

FICTION

Bayard Veiller

The Thirteenth Chair

A PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK

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FICTION

THE THIRTEENTH CHAIR

A Play in Three Acts

BY BAYARD VEILLER

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ACT I
ACT II
ACT III

THE THIRTEENTH CHAIR

Produced at The Duke of York's Theatre, London, on October the 16th, 1917, with the following cast of characters:--

ROSCOE CROSBY	<i>Mr. Charles Rock</i>
WILLIAM CROSBY	<i>Mr. Lionel Belcher</i>
EDWARD WALES	<i>Mr. Yorke Stephens</i>
BRADDISH TRENT	<i>Mr. Dennis Wyndham</i>
HOWARD STANDISH	<i>Mr. Vane Sutton-Vane</i>
PHILIP MASON	<i>Mr. Arthur Finn</i>
POLLOCK	<i>Mr. Charles Bishop</i>
INSPECTOR DONOHUE	<i>Mr. James Carew</i>
SERGEANT DUNN	<i>Mr. Frank Harris</i>
DOOLAN	<i>Mr. Denham Charles</i>
HELEN O'NEILL	<i>Miss Hilda Bayley</i>
MRS. CROSBY	<i>Miss Dorothy Hammon</i>

MARY EASTWOOD *Miss Margaret Moffat*
HELEN TRENT *Miss Ethel Carrington*
ELIZABETH ERSKINE *Miss Grace Darby*
GRACE STANDISH *Miss Gladys Maude*
MME. ROSALIE LA GRANGE *Mrs. Patrick Campbell*

The scene throughout the play is the Italian Room in Roscoe Crosby's House, New York. The time is evening. The second act takes place ten minutes later than the first and the third act half an hour later than the second.



THE THIRTEENTH CHAIR

ACT I

The SCENE is the Italian Room in ROSCOE CROSBY'S Home in New York. It is a handsome room. A plan of the setting will be found at the end of the play. As the curtain rises Miss HELEN O'NEILL and WILLIAM CROSBY are discovered standing R.C. They are in each other's arms, and the rising curtain discloses them as they kiss. The window blinds are drawn.

HELEN. I love you so.

WILLIAM. You are the most wonderful thing in all the world.

(She gives a little laugh and moves away from him a step right.)

HELEN. I can't believe it.

WILLIAM. That I love you?

HELEN. Oh, no, I'm sure of that.

WILLIAM. If there's any doubt in your mind, I'll prove it again.

HELEN. They'll see us. (*He takes her in his arms again and kisses her. She laughs happily. And then turning a little stands with her cheek pressed against his.*) Oh, my dear, my dear!

(MRS. CROSBY, *a fashionably dressed and extremely attractive woman, enters from door down L. She closes the door. She stops for a moment and watches the lovers and then with a little laugh comes toward them. MRS. CROSBY is fifty-five and looks ten years younger. She has charm, beauty and kindness.*)

MRS. CROSBY (*coming to C. a step*). Don't move, you look so comfortable! (*They separate quickly.*) Well, are you happy? (*To R.C.*)

WILLIAM. Oh, mother!

HELEN. Happy!

(MRS. CROSBY *crosses to HELEN, pats her hand and stands between WILLIAM and HELEN R.C.*)

WILLIAM. Shall we tell 'em all?

MRS. CROSBY. Tell them? (*She laughs.*) What do you think they are? Blind and deaf? It's been a perfectly wonderful dinner. You were so blind to everything but each other. Oh, Billy, I thought your father would have a fit.

HELEN. I thought he had an awful cold, he was coughing terribly.

MRS. CROSBY. Coughing? He nearly choked to keep from laughing. I told him I'd send him from the table if he laughed at you.

WILLIAM. Why you never spoke to him once.

MRS. CROSBY. Child, explain to him that wives don't have to--Oh, I forget you haven't learned that yet. You know, Billy, I can talk to your father very effectively without words.

(*Crosses to below table R.*)

HELEN (*turning to MRS. CROSBY*). Mrs. Crosby--

WILLIAM. Mother, Nell's all fussed up because we've got money. She thinks you'll think--I'm--what in novels they call marrying beneath me.

(*He and MRS. CROSBY laugh. HELEN looks a little hurt.*)

HELEN. Well, he is.

MRS. CROSBY. Nonsense, child, don't be silly. (*Sits down stage end of table.*)

HELEN (*moving a step to MRS. CROSBY*). It's not silly, Mrs. Crosby. Everyone will say it, and they'll be right.

WILLIAM. Let's settle this thing now once and for all, then. In the first place it's all nonsense, and in the second it isn't true--

HELEN. Oh, yes, it is.

MRS. CROSBY. Oh, the first row! I'll settle this one. Nelly!

WILLIAM. Now then, Nell, out with it, get it all out of your system.

HELEN. In the first place, it's the money.

MRS. CROSBY. Yes, but--Helen--

HELEN. Please, let me say it all. You have social position, great wealth, charming friends, everything that makes life worth--Oh, what's the use? You know as well as I do the great difference between us, and--

MRS. CROSBY. My dear child, suppose we admit all that, what then?

HELEN. But don't you see--

WILLIAM (*embracing her in front of table R.*). You little idiot! I don't see anything but you.

MRS. CROSBY. You love each other, that's the whole of it, children. Suppose you listen to an old woman.

WILLIAM. Old! Huh!

MRS. CROSBY. Well, old enough. If Billy was the usual rich man's son it might be different. There might be something in what you say. But thank God he isn't. Mind you, I don't say he wasn't like most of them when he was younger. I dare say he was, I know he went to supper with a chorus girl once.

WILLIAM. Twice.

HELEN. What was she like?

WILLIAM. Like a chorus girl.

MRS. CROSBY. The trouble with you, my dear, is that you've been reading novels. When Billy's father married me, I was a school teacher, and he was a clerk. We didn't have any money, but we were awfully in love--we still rather like each other. Now just for the sake of argument, suppose we should have acted like stern parents, what would be the use? Billy's in business for himself, he's making his own money, he can marry when he wants to and as he wants to, and if you want my real opinion, I don't mind confessing that I think he's pretty lucky to get you.

WILLIAM. There!

HELEN. But you know so little about me.

WILLIAM. Oh, rot!

MRS. CROSBY (*to WILLIAM*). Thank you, Billy. I was trying to think of an effective word. (*To HELEN*.) You've been my private secretary for over a year, and no matter how much my looks belie it, I'm not a bit of a fool. I know a great deal about you.

HELEN. My family--

WILLIAM (C.). I'm not marrying your family!

HELEN. I'm afraid you are.

WILLIAM. Oh!

HELEN. There's only mother.

MRS. CROSBY (*rising and moving to HELEN'S side in front of table R.*). Oh, my dear, forgive me. Your mother should have been here to-night.

HELEN. No, my mother--Mrs. Crosby--mother doesn't go out--she'd be unhappy here, and you'd be uncomfortable if she came. You'll find her trying sometimes, you'll think she's common. Oh, don't misunderstand me. She's the most wonderful mother in the world. And she's--

MRS. CROSBY. Suppose, my dear, that we take your mother for granted. (*She crosses to a position between WILLIAM and HELEN.*) Take us as you find us and we will try to be happy.

(*Enter CROSBY from door L. He is a fine-looking man of about sixty, with a pleasant personality, a good deal of charm and that masterful self-possession which sometimes marks the man of affairs. It is always evident that the most delightful intimacy exists between himself and his wife.*)

MRS. CROSBY. Well, Roscoe?

CROSBY (*moves to L.C.*). Welcome, my dear. (*HELEN crosses to him and he takes her in his arms.*)

HELEN. Oh, Mr. Crosby--I--

CROSBY (*placing HELEN L. of him with arm still around her, reaching his other hand to WILLIAM*). Bill, shake!

(*Father and son shake hands.*)

(*CROSBY looks at his wife and they laugh gently.*)

Shall I tell 'em?

MRS. CROSBY (*standing in front of table over R.*). I would.

WILLIAM (R.C.) Tell us what?

CROSBY (C.). You did this just in time. To-morrow I was going to forbid you to have anything more to do with this young woman.

HELEN (L. of CROSBY). You see!

WILLIAM. What for?

CROSBY. Your mother and I felt that you were pretty slow with your love-making----

WILLIAM. Oh, mother!

CROSBY (*continuing*).--and I knew darned well that if I interfered, you'd take the girl out and marry her.

HELEN. Oh!

WILLIAM. You old schemer!

CROSBY (*crossing over R.C. below MRS. CROSBY*). I bet it would have worked.

WILLIAM (*as CROSBY crosses R. WILLIAM slaps him on the back*). It would. (*Crosses behind HELEN to L.C.*)

(The door down L. opens and EDWARD WALES enters.)

WALES. I came ahead of the others to tell you--

CROSBY. Why, Ned, old man, you came just in time to congratulate them. (*He points toward WILLIAM and HELEN.*)

WALES. On what? (L.C.)

MRS. CROSBY. They're going to be married: isn't it fine?

WALES. Oh!

(There is a long pause.)

WILLIAM. You don't congratulate us, Mr. Wales.

WALES. No, Will, I don't. I'm not sure that I can. (*Down stage a step.*)

CROSBY. Why, Ned?

WILLIAM. I'm afraid that calls for an explanation.

WALES. Yes, I expect that it does.

(There is a long pause.)

WILLIAM. Well?

WALES. I'm sorry, but I can't explain anything until to-morrow.

