, you bums. How's the Red Army?

Ken

(Rising, glad of chance to get away from book)
Tippy just put it under the table.

Kate

Good for Tippy! He's the only real American among you.

Tippy

The only real American by conviction. Ted's American by innocence.
He won't know there was a Russian revolution until it becomes a classic.

Kate

(Fondly)

That makes him very English.

(Takes Ted's book)

Is it Chaucer? Or just dear old Ben Johnson?

Ted

No such luck. It's a first edition of Hemingway's "The Sun Also Rises"
For a man who wanted it, it's worth ten dollars.

Kate

Swell! How much did you pay for it?

Ted

Fifty cents.

Kate

Swell!

Ted

As long as ignorant people go into the second-hand book business...
It's a tedious business, but if you look over enough stalls, you're
bound to pick up something.

Tippy

I'm sorry to be sordid in this literary atmosphere, but if you
really have a book worth ten bucks, you'd better sell it.

Ted

I will if I can find the right man.

Tippy

Well -- the landlord informs us that he has a more desirable tenant
who wants these quarters. He gives us till tomorrow morning to raise
the rent or he will out us kick.

(KEN turns away and putters with his drawing
instruments. TED goes into Bedroom)

Martin

(Who has been absorbed in dictionary)

Hell, it means electrification!

Tippy

Then would I shock you by telling you that the landlord means business?

Martin

Run? Oh rent! All right, I have my share. Here, take it now.

(Hands TIPPY eight dollars. KATE takes money out of her purse. TIPPY takes it quietly, nodding understanding.)

Kate

(With gesture toward bedroom)

If he does sell his book, take his eight dollars and hold it. He may not find a ten-dollar book next month.

(TIPPY goes to put money in pocket and discovers he has no pants on.)

Tippy

Hello, I have no pants...

(He grabs pants off chair and goes into bedroom)

Martin

Why don't you quit it Kate? You aren't helping Ted. You're ruining him.

Kate

I'm /only lending him the money. He'll pay it back.

Martin

Like hell he will! The man's been a deadbeat for years.

Kate

(Desperately)

Martin!

Martin

He borrowed off his prosperous friends till he exhausted that source.

Kate

He sold them books.

Martin

Sold nothing! -- Disguised gifts. He made the mistake of naming prices. Fooled me for a while. Then I happened to meet a real second-hand books man.

Kate

(Angrily)

What business was it of yours, checking up on him?

Martin

None whatever, so long as it hurt only him and you.

Kate

All right, then. I'm helping him. You boys need his rent. As long as you get it, and Ted gets something to eat, why can't you treat him like a gentleman? His pride is all he's got left.

(TED re-enters. Wears different tie, good fall top coat, not new. His hat and book in his hand.)

Ted

The man I think should have this book happens to be out of town. But I know someone else who might take it. I'll go and see him.

(TIPPY enters, bathrobe gone, pants on)

Martin

Just a minute, Ted. I've just been told I'm butting in on something that's none of my business. So, having been accused I'm going to justify it.

(TIPPY tries to gesture him to shut up)

Ted

Yes?

Martin

You've been imposing on Tippy here, who is too damned charitable to speak in his own defense.

Tippy

You're not speaking for me, Martin.

Martin

All right, then, I'm speaking for myself. Here is Tippy, a sanitary engineer, cashing in on his education by washing dogs. He's making a little money, but he could make a lot more if he had a place of his own.

Tippy

I'll have it. I'll have it. Give me time.

Martin

You'll not have it till you quit giving away your money.

Tippy

That's my business.

Martin

You paid Ted's share of the rent last month.

(KATE looks surprised)

So this month, if Ted stays here he pays not eight but sixteen dollars. And you stick eight in the savings bank for your own dog laundry.

Tippy

Now just wait a minute. I can explain last month's...

Martin

I'll not wait for you to think up another kind lie. God knows I don't enjoy hurting Ted. He was born and raised a capitalist and an aristocrat. Now he is a cast-off wreck of the system that made him. I hate the system, not the men it makes -- and least of all the weak ones it throws into the scrap heap.

Martin

(cont'd.)

(Sees that all are hurt and offended)

Damn it, I'm sorry. My infernal sense of justice got the better of me.

(He goes out)

Ted

(With stolid anguish) (To Kate)

I'm guilty. I took my rent money and bought this top coat at a second-hand store.

Kate

You said a friend gave it to you.

Ted

I haven't a friend left who'll even give me cast-off clothing.

Kate

But why did you have to lie about it?

Tippy

That coat's an investment. You can't peddle books on Park Avenue without a top coat. -- Go along and cash in on your investment. Sell that book.

Kate

I hope you can.

Ted

I probably can -- by going through another half hour as pleasant as this one.

(He goes, shutting door sharply.
There is a brief silence.)

Ken

Well, I might as well tell you I haven't got my share of the rent, either.

Tippy

What's the matter? Check late?

Ken

No. -- I sent it back.

Tippy

You what?

Ken

I sent it back.

Kate

Did your father lose his job?

Ken

Bishops don't lose their jobs.

Tippy

So what are you talking about?

Ken

I've been living off Dad for five years.

Tippy

Starving off him.

Ken

Don't blame Dad. I set the amount under Hoover. Bishops aren't economists.

Tippy

You sent the check back and asked for a new deal?

Ken

No.

Tippy

(Patiently)

Why did you send the check back?

Ken

Because I'm through letting Dad pay me for piddling around here.

Tippy

But Ken, be reasonable. The landlord must eat.

Ken

Then give him back this place. He can eat the cockroaches.

Tippy

No tickee, no shirtee; no money, no house.

(Pause)

And there's the little matter of our own nutrition.

Ken

I don't expect you and Martin to feed me.

Tippy

I doubt if we could.

Ken

Martin's right, Tippy. You ought to clear out of here and take that place you wanted.

Tippy

Hell, that place has been taken. Bargains like that don't wait.

Ken

There are other places. But you won't get one as long as you stay here and we graft off of you. You've been buying half the grub for the four of us. You fudge the bills against yourself. You're a goddam fool.

Tippy

Must you bring that up?

Ken

Listen, Tippy. Martin can take care of himself, anywhere. He loves flop houses and flop people. The rest of us are just parlor pinks, but Martin's a real revolutionist.

Tippy

And what about Ted?

Ken

Ted is Kate's problem.

Kate

Why do you feel so bitter toward him?

Ken

(Savagely)

If you'll recall, we only took him in temporarily because your mother was coming.

(Angrily, to Tippy)

Why the hell do you have to plan for Ted? Or Martin? Or me? I'm not planning for anyone. -- I'm clearing out.

Tippy

Where are you going?

Ken

That's my affair. I'm packing tonight and leaving tomorrow.

(He goes into bedroom)

Kate

Lord, what a mess!

Tippy

Katie, I'm afraid our children are showing too much spirit.

Kate

What's Ken planning? Going on Laura?

Tippy

Lord, no.

Kate

I'd hardly think so with all that bluff at independence!

(Pauses)

Still, Laura could afford to keep a man better than I.

Tippy

How much did you girls, as seniors, put down as your expectation of earning power in five years?

Kate

We didn't do such sordid things at Vassar. And besides, it's been six years, not five.

Tippy

Class of '29. Six years, and six of us. Well, we've stuck together. In solidarity there is strength.

Kate

This looks like a bust up.

Tippy

Look here, Kate, you'll take care of Ted, won't you?

Kate

Why should I?

Tippy

(Snappily)

As an investment. Business is picking up. Stocks are going up. Culture is coming back. More dogs are being washed. Rare books will come next.

Kate

Tippy, you are a darling.

Tippy

Ted was born a gentleman. The rest of us merely went to Harvard.

Kate

Believe it or not.

Tippy

Katie, the coming revolution is poppycock. What's coming is the same damn thing we used to have. And when it gets back it'll take its old darlings back into its lap. Ted is one of them. So hold his hand a little longer.

(There is a banging against the door with a foot. TIPPY opens door, and LAURA enters with a tall sack of groceries, which she shoves into TIPPY'S arms.)

Laura

Hello. Where's the gang?

Tippy

Some are in and some are out.

Kate

We speak of Fortune and Dame Fortune walks in.

Laura

Bringing her own tea.

Tippy

Fortune. Tea. Ceres. Cornucopia.

(Drops bag on arm, posing as Goddess with the horn of plenty, and spewing groceries over the table, fruit rolling to floor.)

Ken

(Entering from bedroom)

What in....?

Tea. Tippy

Thank God it wasn't eggs. Kate

(Kissing KEN)
Hello darling. Laura
(TIPPY retrieves groceries)

(Severely)
What's the idea, Laura? Ken

What idea, honey? Laura

You promised to quit it. There's plenty of grub here. Ken

But darling, I can't eat canned baked beans. My ulcer, you know. Laura

You haven't any ulcer. Ken

Nor any baby. ^{But} ~~Both~~ doctors say nervous girls must be careful, or they'll have both. Laura

Don't be silly. Ken

(TIPPY starts with bag to kitchen, KATE following. At door he warns her back.)

The preparing of this tea must be a strictly masculine affair. Tippy

(Gesturing toward Ken and Laura) Kate

I'm sorry, but I want tea. If a woman enters that kitchen, there won't be tea. There'll be house-cleaning. Tippy

(He goes in and bolts door behind him. She tries it and finds it locked. She pretends to be interested in drawings. KEN has turned away from Laura in the self-struggle of a man in love, but planning flight.)

Laura

(Casually)
Anything new, dear?

Ken

(Savagely)
No. You always ask me that.

Laura

It doesn't mean anything. Just a little light conversation to kill that first awkward moment.

Ken

It means, have I got a job.

Laura

Have you?

Ken

No.

Laura

Well, you will have one. And more than a job. Some day somebody will accept your plans for fabricated houses. And you'll be rich and famous.

Ken

If I kid myself, you needn't. I know all this won't come to anything. I do it from habit. I do it to keep from going crazy.

Laura

No. You do it because you know that fabricated houses are the coming thing.

Ken

There's already too much competition in designing them.

Laura

It's just getting started. Soon there'll be dozens of firms in the field, and all will want yearly models.

Tippy

(Sticking his head in door)
Attention! Sergeant Holden, go at once to the nearest Commissary and requisition 454 grams of sucrose.

(KEN salutes and goes. The girls stare after him.)

Kate

Now what the hell.

Tippy

Sugar, Katie. Sugar.

Kate

But how much?

Tippy

One pound. He understood. A year in Paris, you know.

Laura
Oh, I'm so sorry! I forgot sugar.

Tippy
Sorry? It gives him a chance to buy something. -- Your failure to understand the masculine nature is appalling.

Kate
I'll bet you had sugar.

Tippy
Yes, we had no sugar. Forget it.
(Exits)

Laura
Oh these men!

Kate
You said it!

Laura
(Turns on her suddenly)
Kate, what's the matter here?

Kate
Matter? Why?

Laura
You are grouched. Ken is touchy, he wants to quarrel. Tippy is too nonsensical, even for Tippy. Something's wrong.

Kate
Everything's wrong.

Laura
Tell me.

Kate
Martin started it. He bawled Ted out for living off me.

Laura
Oh, well -- Martin!

Kate
It seems I gave Ted money for his share of the rent last month, and he bought a coat with it instead.

Laura
Oh.

Kate
So Tippy had to pay his share of the rent again.

Laura
Oh. But Tippy didn't tell on him?

Kate

You know he wouldn't. Martin found out some way and told for him.

Laura

It must have been ugly.

Kate

It was beastly. They all but told me to take Ted back and keep him with me.

Laura

And you will, I suppose?

(KATE is silent)

I'm sorry.

Kate

I don't mind your question. I'm -- just -- thinking...

Laura

About leaving him?

Kate

About going to someone else.

Laura

Oh! So?

Kate

Just so.

Laura

Are you serious?

Kate

He is. Serious, and rich, and -- sixty.

Laura

Your boss!

Kate

You're smart.

Laura

All the time he's been saying to you "I'm an old man..."

Kate

And I've been saying, "oh, no, Mr. Solden." Well, I convinced him.

Laura

Serves you right. So now what?

Kate

So now he thinks he wants me for myself alone. He isn't ^{the} least bit vicarious.

Laura

You brought it on yourself.

Kate

He wants to reduce his income tax by gifts to eleemosynary institutions. Don't I look eleemosynary?

Laura

No. Nor mercenary, either.

Kate

Ah, but I am. And I've been buying love long enough to learn the trade. So now I'm going to sell some.

Laura

Don't be a fool, Kate.

Kate

I've ~~d~~ecided to let him keep me.

Laura

What about Ted?

Kate

(Bitterly)
What about him?

Laura

You love him.

Kate

No, I don't! Maybe I used to love him..But I don't any more. You can't stay crazy about a man when you give him half your salary every week. You get to hate him.. Oh, it's worse than hate. It's contempt.

Laura

But you two have stuck it out so long.

Kate

Too long.

Laura

It'll be different as soon as he strikes something.

Kate

Strikes what? Gold or oil?

Laura

He'll find something. It takes time.

Kate

Time is the only thing I haven't got to spare. Look, I'm twenty-seven.

Laura

But you don't look it.

Kate

I do -- and I look more at a close-up. I have wrinkles.

Laura

Don't be silly.

Kate

Look sharp. Around the eyes.

Laura

You're imagining.

Kate

No. -- And yesterday I found a gray hair.

Laura

Girls of eighteen sometimes have gray hairs.

Kate

But I feel old! And if I don't look it now, I will soon.

(Pause)

What am I to do, Laura? Keep on working at eighteen dollars a week till I'm forty? -- I haven't a decent thing to wear. I haven't had a new coat in three years.

(Feverishly)

And I'm frightened. Calenders frighten me, -- I want to have some fun. I want a man to take me to the Ritz and - pay the check.