MRS. CROSBY. But really, Mr. Wales, don't you think--

WALES. I think my action is almost indefensible. I'm admitting that. But I have very good reasons for what I am doing. (*He turns to CROSBY.*) Roscoe, I've been your close friend for a great many years. You've trusted me and believed in me. I'm going to ask you to wait. After all, twenty-four hours can't make any difference, and it may save you all a great deal of unhappiness.

WILLIAM (*coming to WALES a step*). This is intolerable.

CROSBY. Ned, I can't understand--

WILLIAM. Father, this is my affair.

WALES. I'm sorry.

WILLIAM. Sorry? I should think you would be.

HELEN. Billy, I told you what would happen. Mr. Wales, I don't know what you have discovered. But it's nothing of which I am ashamed, nothing.

WILLIAM. Dear, you mustn't mind what he says.

HELEN (*crossing in front of WILLIAM and moving a few steps towards WALES*). Oh, but I do, I can't bear it. Why, my mother is the most wonderful woman in the world. I won't have her attacked. Do you know what she did? When I was ten years old she sent me away from her. I was the one thing she had in the world to love and she gave me up because she thought--because she thought it was the best thing she could do for me. I was sent to a fine school, then to college, and then when I was nineteen, quite by accident, I found out that she wasn't dead, as they'd always told me, and when I went to her all she said was, "Well, my dear, I wanted to make a lady of you."

(*Turns to WILLIAM C. He takes her in his arms, then HELEN moves over to R. of him.*)

MRS. CROSBY (*in front of table R.*). I think she succeeded, my dear.

WALES (L.C.). Miss O'Neill, I didn't even know that you had a mother.

WILLIAM (C.). Then you'd better tell us now whatever your objection is.

WALES. I can tell you nothing until to-morrow. (*He turns to WILLIAM.*) Billy, I'd rather be shot than do what I'm doing. If I'm wrong I'll come to you gladly and eat dirt. I'll beg this young lady's pardon, on my knees if she likes. (*Voices and laughter heard off L.*) Now that's all I'm going to say about it until then. (*Moves up L.*)

(*The door L. opens. MARY EASTWOOD, HELEN TRENT, ELIZABETH ERSKINE, GRACE STANDISH, HOWARD STANDISH, PHILIP MASON and BRADDISH TRENT enter laughing and talking.*)

MISS EASTWOOD (*at L.C. To crowd in doorway*). And he said whose wife?

(*All laugh.*)

WILLIAM (C. HELEN *in front of table R.*). Quiet, quiet, everybody. I've got a surprise for you.

(*From the people at the door come laughter and buzz of conversation.*)

Nellie and I are going to be married.

(*Girls rush C. and congratulate HELEN. Men and WILLIAM L.C. Business ad lib., congratulating him.*)

MISS EASTWOOD (*coming to WILLIAM C.*). If you hadn't been engaged to her, she could have you arrested for the way you made eyes at her at dinner, Billy. But of course, if people will marry--why----(*She turns away R.*) I hope you will be awfully happy. (*Crosses to MR. and MRS. CROSBY down R.*)

MISS ERSKINE (*coming to WILLIAM*). Isn't it beautiful? (*Moves up to L. of chesterfield sofa.*)

MRS. TRENT (*crossing to WILLIAM and kissing him*). I'm glad, Billy, glad.

(*Moves over to STANDISH, who is down L. with TRENT. MISS STANDISH moves to front of table R.*)

(*WILLIAM and HELEN look around--see that no one is paying attention to them--WILLIAM sneaks up to door R.C., opens it and he and HELEN exit quickly. MRS. CROSBY, MR. CROSBY and MISS EASTWOOD are in front of the table R.C. TRENT, STANDISH, MRS. TRENT, MASON talking together over L. WALES up L. Conversation ad lib. until MISS EASTWOOD speaks.*)

MISS EASTWOOD (*to MRS. CROSBY*). Marriage is such an awful gamble. I know a girl who tried it four times. Billy, I do hope you---- (*Turning to C., where WILLIAM was standing.*) Why, they are gone!

(*Laughter and buzz of conversation ad lib.*)

(Miss EASTWOOD runs up to door R.C., opens it--looks in dining-room--gives a scream--closes door quickly, comes to right end of chesterfield. TRENT goes to console table L. of chesterfield, gets cigarette, lights it, and crosses to C. back of chesterfield in front of fireplace. STANDISH and MRS. TRENT move to table L. of chesterfield. WALES and MISS ERSKINE sit on chesterfield facing audience up C. MRS. CROSBY is still at upper end of table R. CROSBY talks with MISS EASTWOOD. MASON is the L. end of the chesterfield facing the audience.)

(Enter BUTLER from down L.)

BUTLER. Mrs. Crosby, the person you sent the car for has arrived.

(All turn eagerly toward him.)

WALES (rises and moves down L.C.). Can we see her now, Mrs. Crosby?

MRS. CROSBY. Certainly--Pollock, ask Madame la Grange if she will come in, please.

BUTLER. Yes, madame.

(He exits and closes the door after him.)

MISS EASTWOOD (coming down between the large table and the chesterfield). I'm perfectly thrilled. Do you suppose she expects to be taken seriously?

MISS ERSKINE. Of course.

MISS EASTWOOD (at table R.). How funny! If you don't laugh at her, we can have no end of fun. I'll gyp her terribly and she'll never know it.

MRS. CROSBY (at table R.). Oh, I wouldn't do that, Mary. She may be quite in earnest.

MISS EASTWOOD. Oh, I can't believe that. Madame la Grange! I can see her now. Tall, black-haired creature, regular adventuress, see if she isn't. Isn't she, Mr. Wales?

WALES (in front of chesterfield). She's the most remarkable woman I have ever known.

(Enter BUTLER from door L., coming well on stage.)

BUTLER. Madame la Grange.

(Enter MADAME ROSALIE LA GRANGE. She is a woman of about fifty. She speaks with a marked French accent.)

ROSALIE. Good evening everybody. (The men all rise.)

MRS. CROSBY. How do you do, Madame la Grange?

ROSALIE. I am well, I thank you, madame.

MRS. CROSBY. Do come in.

ROSALIE. Thank you, madame. (She sees WALES L.C., and goes to him.) Good evening, Mister Wales. It was kind of you to send the motor-car for me.

WALES. We wanted you to be comfortable.

ROSALIE. And I was. (She laughs and turns to MRS. CROSBY R.C.) Do you know, madame, when the gentleman in uniform come for me, I thought at first it was a policeman.

MRS. CROSBY. I hope you weren't frightened.

(The positions now are: ROSALIE C., CROSBY R. end of chesterfield C. MRS. TRENT and STANDISH have moved down L. TRENT comes to L. of arm-chair. Miss ERSKINE seated on chesterfield up C. MRS. CROSBY at table R. WALES L.C. and MASON L.C.)

ROSALIE. Oh, no, madame. I should like to see the policeman that could frighten me. They are nice boys, the

policemen.

MISS EASTWOOD (*on the R. side of ROSALIE*). Mr. Wales tells us you are wonderful.

ROSALIE. All women are.

MISS EASTWOOD (*with a meaning glance at the others*). So you tell fortunes?

ROSALIE. No, mademoiselle, I do not. I get messages from those of us that 'ave passed on. I do not 'old at all with the cards nor tea-leaves nor any of those tricks.

(*All laugh--MISS EASTWOOD loudest.*)

Once in a while I give advice. (*She turns to MISS EASTWOOD.*) If I was you, mademoiselle, I would not meet Jimmy at the Ritz at three o'clock to-morrow.

(*All laugh. MISS STANDISH crosses to chesterfield C. and sits. Miss ERSKINE rises and crosses to table R. and sits in arm-chair upper end. MASON moves up and sits on up stage chesterfield. TRENT goes to L. end of chesterfield. MISS EASTWOOD is in front of table R. ROSALIE goes to WALES L.C. CROSBY seats MRS. CROSBY down stage end of table R., then crosses back of MISS ERSKINE to upper end of table.*)

Well, sir, and how are you?

WALES. We're expecting great things from you to-night, Madame la Grange.

ROSALIE. Bien! I hope you will not be disappointed.

CROSBY (*above table R., coming C. a step*). I suppose there are a lot of tricks that---

ROSALIE (*interrupting him*). I suppose mine is the only trade in the world in which there are tricks, eh, monsieur?

MISS EASTWOOD (*coming to ROSALIE C.*). Why shouldn't I meet Jimmy at the Ritz to-morrow?

ROSALIE. If you do, something awful may 'appen to 'im.

MISS EASTWOOD. What?

ROSALIE. If you keep meeting Jimmy 'e may marry you.

(*MISS EASTWOOD moves up stage a step.*)

CROSBY (*upper end of table R.*). Would you mind telling me how you know this young lady was going to meet Jimmy at the Ritz to-morrow afternoon?

ROSALIE. She did leave 'is letter in 'er bag in the 'all, and while I wait I 'ave read it.

MISS EASTWOOD (C.). How did you know it was my bag?

ROSALIE. The stuff of the bag matches the stuff of your dress.

MRS. CROSBY (*seated below table R.*). Then it is all trickery?

ROSALIE. It is, madame, and it is not. I tell you, madame, most of the time it is tricks, with even the best of us. But there 'ave been times in my life when it was not tricks. There 'ave been things I could not understand myself, messages from them that 'ave passed on, madame. There is a power--a wonderful power--that come to us. But you never can tell when it is coming. And if you waited for it you would starve to death. So when it is not there we use tricks.

MRS. CROSBY (*seated at lower end of table at R.*). I think I understand.