Laura

I don't know what to say.

Kate

There is nothing to say.

Laura

Kate, you'll regret it.

Kate

Then I'd better act quickly, before I do. He left the latch string out. A nickel stuffed in the phone will turn the trick.

Laura

So you were that near, even before what happened here?

Kate

Yes.

Laura

I don't say you should keep Ted. Drop him and go it alone a while. If you've been living on nine dollars a week, eighteen will seem a fortune.

Kate

And what will become of Ted?

Laura

If you are leaving him you can't worry about that.

Kate

I do worry about it -- That's why I want money.

Laura

Kate you're crazy!

Kate

Am I?

Laura

That's something that -- that just isn't done!

Kate

A fat lot you know.

Laura

Kate...

Kate

Oh, stop it! That just isn't done! You've had a salary of twenty-five dollars a week; you've been in love with a man whose fond papa supports him so you haven't had to soil your lovely ethics with dirty money.

Laura

Darling...

Kate

Don't darling me. And don't tell me what's nice and proper -- and what isn't done!

Laura

I didn't mean....

Kate

You didn't mean anything because you don't know anything. But maybe you're going to learn. Maybe you're going to learn because this gang is breaking up. Not only because my man is deadbent, but because yours is broke. -- So now you try keeping a man a while and see how you like it!

Laura

Kate!

(Kate slams out, brushing Ken,
who enters looking after her.)

Ken

What's the matter with her?

Laura

Nothing.

(Ken hands sugar to Tippy and returns)

Ken

She didn't act like it was nothing.

Laura

She's made up her mind to leave Ted.

Ken

Good! She should have done that long ago. The man's a leech.

Laura

But he is so helpless.

Ken

He won't starve. We have no jobs in America, but we don't starve.

Laura

Ken, are you in trouble?

Ken

In trouble?

Laura

With your father?

Ken

No. No, indeed. -- I merely sent dad's check back. It's time, don't you think?

(With elaborate unconcern)

And as for this arrangement here...we're getting on each other's nerves. And Tippy ought to get out on his own.

Laura

And you?

Ken

I, too. On my own.

Laura

But how?

Ken

I don't know. But I know I can't go on like this.

Laura

Oh, Ken...

Ken

Why don't you clear out like Kate? Forget me. I'm no good to you. I never will be.

Laura

Don't talk like that.

Ken

It's true, Laura. Face it.

(She puts her arms around him)

Laura

Ken, let's get married. -- We've put it off too long.

Ken

Married! On what?

Laura

Not married then. But let's be together. Let's...

Ken

It's too late for that. If that was what we'd wanted it would have happened three years ago.

Laura

I love you more now than I did then. -19-

Ken

And I'm not saying I love you less.

Laura

Then?

Ken

In the last three years I've seen a man I used to love and respect degenerate under my eyes, become a lousy parasite, living off a woman whose whole income isn't enough for her to live on decently.

Laura

How can you compare yourself to Ted?

Ken

Good God, I don't! Yet Ted was once a lovely fellow.

Laura

Ted expected the world to support him. He had nothing to give it. You have ability and ambition. You want to give things to the world.

Ken

(Flatly)

I want a job.

Laura

Of course you do, darling!

Ken

(Fiercely)

That's all I want. A job. I lay awake nights, saying over and over; I want a job, a job, a job...

Laura

Oh, I know!

Ken

I don't think about you when I lie awake at night. I don't think how nice it would be to have you there in my arms. All I think about is a job. If it were a choice between you and a job I'd take the job. -- What's the use of kidding ourselves any longer?

(She is silent. He goes on desperately)

I'm not the same fellow I was three years ago. People slam doors in my face. Do you understand? They look at me. They see my clothes, my eyes...They're antagonized before they speak to me, -- just as people are to a beggar. They say "no" before I ask for anything. No, no, no. They say it as if I were asking for charity instead of a job. "Nothing for you." "Sorry" "Nothing today." -- It makes a beggar out of you!

(TIPPY enters, carrying tea tray.)

Tippy

Hello! Where's the rest of the tea party?

(Neither answers)

Well, we'll have double portions, that's nice.

Laura
Tippy, doesn't your world ever fall out from under you?

Tippy
Certainly not!
(Pause)

Laura
(With forced gayety)
I say, where's Martin?

Tippy
Can it be that you are asking for Martin?

Laura
Uh-huh. I want him to turn me into a Communist.

Tippy
That is news! -- Where did Kate go?

Laura
To make a date with her boss.

Tippy
No kidding? -- No, my world doesn't drop out from under me. It merely turns wrong side out in my hand. -- Your tea, Ken. It contains teaffein, which stimulates the heart but quiets the nerves. Teaffein in tea is the same as caffein in coffee. But under the profit system we don't know that yet -- because no one has invented a teaffeinless tea.

(KEN accepts sandwich and tea and tries
to be a sport and make the party)

Ken
I wouldn't need Martin to turn me into a Communist. All I'd have to do would be to knock out the partition in the middle of my brains and let the left side mingle with the right.

Tippy
As if your brains weren't muddled enough already!

(Martin bursts in, carrying two Soviet posters.
Leaves door ajar.)

Martin
Hey, fellows, look what I've got!

(He hangs one up while the others are inspecting the first)

Laura
It's ugly.

Ken
I like them. Why can't Americans make ugly things look beautiful?

Tippy
(To Martin)

Tippy

(Cont'd.)

Sow your seed now, Soviet sower. The powers of darkness have been fertilizing the ground.

(TIPPY takes thumb tacks and bottle of red ink and goes to kitchen)

Ken

By God, you're right. -- It's the same in all the arts.

Laura

(A hysterically jovial)

'Fess up, Ken. Who's been taking you to American movies?

Ken

I still remember some I saw during Hoover's administration. You don't mean they've changed them?

Martin

Only the revolution will change that tripe.

Laura

Gently, gently. I just told Tippy I was all ripe to turn Communist. But let's enter by the Socialist door. I don't like revolution. It's bloody.

(Martin pours himself tea. KEN squints at posters, LAURA munches sandwich and giggles)
Comrade Martin -- bring on your material dialection.

(Before MARTIN has chance to answer, TIPPY'S voice sings stridently, as he comes marching in)

Tippy

Belaya armeya chornee barone
Snova gotovyat nam tsarskee trone

(He is now in. A towel is tied about his head with a big blotch of red ink over his temple. He carries a broom as a flag-staff to which a red bandanna handkerchief is attached as a red flag)

No ot tigeo do bretanskeye morye
Armoya krasnaya vsekh seelnaye.

(On chorus, MARTIN'S better voice cuts in strong. He seizes LAURA by the arm, forcing her to march with TIPPY. And KEN, beating time with goose step, also sings.)

ALL

Tak poost Zheh krasnaya
Shumayet vlasno
Svoo shtik mozoleestoy rookoy
Es vse dolshnee mwee
Neudersheemo
Ette v posledneo sharkee boy.

(This chorus repeats.)

(The Bishop has appeared in the open doorway, they do not see him and march and sing lustily. BISHOP HOLDEN stands and watches them in growling consternation. They see him and stop suddenly. Only MARTIN'S voice finishes the last line.)

Bishop Holden! Laura

What is this? Bishop

Hello, Dad. Ken

Just a bit of fun. Tippy

(He tosses the broom with its flag into a corner, but has forgotten to take off bandage. He steps up and offers his hand to the Bishop.)

How are you, sir?

(Shaking hands) Bishop
What is the matter with your head?

Oh Jesus! Tippy
(Yanks off towel.)

Were you rehearsing for a theatrical? Bishop

Full dress. My wound was dressed with red ink. Tippy

And that song you were singing? I couldn't quite place it. Bishop

That's a Red Army song. Martin

Red Army? Bishop

Soviet -- Bolsheviki. Martin

So you were all engaged in a little burlesque? Sorry to have disturbed you. Bishop

Tippy was making it burlesque. He refuses to take anything seriously. Martin

Martin

The occasion was that I had just brought home those posters.

Bishop

(Looking at the posters)

Ah, I see.

Martin

How do you like them?

Bishop

The lettering has some Greek characters. I take it that is Russian?

Ken

Of course, Dad. They're Soviet posters. A distinctive form of art.

Bishop

Ah, it is the unique art and the martial music you find entertaining--
Or were you burlesquing a Communist meeting?

Ken

It was just Tippy's idea of fun.

Bishop

(Not quite satisfied)

But you were all singing that song as if you know it well.

Laura

Martin's always singing it -- till we've memorized it without the
least idea what it means.

Bishop

(Satisfied)

Ah yes, of course. I once learned a Japanese song.

Martin

I'm studying Russian.

Ken

It's quite a language, Dad. It would be easy for you with your
knowledge of Greek.

Bishop

Are you studying Russian, too?

Ken

Martin's been teaching me a little. I wish I had your linguistic
preparation for it.

Bishop

I learned Greek so I could read the Gospels in the original tongue.

Tippy

That's why they're learning Russian.

Bishop

The gospels in Russian?

Tippy

Saint Marx, Saint Engels, Saint Lenin and Saint Stalin.

Bishop

But - if you mean ~~K~~arl Marx, he wrote in German.

Tippy

Sure, but Hitler had him translated into Russian so the Germans couldn't read him.

Bishop

You're a very witty young man. Your sense of humor will save you from any dangerous doctrine.

Martin

His sense of humor saves him from anything serious.

Bishop

While I don't approve of a flippant attitude toward life, it is far better than accepting dangerous and destructive doctrines -- such as Russian Communism.

Martin

Dangerous to world capitalism - but constructive of a new civilization.

Bishop

Young man, may I ask if you are American born?

Martin

I sure was, on a Dakota farm. My father was an American ~~X~~ulak. An insurance Company expropriated him.

Laura

Bishop Holden didn't come to get into arguments with you boys.

Bishop

Another time, perhaps. I think I could convince you that you're following a dangerous delusion.

Martin

Thanks, Laura. You're right. I'll run along. Thanks for the tea.

Tippy

I'll go with you. I've a bit of shopping I ought to do.

Martin

I'll get your hat.
(Goes to bedroom)

Bishop

And how is your business progressing, Timothy? Kenneth wrote me about it. Don't be ashamed of it. Don't be ashamed of honest labor, young man. -- You are boarding dogs, I believe.

Tippy

No. I have no place for that. I only wash them.

Bishop

You wash them and they pay you?

Tippy

Yes sir. That is, I wash the dogs, and the people pay me.

Bishop

Ah yes. I understand.

(MARTIN comes out with TIPPY'S hat.
picks up his own.)

Tippy

Clean dogs for clean people.

Martin

Lap dogs for kept women. --While people are starving, sleeping in hallways. People are desperate and destitute. - And Tippy washes dogs for a living!

Bishop

True, it's a sad world. True some have too much, and many have nothing.

Martin

But we mustn't protest. The meek shall inherit the earth!

Bishop

No one is to blame. I have satisfied myself on that.

Martin

(Gives his hand to the BISHOP)

I marvel at your conclusions, but I respect any man for his convictions. It seems to me, though, if you want to save the church when the revolution comes to America, you had better see to it that the class sympathy of the church agrees with the class sympathy of the man who founded it.

Tippy

(Hurriedly)

Goodbye, sir.

(TIPPY and MARTIN go.)

(LAURA quickly gathers up the tea things and puts them on a tray and goes to kitchen. In the following scene she is on and off. The BISHOP walks about, troubled and silent. He looks at posters, picks up the Russian books and looks at them.)

Bishop

Russian. Why are you studying Russian?

Ken

I find it interesting.

Bishop

Chinese would be interesting. Why Russian?

Ken

I am interested in their architectural developments.

Bishop

My boy, you haven't it in mind to go to Russia?

Ken

(Evasive)

It isn't so easy to go.

Bishop

Why, of all places in the world, should you want to go there?

Ken

There is no unemployment there. They need men. They're doing things.

Bishop

(Impatiently)

Oof! Russia...

(TED enters. He still has the book)

Ted

(Greeting BISHOP)

How do you do, sir?

Bishop

(Very cordial)

How are you? How are you?

Ted

(Sees KEN looking at his book)

My man wasn't in. I'll go back and try again later. Is Kate here?

Ken

No. She stepped out.

Ted

Then, if you'll excuse me I'll go into the other room and lie down. I've developed a frightful headache.

Bishop

That is unfortunate. Have you aspirin?

Ted

Yes, thank you.

(HE goes into bedroom, closing door)

Bishop

Shame on you, son. Now there is a fine young man who's facing a problem. He certainly wasn't trained for commercial pursuits. Yet there he is -- selling. Uh, what is he selling, Kenneth?

Kenneth

(Sarcastically)

Books.

Bishop

I knew his father well. A gentleman and a scholar. Unfortunately, he was a gambler. The depression finished him.

Ken

It's finishing a lot of us.

Bishop

My boy. I would not have you be extravagant, but I still have enough. I can still support you.

Ken

I'm sick of living on charity.

Bishop

Charity?

Ken

Yes. On your charity.

Bishop

You are my son. What little I give you is yours by right.

Ken

What right? I'm not a child, nor a cripple. I'm nearly thirty years old.

Bishop

These are not normal times.

Ken

They are normal for me.

Bishop

Be patient a little longer. Our system is not perfect, but it's the best the world has known. It has been responsible for all our progress.

Ken

But now the system has stalled. We're not even aimed at progress, only for recovery; only trying to gain back something we had in the past.

Bishop

But how can you think there is progress in Russia? It's a slave state; a tyranny. Freedom is essential to progress.

Ken

Freedom! I don't want freedom. I want a chance to work. There's enough for us all. I want my share. Other people have their share, and they have dogs. I don't want dogs, but I want a right to have them.

Bishop

Your soul is poisoned with envy.

Ken

It's a short life, Dad, and mine is half gone already. There is beauty, I want to enjoy it. There are good things: I want some of them. There is disease and death and things we can't help, but poverty we can help.

Bishop

This is Martin's influence.

(Excited)

Ken, you must not turn Communist. Do you hear? I forbid it.

Ken

The Inquisition tried forbidding convictions.

Bishop

(Frightened)

Convictions?

Ken

I'm fed up. I'm sick of this damned foolishness of men starving in the midst of plenty.

(More savage and bitter as he goes on)

One can go on so long. Things look hopeless but you still hope. Important people make cheerful speeches. You believe them. You want to believe them. You think tomorrow something's going to happen. Something's got to happen! Tomorrow comes and goes -- a lot of tomorrows. Nothing happens, nothing. And nothing's going to happen. -- unless we make it!

Bishop

My son, you are wrong. The situation is improving. Business conditions are already vastly better. It takes time. You'll get a job, very soon.

Ken

I've heard that for six years.

(Pause)

Bishop

(Clearing his throat; takes check from pocket)

My boy, this check you returned...

Ken

(Shortly)

I don't want it.

Bishop

But how can you get along without it?

Ken

I'll get along.

Bishop

How do you propose to live?

Ken

By sleeping on park benches, eating in our bread lines. -- Or I'll tell the government I'm destitute -- or get a relief job. -- I won't go on the way I've been doing. -- Laura comes and brings food; Tippy leaves cigarettes around; you send me checks. I'm sick of having to take from you all! -- If I've got to live by charity, I want to be free to hate charity. That's a beggar's right.

Bishop

It gives us pleasure to help you.

Ken
But can't you see what you're doing to my self-respect?

Bishop
I don't want to hurt your self-respect.

Ken
Then leave me alone.
(Pause)

Bishop
(Clearing his throat)
Have you been to see Stanley Prescott?

Ken
Yes.

Bishop
Why hasn't he done something for you?

Ken
I suppose he can't.

Bishop
Prescott's my friend. He ought to do something for you.

Ken
Oh, the hell with Prescott!
(Contrite)
Don't misunderstand me. I wouldn't refuse any job he had to offer me. I'd black his boots if that was the job. But I've been to see him as much as I can. I can't sit on his doorstep and whine.

Bishop
Certainly not. You must not do anything that would hurt your self-respect.
(He has been holding the check, which he now lays down on the table.)

Ken
Don't leave that check, Dad.

Bishop
But son.

Ken
If you do, I'll tear it up.

(Bishop picks up check, talks to LAURA)

Bishop
I'll leave this check with you, Laura. Give it to him when he -- when he is himself again.

(At this KEN picks up his hat and walks out without a word. The two look unhappily after him.)

Bishop

(Shaken)

That boy -- that sane youth.... What's happened to him?

Laura

(With difficulty)

He wants to break our engagement.

Bishop

Ah! That's the trouble then. You two have quarrelled.

Laura

He doesn't need me. He doesn't think of me...

Bishop

But of course he does. -- There, Laura, there!

Laura

He said he didn't want me, all he wanted was a job.

Bishop

He did not mean that.

Laura

Oh, he's so muddled -- he's so muddled!

Bishop

I know how you feel, my dear, but lover's quarrels...

Laura

Oh, don't you understand? He's at the breaking point. His morale's all shot.

Bishop

No. Kenneth is essentially sound. Now don't worry, my dear.

(Indulgently)

I'll wait and have another talk with him, eh? Perhaps that's what he needs; a good, sound, heart-to-heart talk with his father.

Laura

Oh no, no! He needs a job! Don't you understand? He needs a job! It's more important than I am - more important than anything in the world to him. A job!

(TED opens the door; starts to come out;
hears the tense conversation and stands,
hesitant)

Bishop

Ah, yes. Work is essential, -- more essential than love. That's what all these young people need. Work, something to do with their hands, with their heads. To feel that the world needs them -- that they have a right to live.

Laura
You've got to find him a job. You've got to!

Bishop
Dear child -- if only I could!

Laura
You've got to! -- even if you have to buy one.

Bishop
Buy one?

Laura
(Moving closer to him)
He needn't ever know...

(Ted draws back and softly closes the door.)

S L O W C U R T A I N

ACT ONESCENE II

PRESCOTT'S office has an air of magnificence. Seems high above the street. In an ante-room can be seen the BISHOP, waiting. LUCILLE, PRESCOTT'S secretary, a smartly-dressed young woman, is in the office, reading a newspaper. After a moment, BISHOP HOLDEN comes to the door.

Bishop

I beg your pardon.

(LUCILLE looks up)

Are you sure Mr. Prescott will be back?

Lucille

Yes sir.

Bishop

You think I ought to wait?

Lucille

Saturday's a bad day. Why don't you come back on Monday?

Bishop

I must see him today. If I can't see him here I shall try to see him at his home.

Lucille

(Quickly)

Then you had better wait.

Bishop

Very well.

(He goes out, sits down. LUCILLE begins to type; the telephone rings. Before answering, she closes door, shutting out the BISHOP)

Lucille

Hello? Yes, Mrs. Prescott. Not yet, but he took the eleven-thirty train out of Washington and should be here any moment.

(Listens)

At the Colony? I'll tell him the minute he comes in.

(Hangs up)

(In a moment the door opens: PRESCOTT stands in the doorway, with his back turned, speaking to the BISHOP.)

Prescott

I'll be with you in a minute, James.
(Enters and shuts the door)

Lucille

Oh, Mr. Prescott! You had a good trip, I hope?

Prescott

No. It wasn't very good.

Lucille

Oh, I'm sorry! And it spoiled your week-end, too.

Prescott

Spoiled everything. Well, it can't be helped. Anything need my attention here?

Lucille

It's been very quiet. Your wife telephoned. She said she'd be at the Colony Club, and would you 'phone her there.

Prescott

All right. Is that all?

Lucille

That's about all.

Prescott

How long has Bishop Holden been waiting?

Lucille

About an hour.

Prescott

What does he want?

Lucille

He didn't say.

Prescott

Why didn't you tell him I couldn't see him today?

Lucille

He said he'd go to your house if he couldn't see you here, so I....

Prescott

Can't I get any protection around here? You could have said I was out of town for the week-end.

Lucille

I didn't think of that.

Prescott

You never think of anything. -- Send him in.

(LUCILLE goes out; BISHOP enters)

Bishop

Seeing you brings back old times.

Prescott

I'm glad to see you, James. Although
(Looks at watch)
If you'd let me know I might have kept myself free....

Bishop

I won't keep you long.

Prescott

Sit down.

Bishop

Stanley, I'm in trouble. I've come to you for help.

Prescott

(Wary)
I needn't tell you that anything in my power....

Bishop

You're a business man.

Prescott

When there is business.

Bishop

You believe in our American system of government.

Prescott

Certainly, certainly. The system we did have.

Bishop

So do I. Sincerely. I have the deepest, profoundest faith in our democracy.

Prescott

(Impatient with the other's irrelevancy)
The world has not yet found anything better.

Bishop

But unless we do something it won't last beyond our generation.

Prescott

Nonsense.

Bishop

Social unrest is growing. Young people, in their enforced idleness, are turning away from all that we have taught them.

Prescott

(Annoyed)
Come, James. That isn't what you came to see me about.

Bishop

It is.

Prescott

You have been reading sensational papers. Of course a depression gives the radicals a chance to spread their doctrines. But there isn't any cause for worry. Prosperity is always a sure cure for radicalism. And things are picking up.

Bishop

You are probably under the common delusion that all radicals are wild-eyed foreigners.

Prescott

(Bitter in his thoughts)

If it wasn't for this foolery at Washington....

Bishop

So was I. But I find they are not.

Prescott

We should all have been out of the slump long ago.

Bishop

Many of them -- the young ones -- are good American stock.

Prescott

The Administration proclaims its adherence to the profit system....

Bishop

They have education, in some cases, background, but unfortunately no experience.

Prescott

...and at the same time it insists on unfair competition with private enterprise.

Bishop

As long as such men remain idle...

Prescott

So how can private capital be expected to make commitments?

Bishop

I don't know.

Prescott

But don't you agree?

Bishop

Perfectly.

Prescott

Surely, James, the depression did not hit you personally?

Bishop

In unexpected ways, Stanley --- in most unexpected ways.

Prescott

On the contrary, the Church should have benefitted. People in misfortune turn to religion.

Bishop

But with empty pockets. However, I am not complaining for the Church. It is my son I am worried about.

Prescott

Ah yes. Kenneth. An agreeable fellow, Kenneth.

Bishop

Of the six years he's been out of college he has worked only four months. Think of it.

Prescott

Is he married?

Bishop

No.

Prescott

That's fortunate.

Bishop

Perhaps. If he were married and had a dependent wife and children he might get architectural work in a government slum clearance project.

Prescott

Exactly what I was talking about. The sooner the government turns the building industry back to private enterprise the better.

Bishop

Kenneth's situation is tragic. He is a mature man, long overdue to take a man's full place in the world.

Prescott

(Impatient)

Yes, I know -- I know.

Bishop

Yet he is classed as a dependent child.

Prescott

Well, aren't you able to take care of him?

Bishop

I have kept him from starving.

Prescott

You realize, of course, that he is better off than many.

Bishop

Keeping him alive is not the point. It is not enough. His spirit is crushed, his education unused, his manhood wasted. He is ambitious, wants to work, to establish a home of his own. He is strong, and he is capable.

Prescott

Yes, yes, I understand. I deplore the waste. It is shameful. But in any event, these conditions won't last much longer.

Bishop

They have lasted a long time.

Prescott

Yes, longer than they should. -- I wish I could help you, James, but I cannot.

Bishop

I want you to give Kenneth a job, Stanley.

Prescott

If I could, I assure you.

Bishop

Any job. Anything that will make him feel useful and keep him occupied. -- Surely in an organization like yours...

Prescott

At the moment we are doing no building whatever. One or two small projects; and a mere skeleton staff to keep my organization.

Bishop

I saw in the papers...

Prescott

That I am interested in the mass production of fabricated houses. Yes! -- And men associated with me are ready to launch large-scale production as soon as we are assured of freedom from competition with cheap government money and cheap government labor.

Bishop

Then, surely...

Prescott

I have just returned empty-handed from a bunch of half-baked theorists who are heading us into socialism and calling it democracy!

Bishop

With a view to your project going through, could you not take Kenneth on?

Prescott

Impossible. My small staff has already done all the preparation that needs to be done. My hands are tied till these socialists in Washington are out.

Bishop

But has not business been given a breathing spell?

Prescott

I don't sell hot dogs. I build houses. People don't consume houses during a breathing spell. -- I tell you I could put a capital of twenty millions at work tomorrow if we were guaranteed that in ten years, or even twenty years, we could get our money back.

Bishop

But what do you fear? You just said you did not fear a revolution.

Prescott

I don't. I fear the continuance of what we already have. Stagnation and semi-socialism.

Bishop

When could you give my boy a job?

Prescott

When a sound administration goes into power at Washington.

Bishop

I don't dare to make him wait.

Prescott

Then you must continue to take care of him.

Bishop

It is not the cost of his living. He needs work. I can't provide that. You could, if you would.

Prescott

Believe me, I would if I could.

Bishop

You understand that the salary...

Prescott

James, I know that your son is a capable young man and I would like to have him here with me. But I can't make a job for a man when I have nothing for him to do.

Bishop

You must, Stanley. I can afford to support, but he refuses to accept support from me any longer.

Prescott

Well?

Bishop

If you will give him a job, I will recompense you for his salary.

Prescott

(Shocked)
You can't mean that.

Bishop

I do mean it.

Prescott

I am surprised, James -- that a man of your principles and profession...

Bishop

I am in a very grievous dilemma.

Prescott

I am sorry, but I can't do it. It is neither ethical nor wise.

Bishop

I don't know whether it is wise or not. But I know my son is desperate. I know I have got to do something. I can't see that fine boy going about lost and unwanted, with no place in the world. I can't see my son turning to Communism -- and helping to pull down not only your temples of money, but my House of God.

Prescott

I am very sorry. I can't do what you ask.

Bishop

If your plans go through, you would have a place for him?

Prescott

(Impatiently)

Yes, yes.

Bishop

Then ~~f~~until they do -- for my sake, Stanley. For old times' sake. Because we were classmates.

Prescott

But its damned unethical! Do you realize...

(Telephone rings)

Hello! -- Oh hello, dear...Yes, I am just leaving. I'll be there in a few minutes.

(BISHOP takes out checkbook and writes)

I don't like this.

Bishop

The ethical sin will be wholly mine. You don't know what it'll mean to my boy to be associated with your firm; you don't know what it'll mean to the girl. He's been engaged to her for three years.

Prescott

I don't like this.

Bishop

It means new life for two young people, life for them in our way of life. This check, Stanley, is for twelve hundred dollars. Pay Kenneth twenty-five dollars a week. When your plans go through, pay him whatever he's worth to you.

Prescott

It's damned unethical.

Bishop

There is a greater righteousness than business ethics.

(Protesting still. PRESCOTT takes the check)

Goodbye, Stanley -- God bless you.

(BISHOP goes. PRESCOTT stands regarding check a moment, then rings. LUCILLE enters)

Prescott

Take a letter. Mr. Kenneth Holden. You have his address on file. Dear Kenneth: Sometime ago you came in to inquire if I could find a place for you. I am glad to tell you that there is a vacancy here now, and if you are still looking for something the place is yours. The work will be....

(Pause)

to develop the interesting plans you spoke to me about, pending possible use of them in the future...

(Pause)

The salary will be small to start with, twenty-five dollars a week. Paragraph. You can begin work at any time....

C U R T A I N

A C T II

A few months later. The hour is dusk.