ROSALIE. Do you, madame? I thought you would.

(*She moves to and puts her hand-bag on the table R. MRS. TRENT, seated below door down L., is joined by WALES. MASON is standing in front of the fireplace.*)

MISS EASTWOOD (*coming to R.C.*). Don't you think all this is dishonest!

ROSALIE (*in front of table R., turning to her*). What is dishonest in it?

MISS EASTWOOD. Tricking a lot of poor ignorant people.

ROSALIE. It is all in the way you look at it. A widow woman came to me this mornin' with a breaking 'eart for the man that was gone. I went into a trance and Laughing Eyes, my spirit control, came with a message from 'im. She said 'e was in heaven with the angels, and there was no cold nor 'unger; and the streets were paved with gold, and there was music and 'appiness everywhere. She told 'er he was thinking of 'er every day and every hour and watching and waiting for the day she would come to 'im. Now wasn't that worth fifty cents of any woman's money? And the man may be in 'ell for all I know!

TRENT (*L.C. by arm-chair*). What I can't understand is why you are telling us all this.

(MISS EASTWOOD *moves to the chesterfield C.*)

MRS. TRENT (*seated over L. by door*). If we know you are fooling---

ROSALIE (*going to TRENT*). Did not Mr. Wales tell you?

WALES (*L.C.*). I've told them nothing.

(MASON *drops down R. of chesterfield, STANDISH down L. CROSBY is R. end of chesterfield C.*)

ROSALIE (*C.*). Well, tell them now, if you please, sir. (*Moves to and sits upper end of table and takes off her gloves.*)

WALES (*down L.*). As I told you some time ago, Madame la Grange has done a lot of things that we can't explain--- when I asked her to come here to-night, she said she would under certain conditions.

MASON (*between chesterfield and table*). You mean test conditions?

WALES. Not exactly. What she said was that no money should pass between us, and that whatever she did, she would be honest.

MASON (*very eagerly, and moving towards ROSALIE*). You mean that you won't play any tricks?

ROSALIE. If I do, I will tell you.

MISS EASTWOOD (*seated on chesterfield C.*). Of course we understand all about spirit rappings.

ROSALIE. You do, eh?

STANDISH (*down L.*). Well, rather.

(CROSBY *sits R. end of chesterfield.*)

ROSALIE. Well, well, what do you think of that?

MISS EASTWOOD. You have to be near a table or something like that and---

ROSALIE. Maybe a chair or a desk would do?

MISS EASTWOOD. And then in the dark---

ROSALIE. But of course in the dark. And you get one rap for yes and two raps for no. (*There is a short pause. ROSALIE rises, comes down C. and says:*) Are those spirits near?

(*All laugh.*)

STANDISH. Oh, no, don't.

(*One rap is heard from the back of the fireplace.*)

(*Little laugh.*)

MISS EASTWOOD. But--(*Rising and coming down L.C. a step.*)

MASON. Oh, please keep still--

(They gather a little closer around ROSALIE.)

ROSALIE. Is it Laughing Eyes?

(One rap is heard--still louder.)

And you cannot talk to me in the light?

(One rap.)

Are you 'appy?

(MRS. TRENT rises.)

(Two raps again.)

Is there someone here you do not like?

(One rap.)

A gentleman?

(Two raps.)

Dear, dear, a lady?

(One rap.)

(She points to MISS EASTWOOD.)

Is it that one?

(One rap.)

Laughing Eyes she do not like you.

(General laugh.)

MASON (R.C.). That's the most wonderful thing I ever heard.

STANDISH *(down L.)*. Oh, I don't think---

MASON. It couldn't be a trick. She just stood there. I watched her hands every minute.

(TRENT goes to arm-chair L.C.)

ROSALIE. You did watch the wrong end of me. I 'ave a wooden sole in my shoe. *(She lifts her skirt and shows that she has taken one foot from her slipper.)* You do it with your foot. Like this. *(Laughingly.)* It is a trick.

(MISS EASTWOOD goes to WALES L.C. MRS. TRENT moves up to armchair L.C. STANDISH up to L. end of chesterfield, and then by the back of chesterfield to R.C., CROSBY C. MRS. CROSBY is seated at table R.)

MASON (R.C.). Then if we get any messages--

ROSALIE. If you get any messages? Well, sir, I am telling you the truth now. Most of the time it is a fake. With me as with the others. But to-night there will be no fake. I am a stranger to all of you except to Mr. Wales. I do not know who live in this 'ouse. I do not know the name of any one of you. Mr. Wales told me he wanted me to come 'ere, he said he would send for me. *(Moves to R. end of chesterfield.)* But 'e did not tell me one word about any of you;

WALES (*down L.*). That is quite true.

TRENT (*by arm-chair L.C.*). You haven't given her a hint of any sort?

WALES (*L.*). On my word of honour.

MASON (*above table R.*). Madame la Grange.

ROSALIE. Yes, sir?

MASON. I know a man who saw Palladino lift a table just by putting her hands on it.

(*ROSALIE points to a small console table R. end of settee--it has a lamp on it. MISS EASTWOOD is at the L. end of chesterfield.*)

ROSALIE (*putting hand-bag on chair above table R.*). Will someone please take the lamp off that table? And will you bring it to me 'ere?

(*MISS STANDISH moves to and takes the lamp and holds it. MASON brings console table to ROSALIE who comes down C.--the wide side of the table to audience. ROSALIE puts her hands on table with her thumbs under its edge and lifts the table and turns right and left.*)

You mean like that?

MASON. Yes, I suppose that was it.

ROSALIE. In the dark you would not 'ave noticed my thumbs.

(*All laugh. Miss ERSKINE is seated at the back of the table over R.*)

But it can be done, it can be done. I do not say that I can do it in the light, but if you want I will try.

ALL. Oh, yes, yes, of course, please do--yes, yes!

MASON. You mean without any trickery?

ROSALIE (*getting back of console table. Turning table around--narrow side to audience*). I mean like this.

(*She places the tips of the fingers of both hands on the C. of the table and stands rigid for a few moments. No one speaks. All watch her with breathless interest. Slowly the table tips a little to one side, and then tips in the opposite direction. Then it slowly rises about a foot from the floor, and then drops suddenly and falls over. There is a long pause.*)

MASON (*R. of small table*). Good Lord!

WALES (*L.C., quietly*). What did I tell you?

(*There is a long pause, all turn towards ROSALIE to see what she will do next. MASON takes console table back to its place to the R. end of the chesterfield. TRENT and MRS. TRENT are over L. STANDISH and CROSBY C.*)

ROSALIE (*C.*). Now you all do know what I can do, but I can trick you too; so you will 'ave to take my word for it that I will not. I am not making to you any promises. I will go into the trance for you and it will be the real trance and not a fake. My spirit does control a little girl named Laughing Eyes.

CROSBY. Are you asking us to believe that the spirit of a dead child---

ROSALIE (*C.*). To them that believe there is no death. Your own religion teaches you that.

CROSBY. But not that the spirits of the dead can come back to earth.

ROSALIE (*moves to chair upper end of table R. CROSBY crosses to R. end of chesterfield*). Monsieur should go and read the Bible. I am not going to argue with any of you. I did not come 'ere for argument. Most of you do not believe. You are all of little faith; it is 'ard to get messages then. Perhaps it would be best if I did go. (*Crosses to L.C. STANDISH has moved to the back of table R.*)

MRS. CROSBY (*at table R.*). Oh, no, please stay.

ROSALIE (*after hesitating*). Madame, I will be glad to.

(WILLIAM and HELEN enter R.C.)

TRENT (*down L. of arm-chair*). And you're willing to submit to our conditions?

ROSALIE. Of course, anything in reason--I---

HELEN (*coming down R.C.*). Why!

(*At the sound of a new voice ROSALIE turns. She gives a little start, and then moves quickly to HELEN C.*)

ROSALIE. Wait! Something is coming to me. Please--not anyone to speak!

(*All laugh.*)

(*She is close to HELEN and looks at her.*) It is a message. Give me your 'and, mademoiselle.

(*HELEN in a good deal of confusion gives ROSALIE her hand. ROSALIE stands and holds it. Her eyes are closed.*)

There is nothing but 'appiness coming to you. The spirits tell me you are the favourite child of fortune.

(WILLIAM comes down to R.C.)

You will 'ave wealth and prosperity and 'appiness. You will marry the man you love, and you will be 'appy all your life,

(*WALES goes up L. TRENT comes to ROSALIE a step. ROSALIE turns to the others.*)

There is something I want to tell 'er just for 'erself. She is so young, we must spare her modesty.

(*MRS. TRENT goes up L. TRENT, MISS EASTWOOD, and WALES go up L.C. ROSALIE brings HELEN down L. WILLIAM joins CROSBY and MRS. CROSBY. MISS ERSKINE and STANDISH are at the back of table R.*)

(*The following lines are spoken by HELEN and ROSALIE in an undertone.*)

HELEN. Mother!

ROSALIE. My darling, I did not know. They just brought me here. You know I would not 'ave come for anything in the world if I 'ad known.

(*HELEN starts to break away. ROSALIE clutches her.*)

Don't tell them, dear, don't 'ave me shame you before all your wonderful friends. I will go in one minute--I will get away from the 'ouse the first minute I can.

HELEN. But, mother, there's no shame. I'm proud----

ROSALIE. Tell them afterwards if you must tell them, but let me get away before you do so. (*In her normal voice again.*) Remember now, mademoiselle, all the love in the world is 'anging above you and praying for your 'appiness. Do not let it go for the love of 'Eaven.