A basement apartment lower than street level. There are four doors, one leading in from the street, one leading to a back yard, one to a kitchen, another to a bedroom.

The room is large and serves as a combined living room and place of business for a dog specialist. Some of the furniture of the old place is here. There is a shelf displaying packages of dog biscuit, muzzles, etc. The walls are decorated with pictures of dogs and glaring advertisements of dog goods, especially insecticides. There is a large home-made sign:

I CLIP, TRIM, PLUCK, WASH AND EXTERMINATE.

At one side is Martin's sketching table, and on wall near it some of his drawings.

TIPPY is kneeling on the floor beside a washtub, bathing a terrier. He talks to it gently, soothingly, all through following scene.

MARTIN, with a green eye shade, is working on a sketch under a table lamp.

During scene TIPPY takes dog out of tub and begins drying him with a Turkish towel. Has large stack of clean folded towels and uses one after the other.

Martin

(As he sketches)

Your persistent love of Class of '29 re-unions seems to me more admirable than politic.

Tippy

It will go off all right if you refrain from talking politics.

Martin

As if I were the only member of the Unholy Six with a capacity to make faux pas!

Tippy

You have tact and tolerance -- When you choose to use them.

Martin

Thanks.

Tippy

The fact that you and Ted still manage to live under the same roof proves that.

Martin

That poor devil would win the compassion of Hitler himself -- with three Jewish grandmothers!

Tippy

Well? If you can put up with Ted, who never did a lick of work in his life, why quarrel with Ken who is now a true worker, being duly exploited by a wicked capitalist?

Martin

Who said I'd quarrel with him?

Tippy

You will.

Martin

All right. You referee.

Tippy

If he high-hats you with his success I'll tell him that you've sold a drawing to the New Yorker and you can high-hat him back.

Martin

Lay off that New Yorker stuff.

Tippy

Sensitive?

Martin

Don't be an ass. It's unimportant, that's all.

Tippy

Eight dollars -- unimportant?

Martin

(Lays aside drawing, removes eye shade and rises)
But you've got me wrong if you think I've any qualms about a reunion with our blissfully-wed bourgeois comrades. Where I doubt your horse sense is in inviting Kate.

Tippy

Jesus, you can't ask a bride to attend a stag party with four men!

Martin

I could have dug up some other female as a shock-absorber.

Tippy

Listen, son; a man can be a revolutionist and still mix socially with the White Guard. But a female revolutionist must either assassinate them or seduce them.

Martin

(Good-naturedly)
Go the hell.

Tippy

I invited Kate because she is Laura's friend.

Martin
She was Laura's friend.

Tippy
Rats!

Martin
In view of recent changes in social status, are you sure that Kate is still on the calling list of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Holden?

Tippy
You're talking awful rot.

Martin
Maybe you know Ken better than I do.

Tippy
Hell, he isn't a prig.

Martin
Another thing: What makes you so sure Ted will enjoy being put on social display in his frayed clothes alongside a lady gorgeously arrayed in the price of her shame.

Tippy
The very fact that Ted is so shabby will make it less obvious that Kate is still keeping him.

Martin
Maybe -- Kate is really showing remarkable restraint. I'd expected her to knock down on her old ~~boob~~ and squeeze enough out of a mink coat to dress Ted up a bit.

(All this time TIPPY has been wiping dog with one towel after another. He now gets up and leads dog to yard.)

Tippy
Now I must hang Itzy out to dry.

Martin
God, haven't you dried that cur enough?

Tippy
Him must be ventilated so him will smell sweet. Him's mama rubs her nose in him and her is very particular.

(He goes out with dog. MARTIN begins picking up the strewn array of used towels. TIPPY comes back)

Tippy
Thanks, old man.
(Takes the towels)
Want to dump the tub for me?

(MARTIN carries tub into kitchen. TIPPY continues cleaning up)

(TED enters with KATE. She is richly dressed and has the mink coat. TED has on a complete new outfit: suit, hat, shoes, top-coat. Everything. The coat is gray; suit brown; hat gray. And there is a price tag on tail of overcoat.)

(TIPPY stares in astonishment)

Tippy

Do my eyes deceive me?

Kate

Hello, flee-killer. -- How do you like it?

Tippy

I must have slept a few years.

(TED removes coat and lays it on table with hat)

Kate

Slept?

Tippy

It looks to me like the Republican Party is back in power.

(MARTIN re-enters. He stops in astonishment)

Martin

Hello.

Kate

Hello, Communist.

(Indicates TED)

Does seeing Ted decently dressed make you see red?

Martin

(Surveying TED'S clothes)

No, indeed. The true Communist loves beauty and prosperity. His distinction is that he insists on both for everybody.

Kate

Well, I know you are prospering. I saw your drawing in the New Yorker.

Martin

I let them have it at half price just to get it where you would see it.

Tippy

(Confidentially to KATE)

Half price in the New Yorker would be triple price in the New Masses. But selling to the New Yorker is the latest orders from the Comintern. It's the new plan for boring from within.

Kate

(Impressed)

Oh! Is it?

Ted

(To MARTIN, who is still surveying him)
Does it fit all right?

Martin

Perfectly.

Kate

(Indicating Ted)
Honest, Tippy, what do you think of it?

Tippy

What should I think? What would anybody think?

Kate

He looks nice, doesn't he?

Ted

(Trying to seem nonchalant, although he is
obviously trying to justify himself.)
I dropped by to remind Kate about the party.

Kate

And I inveigled him into a shop. Isn't it worth it? Transforms him.
Ted wears clothes so well.

Tippy

Agreed. The man makes the clothes. Martin in that outfit would
look like an Oklahoma Indian who'd just struck oil.

Kate

Ted hasn't any business to look shabby. It's all right for Martin,
but Ted just looks pathetic.

Martin

The only reason I don't wear good clothes is because I spill soup
on them.

Kate

(Puts hat on Ted's head)
Now, tell me, do you really like the hat?

Tippy

It's O.K. --- Is he to wear it in the house?

Ted

(Removes hat)
I feel the hat is not quite right.

Kate

He wanted a brown hat. But I thought gray was smarter.

Ted

Brown would have suited me better.

Martin

I'm not up much on sartorial etiquette. Is the hat supposed to
match the coat or the suit?

Ted

There is no arbitrary rule about it. Brown is a better color for me.

Tippy

(Looks at watch)

If we're going to have any party, I'd better clear up my work. I have a delivery to make now.

(Goes to yard)

Kate

If you want to change the hat, darling, go ahead. The store's open until seven.

Ted

Are you sure you wouldn't mind?

Tippy

(Re-enters from yard, carrying small dog in his arms)

Didn't realize it was getting so late. I'll be back as soon as I can.

(He goes)

Kate

I think, Ted, that gray gives your face more life.

(TED puts hat on again, and surveys himself before the mirror. KATE views him in critical admiration, readjusts his hat several times, and stands off to contemplate her man. MARTIN watches them both, then inspired, takes pencil and cardboard and begins to sketch.)

Brown is unutterably drab. It does the most terrible things to me. Put it a little more forward. There -- I think that's stunning, Ted.

Ted

This time of year the hat and coat would be seen together more than the hat and suit.

Kate

That's right. -- Put the coat on again.

(TED puts coat on again, and poses with both hat and coat before the mirror.)

I don't know. Perhaps you're right -- If you really want to change the hat, go ahead.

(They continue posing, KATE angling the hat, etc., till MARTIN calls TED)

(There has been a low knock. MARTIN turns his sketch face down and opens the door. A middle-aged woman enters.)

Case Worker

Does Theodore Brooks live here?

Martin

Yes.

(She walks in.)

Are you Mr. Brooks? Case Worker

No. Martin

Well, is he in? Case Worker

Yes. Martin

Please call him. Case Worker

Hi, Ted! Martin

(TED turns and CASE WORKER looks at him. He shows no recognition and does not start over.)
This lady is calling on you?

(TED comes slowly, taking off his hat; he is still wearing the coat.)

(Impatiently) Case Worker
I asked to see Theodore Brooks.

Yes? Ted

You are not Brooks. Case Worker

Yes. That's my name. Ted

Theodore Brooks? -- You! Case Worker

(Uncomfortably) Ted
What do you want, madam?

I am a case worker on relief applications. Case Worker

Oh! Ted

Someone giving the name of Theodore Brooks and this address applied for relief. Case Worker

Yes. Ted

Case Worker
Did you make that application?

Ted
Yes.

Case Worker
Why?

Ted
(Squirming)
The usual reason -- I suppose.
(There is a pause in which one expects almost anything to happen)

Case Worker
(With restraint)
Very well. I must ask you a few questions.
(Her antagonism is felt all through)

Ted
I'll try to answer them.
(Desperately)
I needed relief or I wouldn't have applied for it.

Case Worker
You feel you still need relief?

Ted
I do.

Case Worker
Well..Well, we'll go ahead. I have to fill my records. Your name is Theodore Brooks.
(She sits at table to fill out blanks.
TED stands.)

Ted
That's right.

Case Worker
Age?

Ted
Twenty-eight.

Case Worker
Where born?

Ted
New York City.

Case Worker
When?

Ted
Twenty-eight years ago.

No, no, the date! Case Worker

March 20, 1907 Ted

Father's name? Case Worker

Nathaniel Brooks. Ted

His birthplace? Case Worker

New York City. Ted

His ancestry. Case Worker

The Pilgrim fathers. Ted

Your mother's name? Case Worker

Ted
Susan Cartwright, born in Philadelphia. Her ancestors, American Quakers.

Case Worker
(Writing fast)
Wait a minute. -- Both parents living?

Ted
Both dead.

Case Worker
Brothers and sisters?

Ted
None.

Case Worker
What other close kin?

Ted
I have one uncle and two aunts.

Case Worker
Do they live in New York City?

Ted
It happens that none of them do *ed*,

Case Worker

Then we don't need them.

Martin

Pardon me, but how far in kinship does the responsibility go?

Case Worker

It depends. We can't force uncles and aunts to contribute, but we sometimes give them the opportunity to do so. However, this doesn't look like a kin folks case. And now, young man, just what is your occupation?

Ted

I haven't any. That's my trouble.

Case Worker

No occupation? You're not a minor. For adults occupation must be stated.

Ted

Very well, I am a collector.

Case Worker

By what firms have you been employed?

Ted

None.

Case Worker

Then how can you be a collector?

Ted

You said I must have an occupation.

Case Worker

You are not helping me by lying and you may get yourself into trouble.

Martin

Is it the first time you ever ran into a man, who needed relief, not because he had worked, but because he hadn't?

Case Worker

(Snappily)

I didn't prepare those blanks, but I have to fill them out. One can have an occupation, like stenography, when trained for it, even though they have never been employed.

Ted

All right, put that down and go ahead.

Case Worker

Stenography?

Ted

No, collecting.

Case Worker

But collectors aren't trained. One has to have worked at that.

Ted
Then say I worked as a collector for my father,

Case Worker
What business was he in?

Ted
He was retired.

Case Worker
Then what did you collect for him?

Ted
First editions.

Case Worker
Please talk sense.

Martin
Books. A book collector.

Case Worker
You mean, a bookkeeper?

Ted
(Bitterly)
We kept them as long as we could. My father died during the Wall Street panic. He'd gone bankrupt. Since you want to know how I lived, I lived for some time by selling my father's books.

Case Worker
(Writing)
Then you lived without working, on property that you inherited?

Ted
Yes, till that source was exhausted.

Case Worker
When was that?

Ted
Some time ago.

Case Worker
You must be definite.

Ted
Then say two years ago.

Case Worker
You sold all your father's books?

Ted
I still have the family Bible, a set of Shakespeare with the marginal notations made by father while he was at Oxford, and a few others.

Case Worker
How much do you consider those books worth?

Ted
I consider them invaluable.

Case Worker
But you must set a value upon them.

Ted
Why?

Case Worker
Because if you own anything worth two hundred dollars you are not eligible for relief.

Ted
I have nothing worth that to anybody but me.

Case Worker
You say you quit selling these books about two years ago.

Ted
Yes.

Case Worker
How have you lived since then?

Ted
Chiefly on borrowed money.

Case Worker
From whom did you borrow the money?

Ted
From friends.

Case Worker
You have very prosperous friends?

Ted
I had some prosperous friends.

Case Worker
You are extremely well-dressed for an applicant for relief.

Martin
Let me explain that. We were to have a little dinner party tonight...

Case Worker
And he bought a new outfit for this dinner. --- Hasn't even had time to remove the price tags. --- Do you mind removing your coat?

Ted
(Takes it off)
I was about to take it off. I'd just come in.

Case Worker
(She rises and looks at maker's label in coat)
H'm. Madison Avenue.

(Noses his suit at close range)
And the suit is better than the coat. --- This is the best I've run into

Case Worker (Cont'd.)

yet. Expensive suit and coat; new shoes; matched accessories. Not much left of a hundred dollar bill, was there? -- But I suppose your rich uncle died since you applied for relief?

Martin

Look here, couldn't a man...

Case Worker

Certainly he could, and many do, apply for relief just to get a little side graft from the government.

Ted

(Desperately, humiliated)

I applied for relief because I wanted a job; because the only way to get a job is to go on relief first. I haven't anything. I have no source of income.

Case Worker

(Sarcastic)

No income, but plenty of money? I understand!

Martin

I was about to explain...

Case Worker

(Shortly)

You needn't. You can't bamboozle me. It's most unfortunate, isn't it, that I caught him unawares? Had he known I was coming he'd undoubtedly have dressed more correctly for the role of a relief applicant.

Kate

Oh, how dare you?

Case Worker

Our instructions are to report in detail on every application, and particularly on those that appear fraudulent.

(Fully formidable)

Now, Mr. Brooks. Will you answer truthfully? Have you any means of support that you have not acknowledged?

Ted

No. I have not.

Case Worker

(Rising, leaves report lying on table)

Then perhaps you will explain how you got those clothes?

Kate

(Who has had great difficulty keeping still)

I bought those clothes for him. Now are you satisfied?

Case Worker

And who are you?

Kate

A friend.

Case Worker

So -- it's that kind of a deal. I wondered who you were.

Martin

(Angry)

Does that go in your report?

Case Worker

Yes, that will go in my report.

Martin

The lady's name and address, I suppose -- and whether she is married or single?

Case Worker

You needn't be sarcastic.

Martin

And if she is married, do you notify the husband?

Case Worker

I don't think there is any ruling on that.

(KATE, unseen, gets hold of report and holds it behind her.)

Kate

Well, what will happen in this case?

Case Worker

I don't know. I shall turn in my report.

Kate

Oh no you won't. Not this report!

(She tears and crumples it)

Case Worker

How dare you?

Kate

Get out!

Case Worker

I'll report you.

Kate

You haven't got my name and address yet.

Case Worker

I'll send the chief investigator here.

Martin

Madam, you will do nothing of the sort. Or I'll report you.

Case Worker

You will? To whom?

Martin

To a New York newspaper which would just love the story of a noble case worker and how well she works her cases.

Case Worker

The impudence!

Martin

And your picture. I always illustrate my own stories, and I can draw your face from memory.

Case Worker

(Whining)

But I must turn in some kind of a report.

Martin

You lost it! And Uncle Sam forgot it. It's only one of ten million.
(He escorts her to door)

Case Worker

(As she storms out)

I ought to report the whole lot of you to the police.

Kate

(As she further reduces the crumpled report to fragments and tosses them into waste basket)

I don't know how I managed to keep still as long as I did. I wanted to choke her.

Ted

I'm sorry I ever made the application.

Kate

Why did you do it?

Ted

It was so long ago, I thought they'd forgotten it.

Martin

Hang it, I shouldn't have lost my temper. I approve of relief. You should be on relief, Ted -- of course you should.

Ted

It was these clothes.

Martin

That's tough luck. That angel of mercy should have seen you yesterday. She would have adored that hole in your elbow.

Kate

Did you really want to be on relief?

Ted

I need a job. The government will give one a job, but only if he goes on relief first.

Martin

That's it. First you go broke, then you go hungry. Then you beg, then you take charity. Then you rake leaves -- then the tax-payers raise hell, and throw the rascals out to save the Constitution.

Kate

(To Martin)

Does a man get work as soon as he gets on relief?

Martin

If he's a skilled worker, perhaps. But they can't invent work fast enough. Many are still on straight.

Kate

That woman was vile. How do people stand it?

Martin

They stand it because an empty stomach growls louder than insulted pride.

Kate

We could report her. We could go over her head to some responsible official.

Martin

They have a rigid system to prevent that.

Kate

No harm in trying.

Ted

No! I won't go near that place again.

Martin

You're entitled to relief as anyone is.

Kate

Yes, Ted. If you really want it....

Ted

I don't want it. I don't even want to think about it.

Martin

There are plenty of fine people on relief. After all, what is relief? Relief is....

Ted

Relief! Relief! Relief! -- I don't want to hear that word again!
(He starts to door)

Kate

Ted! Where are you going?

Ted

I am going to change my hat.
(He goes out)

Martin

Money.

Kate

But I've given him money, and he hates me and he hates himself because of it.

Martin

Naturally. The transaction hasn't been according to Hoyle. Now if Ted were a Georgian Prince, and your grandpa had started the ten-cent stores, it would be a different matter. There'd be grandeur in it; intrigue, romance, finance -- something to write up for the Sunday papers. But room rent and a suit of clothes..that's shoddy. It's got to be Rolls Royces and polo ponies or nothing.

Kate

Oh shut up. Do you think I like the situation. But I can't see him starve.

Martin

Damn that woman! If he could have got a job...

Kate

(With sudden determination)

All right. If he wants a job, I'll get him a job.

Martin

How?

Kate

By asking for it. How do you suppose? I'll go right now, before I lose my nerve.

(She powders nose before pocket mirror)

Martin

You were smart to dress him up first. Those clothes should spell the diff between wages and a salary.

Kate

I'll take anything I can get for him.

Tippy

(Enters)

Well, I'm back... Where's our Beau Brummel?

Kate

He went to change his hat.

Tippy

That's good.

(Crosses to yard)

Bet you never looked at Itzy.

(Goes out)

Martin

(As KATE puts on fur coat)

Funny time of day, Kate, to start out to get a man a job.

Kate

That depends on whom you have to see to get it.

Martin

What's it to be? Bouncer at the Union League Club?

Tippy

(Re-enters from yard)

I'm still smells a eettle bit soapy. -- Kate! Where are you going?
Ken and Laura will be here any minute.

Kate

Sorry, Tippy. I got my dates mixed. But I'll be back. Only
don't wait dinner on me.

(She goes)

Tippy

Now what the hell? Where's she going?

Martin

You can't tell. She works irregular hours.

Tippy

But she promised to be here for dinner. Isn't her soul her own?

Martin

Hadn't you heard she'd sold it?

Tippy

(Glumly)

That's a hell of a note. -- I hope Ted gets back in time. I don't
want my dinner party spoiled.

Martin

He'll be back.

Tippy

He looked nifty in the new clothes, didn't he? Laura will like them.

Martin

Let's hope she doesn't say too much about them.

Tippy

She'll be too busy telling you what a fine husband she has.

Martin

And her husband will tell me what a fine job he has, and all about
the sweet spirit of loyalty that exists in that wonderful corporation.

(Stops to light cigarette)

Jesus, Tippy, if prosperity really does come back, life is going to
be an awful bore for us revolutionists.

(There is a knock. TIPPY goes and lets KEN and LAURA
in. They are happy and gay and terribly in love.
She can hardly keep her hands from caressing him.
She finds threads to flick off his sleeve and must
straighten his tie.)

Laura

(Embracing TIPPY)

You dear!

Ken

Hello -- hello.

Laura
Hello, Martin, -- You still a Communist?

Martin
And ~~how~~!

Laura
(To TIPPY)
Are Kate and Ted going to be here too?

Tippy
You bet!

Laura
Oh, how grand! It's going to be like old times.

Ken
(Tolerantly)
For anyone who so hated those times, Laura, I must say...

Laura
(Positively)
They were good times. -- Except that you wouldn't have me.

Ken
I was an idiot.

Laura
Such a charming idiot.

Martin
Looks as if you maybe like that fellow.

Laura
Mm. A little bit.

Ken
She won't admit it, but she likes me a lot.

Martin
I'll be hanged if I see why.

Laura
It's a mystery to me, too.

Tippy
And after all this time!

Laura
It's queer isn't it? Often I look at him and I say why, out of all the millions of men -- handsome men, brilliant men, wealthy men -- did I fall in love with him?

Martin
And when you might have had me!

Tippy
(With a terrible yowl)
Oh, sweet mystery of life...

Ken

My God!

Tippy

I won't even ask how things are! You look so damned all right.

Laura

On two salaries and no babies, who wouldn't? May I lend you the price of a rented Tuxedo so you can come to dinner without embarrassing our butler?

Ken

Yeah -- when we get the bedroom set paid for we're going to exchange the radio for a Cadillac.

Laura

Oh, Martin! If you have any original drawings unsold, just name your price. All we have on the walls now is the Horse Fair and the Last Supper. But mind you -- art only, no propaganda.

Martin

I'll do a charcoal of the Palisades for you.

Laura

I forbid it. They're an invitation to suicide.

Tippy

He'll draw the Palisades from the bottom looking up. That's an invitation to climb.

Ken

There's a lot in a point of view!

Laura

Good! Climbing is much more fun than jumping off!

Ken

All one needs is a toehold to get started.

Tippy

I say, Ken, so you feel really started now?

Ken

I sure do.

Tippy

That's great!

Martin

When you get to the top, don't push anyone off.

Tippy

There is plenty of room on top of the Palisades.

Martin

You've stacked the analogy on me. Most mountains don't have flat tops.

Ken

Ah, hell, Martin, you're just being stubborn. Kate showed us your drawing in the New Yorker.

Laura

We like it a lot.

Ken

That's your toehold. When you've sold them six you'll be back to pink socialism. And soon you'll be mailing things to the Saturday Evening Post -- and signing them!

Laura

Don't rub it in, dear.

Ken

I'm not rubbing it in. I was once as radical as Martin.

Tippy

Ken, Ken -- don't exaggerate. As an architect, you must keep your perspective.

Ken

I was ready to go to Russia, wasn't I?

Martin

Oh yeah!

Ken

And I used to get sore as a pup when people said a man was radical only because he was unemployed. But it's true. I know because I've lived through it. A man's political views are colored by his situation.

Martin

(Shouting with laughter)

Hey! Don't plagiarize Marx.

Ken

Marx?

Martin

Karl Marx, you're stealing his thunder. That's what the man wrote his big book about. Only -- you see it for one man and a few months. Marx saw it for all humanity for all time.

Laura

They're at it again. The dear little school boys. -- Tippy, how does one make them grow up?

Tippy

Opinions differ. Bobby Benson says Mother's Oats and Buck Rogers says Cocomalt. What do you give Ken for breakfast?

Ken

I say, what's Ted doing?

Tippy

About the same.

Ken

Still looking for book bargains?

Tippy

They get harder and harder to sell.

Ken

The trouble with you fellows is you encourage Ted in his weakness. Someone ought to put it to him straight. The man doesn't realize where he's drifting.

Martin

Yes -- well -- that's his business.

Ken

You fellows are afraid to talk to him.

Laura

What is there to say to him?

Ken

Say to him? Say to him that the least he could do is to apply for relief work.

Martin

(Pointedly)

Ken, you're welcome to your opinion. But I'd advise you not to say anything to Ted about relief.

Ken

Why not? There's no disgrace in relief work. You'd be surprised how many....

Martin

(Shortly)

We know as many nice people on relief as you do.

Ken

I said relief work, not relief.

Martin

What's the difference?

Laura

Why, Martin, there's a big difference!

Martin

Sure there is. Plain relievers can sit on the benches. Relief workers have shovels to lean on. It's a true class distinction.

Ken

Oh, sure, there's lots of loafers and piddling projects, -- but the governments also doing some big jobs, some real construction work.

Tippy

Martin wrote a song about that.

Laura

Really? Have you turned composer, Martin?

Martin

Just some new words on an old tune.

Laura

Oh, let's hear it.

Martin

After dinner.

Laura

No, I can't wait. You sing it for us now, then after dinner, we can all sing it.

(She picks up guitar and thrusts it at him)

Come on Lyric Writer, tune up.

Ken

(Tolerantly)

Sure let's hear it.

Martin

(Singing)

Then little Andy Lang of the Lake Shore gang
Said boys you know I'm countin'
Each day and week until I see

ALL

The Big Rock Candy Mountain.

Martin

Oh the Big Rock Candy Mountain
Stands on a plain of bread
Our Uncle's got to feed us
Or soon we'll all be dead.
The more and more he feeds us
The sooner we'll be red
So serve the soup
With a great big whoop
And promise pie
Up in the sky
On the Big Rock Candy Mountain.

ALL

Oh the Big Rock Candy Mountain

Martin

Belongs to Uncle Sam
To move the great big mountain
Will take a million men.
So come on with your tooth picks
And bring your fountain pen
Go easy, don't jerk
We gotta make work
It'll take more moons
If we use small spoons
To move that great big mountain.

(On the last verse TIPPY has gone to yard and
he is now back with Itzy on a leash.)

Tippy

On with the concert while I take Itzy home. I won't be long.
Itzy lives near .

Martin

Say, let me take Itzy home while you start dinner.

Tippy

Right you are. I forgot a dinner has to be cooked before it can be eaten.

Martin

Any shopping to do?

Tippy

Oh, that's right. I'll have to go myself.

Ken

He also forgot a dinner has to be bought before it can be cooked.

Laura

Something tells me I'd better look into this menu.

Tippy

I'm having tomato soup, and I'm going to make bran muffins. And there are pork chops.

Laura

Pork chops in 1935! That's extravagant.

Martin

He buys them to get the bones for his doggies. The meat we get is a by-product.

Laura

O.K. Ken adores shoulder chops. -- But what's the salad?

Tippy

That's just where I stalled. I haven't even bought the makings.

Ken

(Taking Itzy's leash)

If you people are going to talk salad, tell me where this dog lives.

Laura

No. I see I'll have to go. No salad has been provided and I don't trust men on salad. Martin, you know where Itzy lives, so come along and carry the packages. And Tippy, you go light your oven and mix your muffins.

(LAURA and MARTIN go with the dog)

Tippy

Laura's a peach.

Ken

You don't know how much of a peach.

Tippy

I'm glad you two've got settled so well.

Ken

I was a fool not to do it before.

Tippy

Sure you were.

Ken

The trouble was, I'd lost my bearings. Thought I'd never get out of the woods.

Tippy

The job look pretty good?

Ken

I guess so.

Tippy

You don't sound so sure.

Ken

Oh sure, the job's all right.

Tippy

Prescott a tough customer?

Ken

No. That's just the trouble. He's a queer duck. Half the time I feel he doesn't know I'm there.

Tippy

He hired you, didn't he? He pays you, doesn't he? He knows you're there!

Ken

Of course he isn't ready to use my stuff yet. Just wants me to work it up.

Tippy

Sure. That's what he hired you for.

Ken

But, damn it, I've been there several months and....

(Laughs)

Maybe the trouble is that I don't have to take orders from anybody; maybe it's that I don't have to fuss and sweat over details the way the others do. Maybe that's the truth. I can work on my plans in my own sweet way. Maybe that's it. Maybe I'm unhappy because Prescott doesn't bawl hell out of me the way he does the others.