(*Buzz of conversation. ROSALIE turns to WALES L. HELEN stands looking after her. WILLIAM comes to HELEN B.C.*)

WILLIAM. What did she tell you?

HELEN. You heard most of it. I'll tell you the rest later.

(WILLIAM and HELEN go up R.C.)

ROSALIE. I think I 'ad better go from 'ere.

(MISS EASTWOOD *and* TRENT *come down* L.)

WALES. That's absurd. (*To the others.*) Madame la Grange wants to call off the seance.

MISS EASTWOOD (*down* L.). I thought she might.

(MASON *above table* R.)

ROSALIE. Did you really, miss?

MRS. CROSBY. Oh, won't you please stay?

(WILLIAM *and* HELEN R.C. MISS ERSKINE *above table* R.)

ROSALIE (*coming* C.). I am afraid I cannot, madame. I am not feeling right. I am not just myself, madame.

WALES (L.C.). Really, Madame la Grange? I'm afraid under the circumstances----

ROSALIE (*getting hand-bag from chair*). I am very sorry, but I must go from 'ere.

MISS EASTWOOD (*moving* L. *of* ROSALIE). I think it's a shame to bother her. And I think she's quite right to go. Her sort of tricks aren't for people of intelligence.

HELEN. Oh, won't you please stay? (*To ROSALIE now* C.)

ROSALIE. I must not.

HELEN. Won't you as a great favour to me?

ROSALIE. Well, miss, since you ask it, I will stay.

(MISS EASTWOOD *laughs*. *She and* TRENT *go up* L. CROSBY *is by chesterfield* C. MASON *below table* R. MRS. CROSBY *is seated at lower end of table*. MRS. TRENT *comes to arm-chair* L.C. *and sits*.)

MRS. CROSBY. I'm very glad. Really I'm greatly interested.

ROSALIE (*crosses* R.). Thank you, madame.

CROSBY (*coming down* C.). I think after what we've seen, we must ask Madame la Grange to submit to certain conditions.

ROSALIE. Anything at all, sir--anything at all.

MASON (*down* R.). I agree with you. Frankly this woman impresses me. I think this test should be taken seriously.

(MISS EASTWOOD *at the* L. *end of the chesterfield*, *laughs*.)

WALES (L.C.). Just what I was going to say.

CROSBY (R.C.). If you will submit to the conditions we impose, Madame la Grange, and then show us any manifestations, I will never scoff at anything again.

ROSALIE. Scoffing is the easiest thing anybody can do.

(CROSBY *crosses down* R. *below table*.)

If I could stop that even in one person, it would be a good thing. What is it that you do want?

CROSBY. I want the window fastened.

MASON. That's the idea.

CROSBY (*coming in front of table* R.). Then we will have the doors locked. Will that be all right?

ROSALIE. Oh, certainly all right.

MISS EASTWOOD (*coming down L.C.*). At the risk of seeming unnecessarily sceptical, I'm going to suggest that we search Madame la Grange--that is, of course, if she's willing.

(MISS ERSKINE and MISS STANDISH are at back of table R.)

ROSALIE (C.). But why not? There are no 'oles in my stockings.

(*All laugh.*)

MASON (*down R.*). I suppose it's going to be difficult for you to get results if we are all so antagonistic, Madame la Grange?

(MISS EASTWOOD goes up L.C.)

ROSALIE. It is, sir, and it is not. If there is any who wants to communicate with any 'ere, maybe they can reach us. I do not know. I do not understand you. I showed you all the tricks; would I have done that, if I wanted to--to--fool you? Certainly I would not. Then why will you not believe that I am 'onest?

WALES (*down L.*). I'm sure Madame la Grange is perfectly honest. We've made certain stipulations to which she has agreed. I think we've discussed matters enough already. We're ready if you are, Madame la Grange.

ROSALIE. I am ready.

(CROSBY looks at window fastenings R.)

MRS. CROSBY (*seated at table over R.*). Do you know, I don't believe it will be necessary to subject Madame la Grange to being searched. I'm quite sure we can spare her that indignity.

ROSALIE. I do not mind if you fine ladies will not be shocked at seeing my plain lingerie.

(WALES moves up L. General laugh. Miss ERSKINE joins WILLIAM and HELEN R.C.)

MRS. CROSBY (*moving to L. of ROSALIE C.*). Come with me then, please. I'm sure we won't be shocked. (*Aside to ROSALIE.*) I wear that kind myself.

ROSALIE. Truly, madame?

(*They go to door L.*)

MRS. CROSBY (*at door L.*), We shan't be long.

ROSALIE (*at door L.*). Madame, would you mind if all the ladies come? Then they will all be sure I am concealing nothing.

(*The ladies all talk together and go out L. WALES closes the door down L. CROSBY comes from back of table R. to chesterfield.*)

WILLIAM (*by table R.*). Do you really want that window fastened?

(STANDISH is behind the chair below the table R.)

WALES (L.C. CROSBY and TRENT sit on corner of chesterfield). I don't care.

MASON (*at table R.*). I'd like to make the test that way. I've a queer feeling about that woman. I believe she really has power of some sort. I know it seems funny, but--well, you all saw her lift that table. I watched her carefully. There was no trick about it at all. I'm sure of it.

CROSBY. All right then. You fasten the window. Billy, you and Brad go and get some chairs out of the dining-room. We'll need a lot.

(WALES walks up and down L. of stage. WILLIAM and TRENT go out door R.C.)

You put them in a circle, don't you? (*Begins to place chairs in a circle C. The chair L. of the fireplace is brought*

down and placed in front of the chesterfield.) What are you going to do, Wales? Ask her a lot of questions?

WALES (L.). I'm going to try to find out who killed Spencer Lee.

CROSBY. Still harping on the murder of Spencer Lee?

(STANDISH *places the chairs above and below the table in the circle, then the chair on the R. side of the fireplace in the circle.*)

WALES. Yes.

MASON (*over R.--opening window curtains and raising window blind*). Who was Spencer Lee?

WALES. The best friend I ever had.

(TRENT and WILLIAM *enter door R.C., each carrying two chairs. They bring them down R.C. and exit R.C.*)

STANDISH (*placing chairs C. with backs to audience*). We all knew Lee pretty well. And I know he was no good.

WALES (*moving to L.C., outside the circle*). You mustn't talk like that about him, Standish!

CROSBY (*inside the circle and coming down C.*). The man's dead: why not let him rest in peace?

(STANDISH *outside of circle L.C. seat.*)

STANDISH. I didn't bring up the matter, you know, and I don't want to hurt Ned's feelings, but I know that the police found a lot of compromising letters and rotten things of that sort.

(WILLIAM and TRENT *re-enter from R.C., each carrying two chairs. WILLIAM crosses and places two chairs R. side of circle then goes back to close the door.*)

WALES (L.C.). I don't care what they found, or what anyone thinks of Lee: he was my best friend, and if I can find out who killed him I'm going to do it. It was a damned brutal murder, stabbed in the back, poor chap, with never a chance to fight for his life. (*Moves over L.*)

MASON (*by table R.*). I don't seem to remember anything about the case.

WALES. It happened before you got back from France--no, by Jove, it didn't either. It was a day or two after. I remember you and I had lunch together the day you got home and I had dinner that night with Spencer. Funny you don't remember anything about it.

(WILLIAM *sits R. in circle.*)

MASON. Well, of course, I must have seen it in the papers, but I don't go in much for crimes, and not knowing the man I wasn't interested.

STANDISH (*sitting in circle L.C.*). It was a good deal of a sensation. The man knew a lot of nice people. Came here a good deal, didn't he, Mr. Crosby?

CROSBY (*sitting in circle up C.*). At one time. But after Helen married he rather dropped out of it. Fact is, until Trent here appeared on the scene he was always hanging around.

(TRENT *comes down and sits in R. side of circle.*)

STANDISH. Funny they never found out who killed him.

WALES (*standing outside of circle, L. side*). They may not. They haven't stopped trying.

MASON (*seated on table R.*). Oh, are the police still interested?

WALES. Yes, they're interested. As a matter of fact there's a reward of five thousand dollars for the discovery of the murderers.

STANDISH. Are you sure of that?

WALES. I offered it.

TRENT. You?

WALES. Yes. What sort of a man do you think I am? Do you expect me to sit still and let the murderers of Spencer Lee go free? Why, I'd known the man all his life. We were the closest friends.

WILLIAM. But if he was the kind of a man that Standish says--

WALES. I don't give a damn what he was. He was my friend, and I'm never going to rest till I find out who killed him.

TRENT. But.

WALES. I wouldn't care so much if they'd given the poor devil half a chance for his life, but they stabbed him in the back.

MASON. Wasn't there any indication--

WALES. There wasn't a thing to show who did it, or how it was done. A knife-wound between the shoulder-blades and no knife ever found. Nothing stolen, nothing disturbed. The police have found out that a young woman called to see him that afternoon, two or three hours before his body was discovered. That's all that we know.

TRENT (*with a laugh--still seated in circle*). And now you're going to try spiritualism?

WALES. Why not? (*There is a pause.*) Do any of you object?

TRENT. Certainly not. I'm rather for it.

MASON (*rises, still on L. of table R.*). You are doing this seriously? This is not a joke?

WALES. Quite seriously. (*There is a pause.*) Well, why won't somebody laugh?

CROSBY. My dear fellow, why should anyone laugh? This queer old woman may have powers of which we know nothing at all. Personally, I haven't much belief in that sort of thing, but I'm not going to laugh at it. (*Rise.*) Neither am I going to have any trickery, or if there is any I'm going to expose it.

WALES (*over L.*). That's perfectly fair.

CROSBY. You've been at her seances, or whatever they call them, before?

WALES. Yes.

CROSBY. In the dark?

WALES. Invariably.

CROSBY. I may want light. (*He turns to his son.*) Billy, if I call for lights you give them to me. Don't wait for anything. Understand?

WILLIAM. Perfectly, dad.

(*WILLIAM goes up to small table R. of chesterfield. Brings table with lamp on it down to his chair and the chair next to it in the circle.*)

CROSBY (*still in circle*). That's all right then.

(*The door L. opens. MRS. CROSBY enters, followed by MADAME LA GRANGE and the other ladies. WALES moves to R.C. outside circle, STANDISH to upper end of table R., TRENT to L. side of circle.*)

MRS. CROSBY. I think it wasn't fair of us.

ROSALIE. Oh, madame, I did not mind.

(*MRS. CROSBY crosses back of chesterfield to up R.C.*)

MISS EASTWOOD (*down L.*). I can assure you there isn't anything up her sleeve.

ROSALIE. Well, what did you expect? Burglar's tools?

(MISS EASTWOOD goes up to L. end of chesterfield. MRS. TRENT closes door down L. She and HELEN move up L. with Miss STANDISH.)

WALES (*over R.*). Madame la Grange, we've fastened the windows.

(TRENT, STANDISH, ERSKINE by console table L. of chesterfield.)

ROSALIE. That is right. You cannot be too careful, eh?

CROSBY. And now, if you don't mind, I'm going to lock the doors and keep the keys in my pocket.

ROSALIE. Anything you do wish, sir. It is all the same to me.

(Goes inside circle and sits down up C. in circle.)

MASON (R.C.). May I see that it's done, Mr. Crosby?

CROSBY (L.C., with a laugh). Can't you trust me?

MASON. It isn't that--I--well, I just want to be sure. To see for myself.

CROSBY. Lock that one yourself, then. (*Indicating door R.C. MASON goes to and locks the door. CROSBY goes to door L.C., locks it, takes out the key and puts it in his pocket.*) Better try it, Mason. (*MASON crosses to door L.C.--shows it is locked.*) Now well do this one. (*He starts to door down L. Then stops suddenly.*) No, I've got a better way than this. My dear, will you ring for Pollock?

MRS. CROSBY (*upper end of table R.*). What are you going to do now?

CROSBY. Wait and see. (*To ROSALIE.*) You don't object to this?

ROSALIE. Oh, no, sir.

(BUTLER enters from door L.--comes well on stage.)

CROSBY. Oh, Pollock, I want you to put these keys in your pocket. (*Hands them to him. POLLOCK puts them in his waistcoat pocket.*)

POLLOCK. Yes, sir.

CROSBY (L.C.). Now then, I want you to take the key out of that door, and lock it on the outside, understand?

POLLOCK. Perfectly, sir.

CROSBY. Then take the key from the lock and put that one in your pocket also, after that you are to stand outside that door, and you are not to unlock it until I tell you to. Understand?

POLLOCK. Yes, sir, I'm to lock this door on the outside, keep the key in my pocket, and then stay just outside, and not open it for anyone until you tell me.

CROSBY. Exactly. (*General buzz of conversation. POLLOCK goes to the door L., takes out the key and exits, closing the door after him. The key is heard turning in the lock.*) Now then, Mason, you'd better try that door, too. (*MASON goes over and tries the door L. CROSBY follows him. Speaking through the door L.*) Are you there, Pollock?

POLLOCK (*outside.*) Yes, sir.

CROSBY. And the keys are in your pocket?

POLLOCK. Quite so, sir.

CROSBY. Now we're ready, Madame la Grange.

ROSALIE. Then please you will all sit in a circle and hold hands.

MISS ERSKINE. Hold hands! I'm going to love this.

(All laugh.)

MASON (*moving down to a chair on the L. of the circle*). How shall we sit? I mean, do you want us in any particular order?

ROSALIE. Any way at all.

WILLIAM. I'll sit here. (*Takes chair and sits in reach of lamp on table R.C.*)

ROSALIE. Any way will do.

(HELEN and MRS. TRENT *come down L.*)

(*They all sit in a circle in the following order: ROSALIE, C.; CROSBY L. of ROSALIE; MISS ERSKINE, MISS STANDISH, TRENT, MISS EASTWOOD; MASON; HELEN; MRS. TRENT; STANDISH and MRS. CROSBY; WILLIAM sits on ROSALIE'S right side. This will bring WALES sitting at C. with his back to the audience. ROSALIE directly opposite up stage facing him. The thirteen chairs in the circle consist of two brought from the fireplace, two from the table R., eight from the room R.C., and the armchair L.C., which is moved C. and used by ROSALIE. As they are being seated there is a general buzz of conversation as follows:--*)

MISS ERSKINE. I'm to sit next to you, Mr. Crosby.

CROSBY. I've always wanted to hold your hand, my dear.

MRS. CROSBY. Don't trust him, Daisy.

MISS ERSKINE. I won't, Mrs. Crosby.

MISS STANDISH. I'll chaperone them.

MASON (*to HELEN*). Will you sit by me?

TRENT. I'll take this place then.

MISS EASTWOOD. I'm really getting quite a thrill. (*ROSALIE laughs.*) What's the joke, Madame la Grange?

(*MRS. TRENT moves outside of circle to R.C., then sits.*)

ROSALIE. I did not know anything could give to you a thrill.

MISS EASTWOOD. You don't like me, do you, Madame la Grange?

ROSALIE. Oh, mademoiselle, I am indeed very fond of you.

WALES (*standing below circle R.C.*). I think we're all ready.

(*The others are all seated and WALES is about to sit down.*)

MISS ERSKINE (*counting hurriedly*). Oh! There are thirteen of us. Don't sit there, Mr. Wales.

WALES. Oh, I don't mind those little superstitions. (*Sits down stage side of circle between HELEN and MRS. TRENT.*)

MRS. CROSBY. What do we do now?

ROSALIE. Now, will you please all join your 'ands, and then sit very, very quiet. Do not try to think of anything.

TRENT. By Jove, that'll be easy for me.

(*The others laugh.*)

WALES. We can't get any results if you treat this as a joke.

(*All laugh.*)

STANDISH. Oh, let's be serious.

MISS ERSKINE. Why, Howard?

STANDISH. Well, there might be something in it. Anyhow, it's only fair to do what Madame la Grange wants. I suppose you'd like the lights out? I've always understood that was necessary.

ROSALIE. We shall 'ave better results in that way.

CROSBY. Right! (*He rises, goes to door L., and switches off light. This leaves only the two table lamps R. and L. of the chesterfield C. still lit. All other lights on scene out. Crosses back to his chair--turns out table lamp L. of chesterfield.*) Billy, you turn out that light as soon as we are ready.

WILLIAM. Right you are, dad.

ROSALIE. That is all, then. Now you are not to be afraid if I cry or moan when I do go into a trance. I am not in pain or anything like that. I do not even know that I do such things, but I 'ave been told that it sometime 'appen. My spirit control is a sweet little child named Laughing Eyes. When she begins to talk you can ask 'er anything you do want. If she do not answer you she do not want to talk to you. Then whoever it is speaking must let someone else try. That is all, ladies and gentlemen. (*She settles back in her chair.*) Now then, sir, please to put out that light.

(*WILLIAM turns off the light, and the stage is in darkness all but spots on ceiling.*)

CROSBY. That won't do. Billy, pull down the blind, that light on the ceiling is too strong.

(*WILLIAM turns on light, crosses R., pulls blind down and closes curtains, then resumes his seat and puts light out.*

ROSALIE rises, crosses back of circle to the back of MISS EASTWOOD'S chair. There is a pause. Suddenly MISS EASTWOOD screams shrilly.)

MISS EASTWOOD. There's a hand on my face. There's a hand on my face!

CROSBY. Will, the light!

(*The light on the table goes up, showing WILLIAM leaning back in his chair with one hand on the switch, the other is tightly clasped in his father's hand. ROSALIE is seen standing behind MISS EASTWOOD, with her hand resting on MISS EASTWOOD'S cheek.*)

(*They all start to speak.*)

MRS. TRENT. It's a trick.

ROSALIE. Yes, it is a trick. (*They stop and stare at her. Her manner is commanding, and a little stern.*) I was going to ask you to tie my 'ands to the arm of the chair, but I thought I would show you this first.

MASON. I don't see how you did it--even now.

ROSALIE (*standing outside of circle L.*). Things 'appen in the dark. The sense of touch is not much developed except in those who are blind. When this young gentleman did let go my 'and to turn out the light, I did take my other 'and away from Mr. Crosby and when we joined 'ands again the two gentlemen were 'olding 'ands as comfortable as you please. And I was free. It is an old trick. All the mediums do use it. Anyone can do it. (*She moves back to her chair and sits.*) Now, if someone will tie me in, we will go on.

MASON. How do we know that you can't get free even then?

ROSALIE. Tie me so that I cannot.

CROSBY (*rising*). I'll see to that. I want something strong.

MASON. Take handkerchiefs, they are strong enough. (*Takes handkerchief.*)

CROSBY. They'll do very well. (*Takes out his own.*) I want three more.