Tippy

That's it. The trouble is you've got it too good!

Ken

That's right. Maybe I've got it too good.

(TED enters. Now has new hat, brown; better taste, better fit, and more becoming. HE and KEN greet each other with a little restraint.)

Ken

Hello, Ted.

Ted

Hello. You look fine. Married life must agree with you.

Ken

Nothing like it. Married life, and work.

Ted

Oh yes, work. You do have a job, haven't you?

Ken

Yes, you bet I have.

Ted

And a job's a job, even if it falls from the moon.

Tippy

The moon? Are there capitalists on the moon?

Ted

Do all jobs come from capitalists?

Tippy

Don't they?

Ted

Ask Martin. He says there are no capitalists in Russia but lots of jobs.

Ken

God, are you going Red, Ted?

Tippy

Ted's not going anywhere, but I'm going to the kitchen to start the muffins. The rest of the dinner is on the way, Ted. So lick your chops for a feast.

(He goes. There is an awkward pause, during which TED self-consciously removes his coat under KEN'S curious eyes)

Ken

Nice outfit.

Ted

Glad you like it. -- Going to be like old times. Regular reunion of the class of '29.

Ken

Yes.

(Pause)

Ted

Where's Laura?

Ken
She's gone out to do some shopping.

Ted
Oh. With Kate.

Ken
No. Kate wasn't here.

Ted
She was here before.

Ken
She wasn't when we came.

Ted
Oh!

Ken
Laura went with Martin.

Ted
Shopping?

Ken
That's right.
(Pause)

Ted
Great to have the whole bunch together again, huh?

Ken
Yes, great.
(Pause)

Ted
You seem satisfied with your job.

Ken
Hell yes. It's a great job. The salary isn't anything to boast of--- yet. But the future looks like a million. You see, Prescott didn't hire me for any routine detail. He has men for that. His object in taking me on was to develop for him my plans for fabricated housing.

Ted
Yes? That sounds fine.

Ken
Christ, Ted, do you realize what it means, after you've wasted years, to get back and do real work.

Ted
Must feel great.

Ken
Ted, why don't you get a job?

Ted
I haven't turned down any.

Ken

But have you been going about it in the right way? Of course I realize you haven't any real professional training. But you know the rare books racket. There must be a lot of money in publishing limited editions. What's wrong with that business?

Ted

Unfortunately, the people I know don't consider me a business man.

Ken

What you are and how you're considered isn't important. It's the way you go after things. -- The trouble with you is you got started down and just kept on going down -- Oh, I know how that is. It looked that way for me once. Things were awful.

Ted

They've changed for you, haven't they?

Ken

Sure. They've changed for everybody. The whole spirit of the country has changed. Man, don't you feel it?

Ted

I can't say that I do.

Ken

We've turned that famous corner, and it's time for you to wake up and get out of your rut.

Ted

All right. You know how. Suppose you tell me.

Ken

You still think there's something wrong with the world when your troubles are purely personal.

Ted

My troubles are... All right. What about the other millions of unemployed?

Ken

They're incompetents. Common laborers and workmen in industries that die -- like soft coal mining. And maybe some technological unemployment. But you're not in any narrow technical field. As a matter of fact in not being specialized you actually have an advantage. All you've got to do is go after things.

Ted

Easy to say.

Ken

Easy to do. Part of your trouble is your environment.

Ted

My environment?

Ken

Sure. Tippy here is make-shifting -- but that's all right.

Ken

(Cont'd.)

It's something. Martin's radical living off his wits. That's not your style. Neither of them can help you.

Ted

They have helped me.

Ken

They've weakened you. For Christ's sake, Ted, snap out of it. Get away from here. Get away from it all. Make a break. You won't starve. If you can't get a real job, go on relief.

Ted

Relief!

Ken

I know relief isn't pleasant for a man like you. But hell, it's better than...

Ted

Let's not discuss it.

Ken

It's high time you did discuss it. You can't go on the way you're doing.

Ted

Did I ask for your advice?

Ken

Now don't get sore. I'm trying to help you.

Ted

The hell with your help!

Ken

All right. You don't want advice and you won't take it. What are you going to do? Go on living off Kate forever?

Ted

That's my affair.

Ken

It's your affair, but everybody knows it. And everybody knows what it is. It's the second oldest profession in the world -- and the lousiest one.

Ted

(Wildly)

Drop it, I say!

Ken

You know where Kate gets her money and how she earns it. -- And you know what that makes you.

(With an inarticulate cry, TED tries to stop him, but KEN goes on almost in spite of himself.)

Ken
A pimp! That's what it makes you. A pimp.

Ted
Damn you! Damn you!

Ken
It doesn't sound pretty, does it?

Ted
Not from you.

Ken
It will sound the same no matter where it comes from.

Ted
Not from you. -- Because we're in the same boat. We're in the same boat, do you hear? We're in the same boat!

Ken
(Contemptuously)
The hell you say!

Ted
You'd rather die than accept favors from a woman, wouldn't you?

Ken
You bet your....

Ted
You'd rather eat Salvation Army beansoup than go on living off your father, too.

Ken
Sure. So I got out and got a job.

Ted
A job! What kind of a job?
(Hysterically)
Who got that job for you? Who is paying your salary?

Ken
Ah, you're crazy!

Ted
I'll tell you who got you that job and I'll tell you whose paying your salary. Your father,

Ken
You're a god-damned liar.

(MARTIN and LAURA enter, their arms laden with bundles)

Ted

Prescott is just a go-between. It's your father who's paying your salary!

Laura

(In horror)

Ted!

Ted

Ask her. She knows. It was her idea. -- If I'm a pimp, what does that make you?

(Takes his hat and coat, brushes by her and streaks out.)

Ken

(Unconvincingly)

He's crazy. He's -- crazy.

(Silence)

(LAURA leans against the table, as though she had difficulty in breathing)

(TIPPY enters, apron on, egg beater in hand)

Tippy

Hello. You back?

(Takes groceries)

What's up?

(No answer)

Where's Ted?

(No answer)

Ken

(To LAURA)

What are you whimpering about?

(Seizes her by the arms)

It's true. What he said was true, wasn't it?

(She tries to speak, but cannot)

Who got my job for me? Who is paying my salary? Answer me!

Laura

Your father.

Ken

My father! How could he do such a thing?

Laura

It was my idea. I -- I told him to do it.

Ken

You. You did that to me.

Laura

I wanted to help you.

Ken

It takes a woman to do a thing like that.

Laura

I loved you.

Ken

It takes love. -- That's what love is.

(He goes to door)

That's what it does to a man.

(Pause. The room is deathly quiet)

And when I was a boy I used to wonder why some of the world's wisest men hung out with whores.

C U R T A I N

ACT III.

Same. Several hours later, about 10 P.M.

TED is sitting in a corner with a book, but unable to concentrate. He is wretchedly unhappy and jumpy.

LAURA paces back and forth.

MARTIN sits at a table with a pencil, sketching, evidently using TED whose face is exposed to him in profile, as a model.

There is an air of tense, long waiting. Little is said, and then spoken in quick and jerky tempo, with long pauses.

Laura

If I only knew where he was.

Martin

He's best alone, wherever he is --until he gets ready to come home.

(Silence)

Laura

If I knew he was all right!

Martin

He's all right.

(Silence)

(LAURA sits down apart from the others.
TED rises and crosses to her. She
does not look at him. He speaks haltingly)

Ted

Laura. Is there anything I can do? I am very sorry, very sorry it happened.

Laura

(Without looking up)
What good does that do now? You did it.

Ted

Yes, I did it. To say that he provoked me till I was crazed with shame and anger does not undo it. That is true.

Laura

All right, it's true. What he told you about yourself you already knew. Everybody knew it. It was nothing but words and made no real difference in your life. But you told him something about himself that makes all the difference in the world -- and has ruined his life and mine.

(She rises)

Ted

I admit all that.

Laura

(Near hysteria)
Well, then, shut up!

(To escape from him she goes into kitchen)

Martin

(Dryly, as he shades drawing)
The lady, it seems, would have been quite satisfied if you had merely called her husband a traitor to his country, a robber of blind widows, a bombastic egotist, a thieving son-of-a-bitch and a cock-eyed liar.

Ted

(Humorlessly)
It wasn't what I called him. It was what I told him.

Martin

Precisely. But the greater the truth the greater the libel. Ken Holden, you see, wanted to be an adult lion among the little monkeys, and you informed him that he was still an infant drawing sustenance from parental sources.

Ted

(Sensing Martin's friendliness approaches him like a friendless dog.)
You understand, don't you, how he provoked me?

Martin

Perfectly.

Ted

(Sees sketch)
Why, that's me you're drawing!

Martin

Glad you recognized it. Some people don't recognize themselves in profile.

Ted

It's a good profile. The face is good. -- But why the uniform?

Martin

Clothes make the man. I wanted to see if a uniform would make a soldier.

Ted

I never wore a uniform. I detest them. I'd rather be shot than wear one.

Martin

That's an old Spanish custom.

Ted

Spanish?

Martin

Custom. To shoot men who do not like to wear uniforms.

Ted

But why do you draw me as a soldier? What did I do to suggest that? What made you do it?

Martin

Something in Kate's eyes, while you were posing for her, suggested it. She seemed to think your outfit lacked something. Well, what it lacked I have seen on parade grounds at West Point. There it is.

(Holds up drawing)

Ted

(Backs away)

Why do you torment me?

Martin

I'm sorry.

(He rips cardboard across and throws the halves into waste basket.)

It had no significance to you personally, Ted. -- It's all of us. All of us who are in the army.

Ted

In the army? What are you talking about? We aren't in any army. We wouldn't go in. Why, half the men you meet say they'd be conscientious objectors. The jails wouldn't hold them.

Martin

But the ditches will.

Ted

But I tell you....

Martin

They jailed conscientious objectors in the last war. This time they will shoot them.

Ted

Why are you Communists so afraid of war?

Martin

We know what starts it. -- It's the army, Ted, that makes war.

Ted

But this country hasn't a big standing army.

Martin

Oh, yes it has. There are ten millions in it.

Ted

You mean the unemployed.

Martin

That's the army that makes war these days.

Ted

I know. You radicals always say that. I don't agree with you -- except about war. I think you are right about that.

Martin

Which is why the American Legion wants to exterminate us.

Ted

They want war. But you want revolution. You are against war and for revolution. That's silly. Just a different kind of war. You're both wrong. There's no sense in any of you.

Martin

That's right. The business men have all the sense. They know that any army in rags is more dangerous to them than any army in uniform. So we will wear uniforms. I just tried yours on to see how it would fit you.

Ted

(Picks up the two halves out of basket
and puts them together and stares at it)

No. -- No. I'll never wear one. Never!

(He crumples drawing and throws it back into
basket. LAURA comes in from the kitchen.
TED, looking for escape, goes into bedroom)

Laura

Tippy hasn't telephoned. That means he hasn't found Ken.

Martin

Maybe he wants to march the grand monarch in on us.

Laura

Oh, I hope so -- He ought to be back...Martin, do you think Ken will ever forgive me?

Martin

Well, you know what Solomon said about the way of a man with a maid.

Laura

Don't wise-crack.

Martin

I'm only hiding my ignorance behind Solomon's.

Laura

Do you think Ken should forgive me?

Martin

I think he ought to spank you till you'd have to eat off the mantle for a week, and then take you back to his bed and board and forget it.

Laura

If he only would.

Tippy

(Enters, looking gloomy)

He hasn't been at the apartment, Laura. -- He hasn't been there and he hasn't 'phoned there.

Martin

So that's that.

Tippy

There were some messages for him. The girl at the switchboard said a man's voice asked for Ken and then asked for you. Called a couple of times. Left no name.

Laura

Maybe I ought to go home?

Tippy

Would you be any more miserable alone?

Laura

I couldn't be.

Tippy

You stay here a while. I gave the girl this address and number and told her to give it to any one who called. I also made her promise that if Ken came in she'd call you here at once.

Laura

She'll die of curiosity.

Tippy

Telephone operators develop immunity.

Laura

You're a dear. Thanks. -- But -- what shall we do?

Tippy

There is nothing more we can do until you're ready to notify the Missing Persons Bureau.

Laura

Do you think we ought to?

Tippy

No. -- I hate to seem callous to your distress, dear, but involving the police department at this moment would be a little premature.

Laura

But I'm so worried. He might do anything, Tippy.

Tippy

The chances are he'll do nothing but take a walk.

Laura

If I only knew...

Tippy

And what could you tell the police? Man quarrelled with wife, left house, has been gone four hours...

Laura

It seems dreadful, dreadful -- just to sit here and not know anything.

Martin

I think I have a hunch.

Laura

Oh, Martin! Why didn't you say so before?

Martin

I only just got the hunch.

Laura

What? Where?

Martin

Now wait a minute. It's only a hunch, and my hunches aren't so hot. I don't believe in them, you see.

Laura

But you'll go, won't you? You'll go?

Martin

Oh, sure.

(Gets hat)

You stay here with Tippy.

Laura

(Grabbing her things)

No. I want to go with you.

Martin

Please don't, Laura. I don't know where Ken is. It's just a mere possibility; an old dump I used to take him to. You stay here.

(He goes. Just as he closes door TED walks into room.)

Ted

Hello, Tippy. You back?

Laura

(Gives one look at Ted, grasps wrap and runs out.)

Ted

She hates me.

Tippy

Well, there's nothing to do about it, except keep out of her way.

Ted

I shouldn't have come back.

Tippy

Why not? You live here.

Ted

Then why does she stay?

Tippy

Because she doesn't want to be alone with her thoughts.