WILLIAM. Here's mine. (*Hands his handkerchief to his father. MASON and TRENT give CROSBY theirs.*)

CROSBY. Now, Madame la Grange, if you don't mind. (*He ties her hands to the arm of the chair.*) I don't see why you did that just now.

ROSALIE. I told you I wanted to be sure.

CROSBY. Why?

ROSALIE. Because I think something is going to happen. I think there will be manifestations. I wanted you to know I was not faking.

MISS EASTWOOD. Why should we think that you were?

ROSALIE. Why, you have thought nothing else ever since I did come into the room.

CROSBY. Mason, see if she can get free from that now.

(MASON comes over; inspects the knot. CROSBY tying the other hand.)

MASON. That seems pretty secure--someone else look at it.

(WILLIAM and TRENT rise and go to ROSALIE'S chair.)

CROSBY. I'm going to fasten your ankles now, Madame la Grange.

ROSALIE. Yes, that is right.

(CROSBY ties ROSALIE'S ankles to leg of chair. The other two men look on.)

WALES. I don't believe all this is necessary.

ROSALIE. Why not, if they do want it.

CROSBY. Now I'm sure she can't get away.

(MASON inspects knot.)

MASON. So am I.

(The men resume their places.)

ROSALIE. Well, now, if you will all sit down, please---- (Pause.) You will have to reach over and take my hands this time--are you all satisfied now? Is there anything more you want me to do? (There is no answer.) Then if you will all sit quiet, just keep your minds perfectly free, that is all you have to do. Now, sir, please to turn out the light.

(WILLIAM turns out the light.)

(There is a long pause. ROSALIE moans and whispers as if in pain.)

HELEN. I can't stand this, I----

WALES. Please keep still--she asked us to keep still.

(ROSALIE moans again; after a short pause, she gives a choking sob; another pause. Finally she speaks with frequent pauses, using the voice of a little child.)

ROSALIE. Laughing Eyes is sad, very sad. I am a long way off--a long way. (Pause.) Bad people, bad people, unhappy--he is unhappy---- (Pause.) (Knife is set down in sight of audience, sticking in the ceiling.) Spencer wants to tell Ned---- (She moans heavily.) It hurts--terrible--like a knife--it burns--burns, in the back---

(A man's voice from the chesterfield, facing fireplace, speaks:)

VOICE. Ned, I want Ned--why in Hell doesn't Ned answer?

ROSALIE (in child's voice). He wants to talk to Ned--is Ned here?

STANDISH. Ned who? Who is it? Who does he want to speak to?

ROSALIE (in child's voice). Tell Ned it is Spencer--Spencer wants to tell Ned about the letters and the pain in the back--in the back.

STANDISH. What was in the back? *(There is no answer.)* Ask him what was in the back?

ROSALIE *(still using child's voice)*. The knife--Ned--he wants Ned.

WALES. What do you want!

ROSALIE. A swimming pool--do not forget the swimming pool. Do not ever forget----

WALES. You mean the time he went in after me when I was drowning? When we were little boys? Is that what he wants me to remember?

ROSALIE. Spencer says he cannot rest--he wants to tell you it is hard to reach--too far away--you promised--

WALES. Promised what? When did I promise!

ROSALIE. Your life saved----

WALES. Now I know--I told him I'd do anything in the world for him. Spencer, of course, I remember--what do you want me to do?

ROSALIE. Find--find----

WALES. Do you want me to find the letters?

ROSALIE. In the back--someone came--someone came.

WALES. You're trying to tell who killed you?

ROSALIE. Ask--ask--ask.

WALES. You want me to ask questions? Is that it? You mean you can't talk much?

ROSALIE. Too far away.

CROSBY. You know who killed you?

(There is a pause, but no answer.)

ROSALIE. He says Ned, he wants Ned.

WALES. You want me to ask.

ROSALIE. He wants Ned to ask.

WALES. Do you know who killed you?

MRS. TRENT *(hysterically)*. Oh, my God!

CROSBY. Keep still, Helen.

WALES. Can you tell the name? *(ROSALIE suddenly gives a long moan.)* Quick, the name, the name. Spencer, tell me who killed you--she's coming out of her trance. I want the name. *(ROSALIE moans again. Her cry is overtopped by a shriek from WALES.)* Oh, my God! My back--oh! *(Then there is a dead silence that lasts as long as it will hold.)*

CROSBY. Wales, is anything the matter?

MRS. TRENT. Father, he's pulling at my hand.

CROSBY. The light, Will.

(WILLIAM suddenly turns on the light at table. WALES is discovered leaning forward, the circle is unbroken.)

MRS. TRENT. Look at him! Father! Look at him!

(CROSBY drops ROSALIE'S hand and springs forward towards WALES. At the same instant WALES falls forward on his face to the floor. The others all rise, chairs are knocked over in the confusion which follows.)

CROSBY. Stand back, please. *(The others move back a little. CROSBY leans over WALES.)* Why, he--why--it's

impossible.

MRS. CROSBY. Roscoe, look at your hand.

(CROSBY looks at his hand, takes out his handkerchief and wipes it hurriedly, then crosses suddenly to the door L. ROSALIE has come out of her trance and sits staring at WALES as he lies on the floor in front of her. The two figures are thrown out from the shadows of the room by the light on the table at the back of MADAME LA GRANGE. The rest of the room is in semi-darkness. TRENT kneels by WALES' body.)

CROSBY. Pollock! Pollock!

POLLOCK (outside). Yes, sir.

(TRENT turns WALES' body over on back.)

CROSBY. Get on the 'phone at once and call up Police Headquarters. Get Inspector Donohue if you can. Tell him to come to the house at once.

POLLOCK. Very good, sir.

(CROSBY turns away from the door, and faces the others who have followed him over.)

WILLIAM. Father, what do you suppose it is? Are you sure that---

MRS. TRENT. It can't be. He was talking and---

MRS. CROSBY. Roscoe, are you sure? Hadn't we better send for a doctor?

(TRENT is leaning over WALES' body on the floor.)

TRENT. It's no use. He's dead.

CROSBY. Murdered!

TRENT (rises). What?

CROSBY. Mr. Wales was stabbed in the back, just as Spencer Lee was stabbed in the back.

STANDISH. Just as he was asking--just when he was trying to find out who--

(There is a knock on the door down L.)

CROSBY. What is it?

POLLOCK (outside of door). Inspector Donohue was at the Fifty-first Street Station, sir. He's on his way here. (There is a pause). Shall I unlock the door, sir?

CROSBY. No--not until the Inspector tells you.

CURTAIN.

ACT II

Ten minutes later.

Discovered:--CROSBY standing by the door L. ROSALIE still tied in chair. Dummy supposed to represent WALES' body, covered by a piece of drapery, has been placed on chesterfield facing fireplace up C.

MRS. TRENT seated below console table L. end of chesterfield.

MISS EASTWOOD *seated at R. end of console table R. of chesterfield, rattling book leaves.*

STANDISH *standing over R. below table.*

MISS STANDISH *is sitting L.C.*

HELEN--WILLIAM--*standing above table R.*

MRS. CROSBY *seated L. next to ROSALIE. MISS ERSKINE seated next to MRS. CROSBY, tapping the sides of the chair with her fingers. MASON in front of fireplace C., looking at WALES' body. Eventually he moves to MISS EASTWOOD and takes the book away from her.*

TRENT *walking up stage L. as curtain rises. All lamps alight.*

The arrangement of the chairs for this act is detailed at the end of the play.

MRS. TRENT *(rising and moving to CROSBY).* Father, please let me go to my room.

CROSBY. It is impossible, my dear.

TRENT. But, Mr. Crosby---- *(Comes down to CROSBY L.)*

CROSBY *(interrupting him).* It's quite impossible.

(MRS. TRENT goes to and sits in chair up L., followed by TRENT, who stands R. side of her. WILLIAM sits back of table R. HELEN sits above table R.)

STANDISH *(below table over R.).* Mr. Crosby, I must----

CROSBY. Mr. Standish, I just refused to let my own daughter leave the room.

(Slight pause.)

STANDISH. But don't you see, sir----

CROSBY. My dear Standish, poor Wales was killed by someone in this room. We are all of us under suspicion. Everyone of us. *(Slight movement from all.)* It's an awful thing to say--but one of us in this room has killed Wales. Which one of us?

(Knock on door down L.)

CROSBY. Yes.

POLLOCK *(outside).* The police are here, sir.

CROSBY. Who is it?

DONOHUE *(outside).* Inspector Donohue.

CROSBY. Pollock, give Inspector Donohue all the keys.

POLLOCK *(outside).* Yes, sir.

(There is a pause.)

DONOHUE *(outside).* What is all this?

POLLOCK *(outside).* I don't know, I'm sure. I was told to lock the door. I don't know what's been going on inside. Then I was told to call you. This is the right key for that door.

(The noise of the key being put into the lock can be heard, then the click as it is turned in the lock, then the door is opened, and INSPECTOR DONOHUE in plain clothes comes well on stage L. He is seen to be a clean-cut, intelligent-looking man of fifty. It later develops that he is reserved and extremely quiet in manner. He speaks like a gentleman and acts like one. SERGEANT DUNN enters also and drops below door L.)

DONOHUE. Where's Mr. Wales?

CROSBY (L.C.). How did you know that Wales----

DONOHUE (*L. of CROSBY, interrupting him*). I don't know anything. I was thinking of something else. I was told that I was wanted here in a hurry.

CROSBY. Queer your asking for Wales. Mr. Wales is dead; that's why I sent for you.

DONOHUE. Wales is what?

CROSBY. Wales is dead.

MISS EASTWOOD (*still seated R.C.*). Yes, and if you ask me----

DONOHUE. Just a minute, please, miss. (*He turns to CROSBY*) It must have been very sudden. Why, only this afternoon I---- Did he ask you to send for me?

CROSBY (L.C.). Inspector, you don't seem to understand. Mr. Wales was murdered in this room not fifteen minutes ago.

(Other characters keep the same positions as when the curtain rose.)

DONOHUE (*his manner changing abruptly*). Mike! That door! (*SERGEANT DUNN closes door L. and stands in front of it.*) Where have you taken him?

CROSBY (*pointing to the chesterfield C.*). There.

(DONOHUE goes up L. end of chesterfield to C. and stands looking down on the body. There is a long pause, and then slowly raising his head looks with terrible deliberation at each person in the room. MASON moves to R. end of chesterfield.)

DONOHUE. Who did this?

CROSBY. We don't know.

DONOHUE (*very quietly*). Then I expect we'll have to find out. (*He comes down by the R. end of the chesterfield and stops when he sees ROSALIE. He gives a short laugh as he sees how she is tied to the chair.*) What's this?

MRS. CROSBY (*rises*). Good Heavens, we forgot to untie her! I'm so sorry.

ROSALIE. Thank you, madame. I am quite comfortable. I will stay as I am if you do not mind.

MRS. CROSBY. But--

DONOHUE. I think we'll leave things as they are for the present.

(MRS. CROSBY resumes the same seat as before.)

ROSALIE. A policeman with brains! Oh, la-la!

DONOHUE. Let's see if he can't use them then. (*Moving to CROSBY down L.C. and standing on his R. side.*) Now, Mr. Crosby, tell me exactly what happened.

CROSBY. I know it sounds foolish, but we were having a spiritualistic seance. Madame la Grange is a medium.

DONOHUE. I see.

CROSBY. We were sitting in the dark, in a circle, you know, holding hands. Suddenly Wales cried out. I called to my son to turn on the light. He did so. Wales was leaning forward in his chair. His hands were in those of the people he sat between, and all the rest of us were sitting around.

DONOHUE. All of you?

CROSBY. Yes.

DONOHUE. I thought you told your son to turn on the lights.

CROSBY. If you're implying that--

DONOHUE. I'm not implying anything, and please answer my questions.

WILLIAM (*rises, and stands back of table R.*). Inspector, I was sitting there, and simply made a move to turn on the light. I had chosen the seat purposely. We wanted to expose trickery, if we found any.

DONOHUE. I understand. (*He turns again to CROSBY.*) Go on, Mr. Crosby.

CROSBY. In a moment poor Wales fell to the floor. I ran to him and found that he had been stabbed in the back. Before we could call for aid, he was dead.

DONOHUE. Did he say anything?

CROSBY. No. I think that he was dead before we got to him.

DONOHUE. What happened then?

CROSBY. As soon as I realized what had happened I sent for you.

DONOHUE. Why for *me*? Why not simply notify the police? I mean, was there any special reason for wanting *me*?

CROSBY. There was, but I wasn't conscious of it at the time. We'd been talking about the killing of Spencer Lee earlier in the evening, and I suppose that subconsciously I remembered that you were handling that case, which brought yours as the first name to my mind. That's all.

DONOHUE. I see. (*Going C. a few steps.*) Now then, who's been in or out of this room since? Of course, you know you had no right to move Mr. Wales.

CROSBY (L.C.). Yes, I know, but I couldn't let him lie there on the floor. It was a little too much. You see we were all locked in here and and----

DONOHUE. Locked in! You mean as I found you when I came?

CROSBY. Exactly. We had all of the windows fastened and all doors locked for the seance. Pollock had the keys, I refused to let him open the door until you came.

DONOHUE. Mr. Crosby, you are forgiven for breaking the Coroner's rules. As I understand, then, you were sitting in this room with the doors and windows locked; you were in the dark. Wales was stabbed in the back, the lights were turned on, and no one has left the room or entered since?

CROSBY. No one but you.

DONOHUE. I didn't kill him. (*There is a long pause, then he turns with a sweeping gesture.*) Which one of you did? (*Slight movement from others. There is another long pause. No one speaks. He moves very quietly down R.C. to below table R.*) Now, I'm not going to employ the usual police methods. There is to be no threatening or badgering. But you all can see that there can be no escape for the guilty person. I realize that this is a terrible situation for all of you, but the only way to relieve it is for the murderer of Mr. Wales to confess. (*Another pause.*) It will save a long, and I assure you, a very trying police investigation. Let me say also that there will be no recriminations, no unpleasant scenes. I realize that this seems a very weak plea for a confession. But I am counting on the intelligence of the people now in this room. (*He takes out his watch and holds it face upward in his hand.*) I have unlimited time, but not a great deal of patience. Well? (*There is another long pause. He finally replaces his watch with a little gesture of finality.*) Very well then. (*He turns suddenly to MISS EASTWOOD, who is still seated up R.C.*) What is your name?

MISS EASTWOOD. Mary Eastwood.

DONOHUE. A moment ago, Miss Eastwood, you started to tell me something. You said, "If you ask me--" Now I am asking you. What was it you wanted to tell me?

MISS EASTWOOD (*seated R. of console table R.*). I don't want to especially. But I think I ought to tell you this. No one else seems to have thought of it. When the seance started we were all sitting in a circle holding each others' hands. As I understand it----

DONOHUE. We can take it for granted that I know how that is done. Go on, please.

MISS EASTWOOD. The medium got out of the circle without our knowing it, and then showed us how she did the trick.

DONOHUE. I see.

MISS EASTWOOD. Why couldn't she have done it again? Of course, that's what someone did, isn't it? And if she could get out of the circle without our knowing it, she could get back in again, couldn't she?

(HELEN *rises*. MISS EASTWOOD *continues with an air of triumph*.)

That's what I wanted to tell you.

ROSALIE. If any one of you, or all of you, can get me out of this chair without untying me or cutting me loose, I will say that I've done that murder.

(HELEN *sits above table R*.)

DONOHUE. Thank you, Miss Eastwood. It's only fair to tell you that there isn't a trick or an effect that these people do that the police do not understand perfectly.

ROSALIE. Is that so?

(DONOHUE *goes over and examines the way in which ROSALIE is tied to the chair*.)

DONOHUE. Why was she tied up?

CROSBY (*down L.C.*). At her own request. As Miss Eastwood says, she showed us how she broke out of the circle and then suggested that we tie her into that chair to make sure she didn't do it again.

DONOHUE (*R. of ROSALIE'S chair*). It's lucky for her that she did. Even if she had slipped out of those knots, there's no way in the world that she could get back in.

ROSALIE. I did say this policeman 'ad brains. (DONOHUE *turns away from her*.) Get me loose, dear Inspector. My foot 'e sleeps.

(DONOHUE *turns back and unties handkerchiefs with which she is tied. She gets up and stands in front of arm-chair C.*)

DONOHUE. Thank you very much, Miss Eastwood, that eliminates one.

ROSALIE. Then I can go? (*Starting for door L.*)

DONOHUE. You cannot.

(ROSALIE *goes R. of arm-chair and sits R. end of chesterfield C.*)

Anyone else anything they want to tell me? (*Pause.*) No? Mike, you'd better 'phone the Coroner and ask him to come up here. Tell him I do not want the case reported yet. And suggest that he hurries.

DUNN. Yes, Inspector.

(*He turns and exits L., leaving the door open behind him. STANDISH and TRENT start towards door L.*)

DONOHUE (*turning to them*). That open door does not mean freedom for any of you yet.

TRENT (*coming to DONOHUE C.*). I'm awfully sorry, Inspector, but I've an important business engagement at ten o'clock. My father-in-law here will---

DONOHUE. That's quite impossible.

(TRENT *goes up L. again and stands L. side of MRS. TRENT.*)

STANDISH (*moving to L.C.*). That is all very well, Inspector, but you know you can't keep us in this room for ever. If you want to take the consequences of accusing me of murder, well, that's your affair. But my patience is exhausted and I haven't the slightest intention of remaining here much longer. Unless, of course, you are planning to arrest me.

DONOHUE (*C.*). I see. By the way, who are you?

STANDISH. Howard Standish, of Standish, Giles & Updegraff, 120 Broadway. My brother is Judge Standish of the Supreme Court.

DONOHUE. And you refuse to remain here any longer?

STANDISH. I do.

DONOHUE. Very well, Mr. Standish of Standish, Giles & Updegraff. You are arrested as a material witness in this case. As soon as Sergeant Dunn returns he will call a patrol wagon and take you down to the House of Detention. (*Turns and crosses R.*) Are there any others who insist on leaving this room?

STANDISH. I beg your pardon, Inspector. I acted like a fool.

(MASON R. *of chesterfield C.*)

DONOHUE. Not at all, sir, your actions are entirely natural.

(STANDISH *goes up L.* DUNN'S voice is heard outside.)

DUNN. Hello! Hello! No, sir. But Inspector Donohue wants you to come here at once. We're at Mr. Roscoe Crosby's house. No, sir (DONOHUE *crosses over and closes the door L.*), he doesn't want the case reported yet.