Ted

You think she feels guilty, too?

Tippy

Well, what do you think? She tricked Ken into continuing the thing he'd come to hate most in the world; financial dependence on his father. She took a big chance, and lost.

Ted

It was my fault. I told. I never would have told if he hadn't...

Tippy

Never mind. We know what Ken did to you. It was in his nature to do just that. -- His nature was part of the thing Laura took a chance on too, -- and lost.

Ted

(After slight pause)

I suppose it's always hard to understand the other fellow's troubles. They seem so small compared with your own.

Tippy

Circumstances do not excuse crimes, but they do explain them.

(Pause)

We've all taken plenty. But I'll say this, old man. If I'm the first member of the Class of '29 to check in at the big Court House I'll look up at the judge and I'll say to him, "See here, God, when Ted Brooks arrives, don't judge him till you've looked up his full record. The cards were stacked against that guy from the start! The rest of us merely needed jobs, but he needed..."

(Pauses, not knowing how to finish.)

Ted

Thanks, Tippy.

Tippy

I'll be damed if I know what you do need!

Ted

Guts. Guts is what I need. -- My health's good enough for physical labor, but nobody wants me to dig ditches.

Tippy

Did you ever see a steam shovel at work? I don't even say you're any use to the world or have any right to live in it. But making a hundred men like you substitute for a steam shovel is plain damn silly. It's an insult to the steam shovel.

Ted

(With deep, quiet desperation which grows more and more intense through the following scenes)

What should I do? What was it intended for me to do?

Live like an aristocrat. Tippy

As Martin would say -- on the backs of the workers. Ted

The workers don't seem to mind. They didn't throw you off. Tippy

No, but who did? Ted

The other guys on the backs of the workers. Tippy

No one in particular threw me off. Ted

Then maybe you just fell off. The worker's back is broad, but it's not broad enough to accommodate all of us. Tippy

But you're not a revolutionist? Ted

Hell, no. I'm a dog washer. Tippy

(KATE enters, excited, out of breath)

Ted -- guess what! I've got a job for you! Kate

(Not believing)
A job? For me? Ted

You mean that? Tippy

I do. It's nothing to brag about, but it's a job. Kate

Private industry or relief? Tippy

(Indignantly)
Relief? Certainly not. It's real work. Kate

With real money -- that's great. Tippy

Oh, it's nothing fancy; but it'll pay enough for Ted to live better than he has been living. Kate

(TED doesn't grow enthusiastic, and KATE becomes resentful. Sensing this, TIPPY keeps up the badinage.)

Tippy
How many questions will you give me to name the job?

Kate
Oh, you'd never guess it.

Tippy
Come on, Ted, we'll alternate and spot it in ten questions. I'm first. Is it indoors or out?

Kate
In.
(They wait for Ted's question)

Ted
(Dully)
Is it working on commission?

Kate
(Triumphantly)
No. Regular wages.

Tippy
Is the wage above or below \$25.00 a week?

Kate
It's a little below.

Ted
Is it in an office?

Kate
No.

Tippy
Would he wear a white collar at work?

Kate
Yes

Tippy
Hey, Ted, use your head. That's five questions gone.

Ted
Do I have to sell anything?

Kate
No.

Tippy
Indoors. No office. Low wages. White collar. No selling.
(Thinking)
Does he work with his hands or his head -- or his mouth?

Kate
His hands and his mouth. -81-

Tippy
But not his head. That's illuminating.

Ted
How did you get this job?

Kate
I got it the only way you can get jobs for anybody these days --
by asking it as a favor from someone who had it to give.

Ted
I see.

Kate
(Resentful)
But you don't seem very appreciative.

Tippy
Wait a minute, Kate. He doesn't know yet what the job is.

Kate
He doesn't act as if he wanted to know.

Tippy
Don't get sensitive. -- And I haven't played my game out.

Kate
All right. Go on.

Tippy
(Thinks a moment, then brilliantly)
Will he wear a uniform?

Kate
Yes. -- You guessed it.

(TED grows dismayed)
The job is elevator operator in the Graybar Building. It's a
cinch. You don't even have to stop the car. You just push buttons.

Tippy
Automatic. All but the phonograph. And you're it.

Ted
In uniform!

Kate
(Impatiently)
Well, what of it?

Ted
And push buttons... Floor, please. Two please. Five please.
Right please.

(Laughs harshly)
Kate
Oh, so it isn't good enough for you!

Ted
Fifteen please. Twenty-six please.

Kate
Well, what do you want? Vice-president in a bank? Wake up!
This isn't 1929. This is 1935. You take what you get and
are grateful.

Ted
Like a bell boy!

Kate
It's a job. You said you wanted a job.

Ted
But, Kate...

Kate
It pays more than I got for years. And I supported myself on it
and you too.

Ted
Listen, Kate...
(Has some difficulty going on)
If it were an old freight elevator in a warehouse, and I could
wear overalls, and pull on a rope that blistered my hands....

Kate
It's the uniform that stalls you, is it? -- Now I see why they
make soldiers wear them.

Tippy
(Wishing to save the situation)
The British started that with their Red Coats, to make them better
targets so we could win the Revolutionary War. -- I learned that
in school.

Kate
(Bitter)
You got it wrong, brother. It's to take the conceit out of a coward
by making him realize he's no better than anybody else. That's
what it's for!

Ted
Kate...

Kate
You said you wanted a job. I believed you. I asked for a job; any
kind of a job that a man who had never worked could do. And I got
one.

(To TIPPY)
But he doesn't want it. It's not because of the uniform. It's be-
cause it's a job!

(She has turned her back on TED. He quietly
takes his new hat and coat and sneaks out.
She turns as she hears the door.)

Kate
He's gone.
(Pause)

Kate

(Cont'd.)

I never talked like that to him before.

(With sudden fright)

Where's he going? -- Ted! Ted!

(She runs out after him. TIPPY follows to the door which she leaves open. An elderly, richly-dressed spinster, whom KATE has nearly knocked down as she fled, stalks into the room. She glowers at TIPPY)

Miss Donovan

So that's the kind of a place this is!

(She stalks about and glares at everything)

Tippy

(Closing door)

Good evening, Miss Donovan.

Miss Donovan

Irresponsible people! Wild and irresponsible people! To think that I trusted Itzy to wild, irresponsible people.

Tippy

My dear Miss Donovan, the distresses of my personal guests have nothing to do with my professional work.

Miss Donovan

Guests! Was it your guests who brought Itzy home?

Tippy

Surely there is nothing wrong with Itzy?

Miss Donovan

Nothing wrong!

(Portentously)

Itzy is sneezing! He has a cold!

Tippy

Surely you're mistaken. He was all right when he left here.

Miss Donovan

He was not. Dr. Sayre, I told you never let any person but yourself touch that dog when he was out of my apartment.

Tippy

But it's a very short distance and the man who took him home....

Miss Donovan

The man you say! My maid said it was a silly boy and a giggling, irresponsible girl. How do I know what they did to Itzy? How do I know where they took him? Or in what company they had him? They might have let him get into a fight and get killed.

Tippy

But they didn't.

Miss Donovan

They, or you, exposed Itzy to a chill. Itzy is sneezing. Itzy has a cold. Itzy may develop pneumonia and die.

(During this speech there is a knock and
TIPPY goes to door and lets in the BISHOP
while MISS DONOVAN continues)

I shall hold you responsible. If anything happens to Itzy, you alone are to blame. I shall hold you responsible for Itzy's death.

(She addresses the BISHOP)

If you are a customer of this man, let me warn you. He is not to be trusted. He is not responsible.

Bishop

There must be some misunderstanding.

Miss Donovan

There is no misunderstanding. I brought Itzy here on a friend's recommendation. She said it was a responsible place. It is not. It is full of wild, irresponsible people.

Bishop

Madam, I am sure....

Miss Donovan

You look like a man who loves animals. If you do, do not bring them here. This man deliberately exposed my poor Itzy to a cold. He may die.

Bishop

Itzy is your dog, I presume?

Miss Donovan

And such a darling. Everybody loves him. I shall tell everyone -- all my friends. He suffers so -- I shall warn them. His nose is running... I shall destroy this irresponsible man's business! -- If you could look into his eyes you'd understand!... If you love dogs, never trust them to irresponsible people.

(She goes to the door and out)

Bishop

That woman is a fool.

Tippy

Some of my best customers are, Bishop.

Miss Donovan

(Opens door, and sticks her head in)

I shall ruin your business!

(Closes door with a slam)

Tippy

Jesus!

(Takes the Bishop's hat and coat)

Won't you be seated, sir?

Bishop

I trust that lady is not as influential as she feels.

Tippy

Dog lovers are gossips. But I get business by gossip as well as lose it. By gossip, sir, and perfumed soap. The art of perfuming dogs has a great future. It's an undeveloped field. I'm just beginning to explore it.

Bishop

You are a marvellous young man, Timothy.

Tippy

It's the Irish in me -- also the Scotch.

Bishop

I wish -- I wish my son were more like you. -- Have you seen him, Timothy?

Tippy

(Evasively)

Why, yes sir -- earlier this evening.

Bishop

I called at his apartment and was told to come here.

Tippy

Well, yes -- he was here. So was Laura.
(Bishop sighs heavily)

Bishop

You have a nice place here. -- And your business?

Tippy

I don't complain. Only the customers do, as you heard, sir.

Bishop

I could see that woman was a fool.

Tippy

I would not dispute you.

Bishop

But surely not all people who ~~own~~ dogs are fools.

Tippy

There are exceptions.

Bishop

At least you are busy. You are occupied and happy. You have found congenial work. Why cannot all young men do as you have done?

Tippy

No* enough dogs, sir.

Bishop
It need not have been dogs. It might have been -- other things.

Tippy
True, sir. I considered the hanging of clothes lines for women whose husbands are mechanical morons.

Bishop
That's an ingenious idea.

Tippy
But I found there weren't enough morons. Automobiles, sir, have taught even the gentry to use screw drivers.

Bishop
I like your humor. You have enterprise and perspective. You renew my faith in youth. I wish my son had such morale. I wish... Where is he, Timothy? Where is Kenneth? And Laura? Do you know where they went?

Tippy
I'm afraid not.

Bishop
I must find them.
(Rises to go)

Tippy
The best chance is they'll be back here.

Bishop
(Sitting again, speaks slowly)
I am guilty of a great wrong against my son.

Tippy
I'm sure it wasn't a wilful wrong.

Bishop
No. I love my son. I meant to help him. Sometimes it is hard to know what is right and what is wrong. Timothy, I arranged for my son to have a job.

(Pause)
I conspired to let him think he had secured the job in the usual manner. I fear I made a great mistake.

Tippy
I understand the spirit that prompted you.

Bishop
Thank you.
(Pause)

He called me up on the telephone and said I had ruined his life with my meddling. He said I was an unworthy example of a man of God. He said I had betrayed him...

(He is too moved to go on)

Bishop

(Cont'd.)

He said harsh things -- very harsh things.

Tippy

I am very sorry, sir.

(He feels helpless to comfort the old man.
In the ensuing, uncomfortable silence,
KEN, MARTIN and LAURA come in. KEN is
drunk and boisterous. MARTIN is trying to
hold him back. KEN backs into the room,
dragging MARTIN with him, LAURA follows.)

Ken

I got to go in. Got to find Ted. I got to 'pologize to Ted.

(MARTIN, seeing BISHOP, lets go of
KEN who nearly falls. KEN does not
see his father)

I got to shake hands with him and say, Ted, ol' boy, you're right.
We're in the same boat. We're brothers under the skin. We are
both kept men.

Bishop

My son!

Ken

(Turns slowly and sees his father)

Hi, Dad!

(Gestures to LAURA)

Meet the wife. She got the job. You paid for it.

(Silence. Gestures to MARTIN)

Meet Martin. He's a god-damned Communist. But I like him.

Bishop

My son, you have been drinking.

Ken

Drinking?

(Laughs - to MARTIN)

He thinks I have been drinking.

(To Tippy)

Hi! Good old Tippy. Washes dogs. -- Kept dogs. Kept women.
Kept men.

Tippy

(Taking him by the arm)

Come on, Ken. Come out in the kitchen and have some coffee.

Ken

I don't want coffee. Makes you 'member what you got drunk to forget.

Tippy

All right, then. I'll give you some more whiskey.

Bishop

(In horror)

I forbid. Please, no more liquor.

Ken

That's right. No more liquor. Might forget too much.

Tippy

Then come in and go to sleep and forget everything.

Ken

(Shaking him off)

I don't want to forget. I want to explain.

(Looking around at each)

Dad -- Laura -- Tippy -- Martin. Whole goddam class of '29. Class of '29...Six years. Hi, Martin, 'member the speeches? 'Member the Bac-ca-laurit address?

(Struts and gestures)

Young men of the class of '29.

(Gestures left)

This is your god damn old alma mater.

(Gestures right)

And out there's the goddamn old world.

(Gestures left)

In there you studied four years like sons-o'-guns, stuffing your empty heads full of useless knowledge.

(Gestures right)

So you could go out there and get a job. And make money. And get a house. And a car. And a woman to sleep with. And have a baby, and vote the Republican ticket... And so what happens? Depressions and Democrats. And Hoover -- 'member Hoover? -- Hoover had to go back to Leland Stanford libr'y to read a book to tell him why there's jobs for everybody in Russia.

(He stops, looks at his father)

'Scuse me. Hoover's all wet.

(To MARTIN, belligerently)

My father's a bishop, see? Russia's hell on bishops. This is the country for bishops. You are out of luck, Martin. Your father made a mistake being a farmer. He should have been a bishop. Nice jobs, lots of money. Buys a job for his son so he can get married and have a wife and a home and a baby and not be a Red. You think I'm a Red? Hell, no. I'm a hundred percent American. I'm an individualist. Americans are individualists. Each man got his own wife 'n his own bed. A Russian's a collectivist. Got everybody's wife in bed.

Bishop

Kenneth, my son!

Ken

See? My dad doesn't like Russians. Russians shot all the churches and made the priests go to work. He doesn't like you. -- You read the wrong books. My Dad reads Mark and Luke and John -- makes him a Christian. You read Marx and Lenin and Stalin -- makes you a revolutionist. Why don't you read Hearst and Hoover and make yourself an American.

Tippy

Never mind, Ken. The revolution's all over.

Ken

That was no revolution. That was only a depression. But it's all over now. My father bought me a job because my wife told him to. I've got a smart wife. She understands business methods. We are individualists, and must have initiative. So my wife, she has initiative. She says -- Ken's got to have a job so we can get married. So she explains to my father how capitalism works. Lots of competition; too many lousy architects. So got to fabricate houses and put 'em all out of a job.

Martin

You talk more sense drunk than sober.

Ken

Too many architects -- so what? Give 'em relief work, that's what. Makes lots of little houses, with lots of little yards, with lots of little trees, so they'll be lots of little leaves to rake.

(Faces LAURA)

That's why a man needs a smart wife with lots of initiative -- to get him a job.

Tippy

O. K., Ken.

Laura

(Fiercely)

Do something with him, Martin.

Martin

(Going to KEN)

All right, old man. Let's go in there and see whether we can figure this thing out.

Ken

I got it all figured out. Lots of little houses, 'n' lots of....

Tippy

But we've got to figure out what to do about Ted.

Ken

Ted. That's right...Ted.

(The three go out to kitchen)

Bishop

(Wringing his hands)

Radicalism and liquor. Liquor and radicalism.

(LAURA is unresponsive; sits stony-eyed and heartsick)

Bishop

My poor child. My poor child.

Laura

Poor Ken!

Bishop
 We must be strong. And patient
 (Silence)
 How did he learn of this?

Laura
 He quarrelled with Ted and Ted lost his temper and told.

Bishop
 Ted? But how came he to know of it?

Laura
 Oh, I don't know.

Bishop
 Such a nice young man, I always thought. He seemed so....

Laura
 (In despair)
 What are we to do about Ken?

Bishop
 He blamed me. He said I had betrayed him.

Laura
 (Impatiently)
 You didn't -- But how are we to give him back his self-confidence?

Bishop
 He said I was dishonest.

Laura
 If in some way I could return to him his lovely vanity. When he had no job, he had no thought of me -- none -- none....

Bishop
 What is there left for him to believe in, when even I, his father....

Laura
 Oh don't! It was my fault. I told him so. Don't blame yourself. And anyway, the only thing that matters is Ken. Don't you see?

Bishop
 You're right, my child.

Laura
 He's so crushed! And that despair that shuts me out! Why is it? Why is it that a woman loves a man most when she has nothing -- and he wants her only when he has everything else? What's going to happen to us, to him?

Bishop
 Don't worry so. Everything will be all right. Kenneth has suffered a bitter blow to his pride. But he'll sober up and resign himself to the situation.

Laura
 Resign himself? Oh, never!

Bishop

We must make him see that that is the only thing to do.

Laura

But is it? Is there no hope of a real position?

Bishop

Prescott gave me his word when I -- when we made the arrangement -- that he would make a real place for Kenneth as soon as he could.

Laura

So far he hasn't.

Bishop

It's a matter of time. Business is greatly improved. Building must revive by the spring. Therefore, don't you see, if our boy is patient until then....

(LAURA shakes her head)

We must make him go on. If he gives it up now he may lose a real opportunity. That is what you and I must make him see! The opportunity ahead.

Laura

He couldn't go on.

Bishop

He must.

Laura

No. Why must he?

Bishop

(Tenderly)

A family, my dear, is a very conclusive argument.

Laura

Family? What do you mean?

Bishop

(Still with his tender sentimentality)

I take it, since Kenneth spoke of a wife and baby...

Laura

(Half-laughing)

Oh! -- Thank God, no!

Bishop

But he said....

Laura

That was just rhetoric. -- I am not having any babies until I see some security for them.

Bishop

Many of the unemployed do have children.

Laura

There are different classes of unemployed.

Bishop

Unfortunately, it is usually the wrong class who have the children.

Laura

I want children! -- But I'll have them only when I can see safety for them.

Bishop

Yes, yes. Well, I only thought that....

Laura

That if a child were coming, Ken would have to knuckle under.

Bishop

Such responsibility has always been the most powerful force to make man go along the path of duty, even though the way seemed hard.

Laura

At least I have spared Ken that! He can do as he pleases. I am still working, and can take care of myself.

Bishop

Yes, quite right. That is the way we must present it to him. That he need consider only himself.

Laura

Poor Ken. What can he..

Bishop

'Sh!

(KEN enters, followed by MARTIN and TIPPY)

Ken

Who said I had no manners!

(To BISHOP and LAURA, with absurd, ironic dignity)

The boys say I wasn't a gentleman. I apologize.

Laura

Never mind, Ken.

Ken

A man ought to be a gentleman, even to his wife.

(She turns away)

(To his father)

A man ought to respect his father. I apologize.

Bishop

I accept your apology, son.

Ken

(To boys)

There you are! I apologized to my father. He accepted my apology.

(To LAURA)

I apologize.

Laura
 All right, Ken. I accept your apology.
 (At the end of her self-control)
 And now that's enough.

Ken
 No. I got one more apology to make.

Tippy
 All right, Ken. I'll take the next one.

Ken
 I didn't insult you.

Tippy
 No. Well, whom did you insult?

Ken
 I insulted Mr. Prescott.

Bishop
 Prescott?

Laura
 You haven't anything to apologize to him for, Ken!

Ken
 I called him a lousy heel. If that's all right with you, I won't apologize.

Tippy
 You did what?

Ken
 I called up Mr. Prescott on the telephone and told him...

Laura
 When did you call him on the telephone?

Ken
 Before.

Bishop
 You were drunk!

Ken
 I wasn't drunk then.

Laura
 What did you tell him?

Ken
 Specifically? -- Specifically I told him -- Martin'll like this...
 (Looks about blankly, doesn't see MARTIN)

I told him that as a multi-millionaire, as a captain of industry, as a pillar of capitalistic society, he ought to be ashamed of himself for robbing the widows and the orphans and taking the money out of the collection baskets of the House of God to pay an architect to draw plans for a wastebasket.

Good Lord!

Tippy

Ken

(To LAURA)

You think I ought to apologize to him for that?

Bishop

If you really did say anything like that to Prescott, of course you will have to apologize.

Ken

(To LAURA)

Dad is a gentleman. And he thinks I ought to apologize. Well, what do you think?

Laura

Oh leave me alone, leave me alone!

Bishop

But surely that is all a figment of your imagination. -- When a man has been under the influence of liquor and then - then recovers from its influence, how much does he remember?

Tippy

That depends.

Ken

Let me explain. I know all about it. A man gets drunk in order to forget what he had on his mind when he was sober. And then he gets sober in order to forget what he said when he was drunk.

Bishop

(Almost pathetically)

Then surely you are mistaken, son. You did not say these things to Mr. Prescott. You do not remember what you did say -- or even if you spoke to him at all.

Ken

Oh, yes, I do remember. Because I was not drunk when I spoke to Prescott. And I am not drunk now.

Bishop

My boy...

Ken

I was drunk. That's how come I was disrespectful. And that's why Tippy gave me some coffee. A quart of whiskey makes any man disrespectful; but a cup of coffee makes a man respect his father, and two cups of coffee makes a man respect his wife.

Martin

Give him another cup and he'll respect Prescott.

Ken

Hello. Where'd you come from?

Martin

I've been here all the time.

Ken

That's fine. That's fine. Having a good time?

Martin

Punk!

Ken

That's too bad. All right. Tell us what you think.

Martin

I think you ought to go home and sleep it off and then go back on the job.

Ken

Ain't got no job.

Martin

Well, I mean go back to Prescott.

Ken

Didn't you hear? There is no Prescott. There is no job.

Martin

Yes, but there's work. And I tell you work is more important than the matter of who pays for it.

Ken

Work for the waste basket?

Martin

No. Not for the waste basket. For whatever use it may be to the world. Your work is important because you are creating something. The pay system has stalled on you, so what? If your father is able to help to keep you at work, the best you can do is to accept it.

Ken

Have you gone screwy?

(To TIPPY)

Is that Communism?

Martin

I believe in revolutions, not in futile personal rebellions.

Ken

(To TIPPY)

Do you get him?

Martin

I think so.

Ken

For God's sake, do you agree with him?

Tippy

Listen, old man, you believe in those plans of yours...

Ken

No. I don't believe in anything, in anything, do you hear?
Not in the love of a father for his son, or in the love of a wife
for her husband, or in the loyalty of friends -- or in the in-
tegrity of one's purposes, or in the sincerity of one's hopes, or
in the greatness of one's ambitions.

Tippy

That's how you feel now, Ken, ---

Martin

You know doggone well you believe in your work. You love it.
You live it.

Ken

(Quietly)

So you think I ought to call up Prescott and apologize. Is that it?

Martin

Why not? A son of a bitch like Prescott?
(A moment's silence)

Ken

(To TIPPY)

And you!

(To his father)

And you, of course...

(To LAURA)

And you...

Laura

(Breathlessly)

You must do whatever you like.

Ken

All right, I won't hold you responsible.

Laura

I only meant... I can take care of myself and ...

Ken

And of me, too.

Laura

No, Ken...I....

(The BISHOP stops her)

Ken

So you all think I ought apologize to Mr. Prescott. That's great.

(Into telephone)

Circle 7-6799...That's great...

(Into telephone)

Mr. Kenneth Holden would like to speak with his employer, Mr. Stanley
Prescott.

Ken

(Cont'd.)

(Plainly)

The name is Holden. That's right. -- What do I want? I want to apologize. Tell him I want to apologize.

(Pause)

Hello, Mr. Prescott? This is Kenneth Holden. I called up to apologize.

(His voice is still high.)

I called you up earlier in the evening, Mr. Prescott, and criticized our working arrangement. Well, sir, I have become convinced that the work is more important than the arrangement, so with your kind permission.

(Listens, as to an interruption. His confident manner slowly disappears. He listens with growing humiliation.)

I'm sorry, sir. I didn't mean to use that tone. Yes -- I meant it.

(Almost in a whisper)

Thank you.

(Slowly, with an air of absolute defeat, he hangs up the receiver.)

Bishop

My son, that was a brave thing. It's wisest for you to keep the arrangement for the present, until...or -- it won't be long...

(Clears his throat; looks at his watch)

My train. I've just time to catch it.

(To Ken)

You'll feel better about it in the morning, son.

Tippy

I'll call you a cab, sir.

Ken

Goodbye, Dad.

(BISHOP and TIPPY go.)

Martin

(To no one at all)

Damn it all!

Laura

If you'd kept still he wouldn't have done it...

Ken

(Roughly)

Are you ashamed? Trying to apologize for my apologizing?

Laura

No, Ken, no.

Ken

You're right to be ashamed of me....

Martin

Damn if anybody makes sense around here!

Ken

Didn't you hear my father? He said I'd feel better about it in the morning.

(Sinks into apathy)

In the morning!

Tippy

(Returning)

Well...

Martin

It's been a fine day!

Tippy

Yes -- great!

Martin

That was a good idea you had, re-union of the Class of '29.

Tippy

I meant well.

Laura

Of course you did!

Tippy

We'll have one yet, I tell you.

Laura

And soon.

Tippy

And we'll all have jobs.

Laura

Real jobs -- important jobs!

(They try to make Ken pay attention, but he doesn't)

Tippy

Mr. Prescott will discover that Ken is really a genius and...

Martin

And he'll fabricate the houses; millions of houses, all according to Ken's plans -- millions and millions and millions of 'em -- and all for individualists.

Tippy

Hi, Laura, you'll have advance models!

Laura

Like a Paris frock.

Tippy

You'll be the envy of all women.

Laura

I know it -- because Ken will be so famous; and I'll be proud.

(There is a rapping at the door. TIPPY opens, and POLICEMAN enters, bringing KATE, who is in state of collapse)

(KEN continues to sit staring bitterly into space. Repeats out loud: Feel better about it in the morning.)

Laura

(Rushing to Kate)

Kate! What happened?

Policeman

Friend of yours?

Tippy

Yes, that's right.

(KATE stares wildly, shivers. LAURA attends her. POLICEMAN draws TIPPY and MARTIN aside)

Policeman

Her man, Theodore Brooks' the name -- you knew him?

Tippy

Yes. What happened?

Policeman

Now take it calm.

Martin

All right. Go on.

Policeman

Train. Subway train.

Tippy

Good God!

Martin

Is he dead?

Policeman

Killed outright. It was suicide. Plenty of witnesses. He was standing with her, waiting for the train. He jerked away and jumped just as the train came in. She'd have gone over with him if somebody hadn't grabbed her.

Tippy

God, how awful!

Policeman

It was pretty messy.

Laura

She needs a doctor.

Policeman

Tried to get her to go to Bellevue...

Martin

There's a doctor three doors down. I'll get him.

Policeman

I guess there's nothing more I can do. I'll wait outside and see if the doc's coming.

(To TIPPY)

Your man's at the morgue if you want him.

Tippy

Yes -- yes -- thanks...

(POLICEMAN goes)

Ken

{Who has become aware, looks bewilderedly
from one to the other}

What's up, Tippy? What's the matter?

Tippy

(Quietly)

Ted's dead, Ken.

Ken

Dead. -- Dead?

Tippy

He killed himself. He...

(His voice breaks)

Ken

(Pause)

The lucky bastard!

CURTAIN