DONOHUE. We needn't be bothered with that, anyway. (*Moves back to R.C. There is a pause.*) Well, I'm afraid we'll have to begin work. (*He goes over to table R. and sits down stage end of table. Takes paper and gets pencil.*) With the exception of Mr. Crosby, who is known to nearly everyone, and Mr. Standish, who has so pleasantly introduced himself to me, I know none of you. So I'll have to ask-- (*He stops suddenly and rises, facing them all. He points slowly to the chesterfield, facing fireplace up C.*) That's rather a gruesome thing there. I think we'll move it into another room. Will some of you gentlemen carry Mr. Wales' body into the other room. (*There is a pause. The men all hesitate. Finally MASON starts to move to chesterfield. DONOHUE is down stage R.C.*) Thank you very much. We'll---

(*Coming to C. DUNN enters from L.*)

DUNN. Dr. Bernstein himself is on the way here, Inspector.

DONOHUE. Good! Mike, get one of the servants to help you to carry this sofa into another room.

(DUNN *turns and exits L. without speaking.*)

I won't have to trouble you after all, sir.

(MASON *drops down to console table R. of chesterfield. DONOHUE gives a little laugh.*)

Funny how these old superstitions cling to us. One of the first tests for guilt invented by detectives was to ask a supposed murderer to touch the body of his victim. (*Slight pause.*) The test didn't work very well, did it? Certainly you four gentlemen can't all be guilty. (*Slight pause.*) Well, we'll have to try something else. (*Very impressively.*) Because, you know, I really am going to arrest the murderer of Edward Wales to-night.

(DUNN *enters from L., followed by POLLOCK.*)

Carry the sofa into another room, please.

CROSBY (*down L.*). Into that room, please. (*Indicating door L.C.*)

(DUNN *goes up to door L.C., turns knob--discovers door is locked. POLLOCK crosses to R. end of chesterfield facing fireplace on which dummy has been placed between first and second acts. Dummy is covered with a drapery.*)

DUNN (*at door L.C.*). The door is locked.

DONOHUE (*C.*). Oh, yes, try these keys.

(DUNN *comes down L.C., gets keys, goes up and unlocks door. He and POLLOCK pick up chesterfield, POLLOCK taking his end of chesterfield through door L.C. first.*)

And, Mike!

(DUNN *turns his head.*)

DUNN. Yes, sir.

DONOHUE. Make as quick an examination as you can and report to me here. (*The men exit carrying sofa into room L.C. DONOHUE crosses to chair below table R. and sits. TRENT places chair L.C.*) If you will all come a little closer, please.

(*The positions now become as follows:--WILLIAM back of table R.; HELEN O'NEILL seated above table; MISS EASTWOOD seated below console table R. end of chesterfield; ROSALIE seated C. chesterfield; MRS. CROSBY seated in arm-chair up C.; MASON standing upper end of table R.; MISS ERSKINE seated up L.C.; MRS. TRENT seated in chair L.C.; STANDISH standing L. of MRS. TRENT, and TRENT seated L.C.; CROSBY down L.C. DONOHUE seated lower end of table R.*)

Now, I can see you all quite comfortably.

(*POLLOCK enters door L.C., closes door--crosses to door L. and exits, closing the door.*)

As I started to say a moment ago, I shall have to find out something about each of you. You, madam? (*He turns to MRS. CROSBY.*)

MRS. CROSBY (*seated in arm-chair C.*). I'm Alicia Crosby. Mrs. Roscoe Crosby.

(*He makes notes on paper in front of him.*)

DONOHUE. I'm sorry to trouble you, Miss--(*He points his pencil at MISS ERSKINE, seated L.C.*)

MISS ERSKINE. Elizabeth Erskine. I'm---

DONOHUE. It's not necessary to tell your age.

MISS ERSKINE. I wasn't going to. I'm the daughter of Edward Erskine, my father is the banker.

DONOHUE. I know him. Thank you. You are then merely a guest here?

MISS ERSKINE. A friend.

DONOHUE. Miss Eastwood, I already know. And you, miss?

MISS STANDISH. Grace Standish.

STANDISH. My sister.

DONOHUE. Oh! And this young lady?

CROSBY (*puts his hand on MRS. TRENT'S shoulder L.C.*). My daughter, Mrs. Trent. She and Trent here live with us.

DONOHUE. And you, sir?

MASON (*there is a pause*). Philip Mason. (*At upper end of table R.*)

DONOHUE. That doesn't tell me very much.

MASON (*with a laugh*). There isn't very much to tell. I'm just a friend of the family. We've known, each other for years. I've lived in Paris for the last two or three years. I'm a painter.

DONOHUE. You mean an artist?

MASON. Well, I don't paint houses or fences, but I'd hardly call myself an artist--yet.

DONOHUE. Poor, I suppose? I know you'll pardon that question, won't you?

MASON. Quite all right, I assure you. No, I'm not poor.

DONOHUE. Thank you. (*Turns toward WILLIAM, who is standing back of HELEN'S chair above table R.*) And

you?

WILLIAM. I'm young Crosby.

DONOHUE. I see. Live here, I suppose?

WILLIAM. Certainly, where else should I live?

DONOHUE. I thought perhaps you might be married.

CROSBY (L.C.). He's not, but if he were he'd live with us and---

WILLIAM. No, father. When I marry I've got to have my own home and---

CROSBY. Nonsense. Don't talk like a fool. You'd live here with me and your mother--and your wife, of course.

DONOHUE. I think perhaps we'd better defer that discussion, gentlemen. (*He turns toward HELEN.*) And this young lady?

WILLIAM. My fiancée, Miss O'Neill.

DONOHUE. Well, that finishes that. (*Rises, standing below table R.*)

MISS EASTWOOD. But, Inspector, you haven't asked anything about the medium?

DONOHUE. Perhaps I don't consider that necessary, Miss Eastwood.

MISS EASTWOOD. But---

DONOHUE. And I'm terribly set on conducting this investigation in my own way, if you don't mind.

(*Enter DUNN from L.C.*)

DUNN. Inspector!

DONOHUE. Well?

DUNN (*at door L.C.*). I can't tell for sure, but I guess the knife went clean into the heart. He must have died instantly.

DONOHUE. All right. Let me know when the Coroner arrives. (*DUNN starts toward door down L.*) And, Dunn!

DUNN. Yes, sir.

DONOHUE (*going C.*). You'd better let me have a look at that knife.

(*DUNN turns sharply and looks at him.*)

DUNN (*down L.*). The knife?

DONOHUE. Yes, the knife.

DUNN. I haven't seen any knife. I thought you had it.

DONOHUE. No. I haven't seen it. (*There is a long pause. DONOHUE is R. of CROSBY.*) Mr. Crosby?

CROSBY (*still L.C.*). We didn't find it.

DONOHUE. Look carefully?

CROSBY. Everywhere. While we were waiting for you.

DONOHUE. Who moved Mr. Wales' body?

CROSBY. I did.

DONOHUE. No one else touched him?

CROSBY. No one.

DONOHUE. What did you do, after you had carried him to the sofa?

CROSBY. I saw that he had been stabbed. I looked for the knife.

DONOHUE. Where?

CROSBY. On the floor, under the stairs, everywhere I could think of.

DONOHUE. No trace of it?

CROSBY. None.

DONOHUE. What did you do then?

CROSBY. Nothing. I waited for you.

DONOHUE. How long after you found that Mr. Wales was killed did you turn on the lights?

CROSBY. Why, I told you; we turned on the light before we found what had happened.

DONOHUE. Would it have been possible for the murderer to have hidden it about the room?

CROSBY. I doubt it very much.

DONOHUE. Why?

CROSBY. I don't think there would have been time. I don't see how anyone could have done it at all. It's all a mystery to me. I told you the circle was intact. You remember?

(There is a pause.)

DONOHUE. Yes, I remember. Then if the knife was hidden, it's probably on the person of the man or woman who used it.

CROSBY. I think so, undoubtedly.

DONOHUE. Mike, 'phone over to the station house and have them send a matron over here.

(DUNN exits L., and closes the door after him.)

Now about that light. There was just one lamp turned on as I remember.

CROSBY. Someone turned on the rest of the lights, almost immediately.

DONOHUE. Could the knife have been hidden about the room, since that time?

CROSBY. It's extremely unlikely. We have all been here together. A thing of that sort would have been seen.

DONOHUE. Then I expect we'll find it without much trouble. *(There is a pause, as he looks slowly at each person individually in the room. WILLIAM puts arm on HELEN'S shoulders as DONOHUE looks at him.)* In the meantime, I think we'll let it remain where it is. *(Crosses down R. He turns with a gesture which takes them all in.)* You see how inevitably the guilty person must be discovered. Don't you think it would be much simpler to confess? *(Pause.)* No? Then I suppose we will have to continue. *(Crosses up L., takes a chair and places it L. side of circle, then he takes the chair down L. and places that in lower left-hand side of circle. CROSBY moves to C.)* I'd like to visualize the scene a little more clearly. *(TRENT places chair L. side of circle.)* Let's form that circle again--*(Turns two single chairs down C. around with backs to audience. Crosses and gets chair in front of table and places it in lower right-hand side of circle. MRS. CROSBY, MISS ERSKINE, MRS. TRENT, TRENT and MISS STANDISH rise and move to the L. of the circle.)* Of course this time without Mr. Wales. *(MISS EASTWOOD rises and stands at R. end of chesterfield. During these last few speeches of DONOHUE, TRENT and CROSBY have placed the remainder of chairs in the circle.)* All sit as you were sitting at the seance.

(There is a general movement. STANDISH crosses R. to above table R. The minute this suggestion is made ROSALIE comes down, nearer to DONOHUE, and looks at him anxiously. Something in his suggestion greatly disturbs her.)

CROSBY *(in upper L. side of circle)*. Will, you were there by the lamp, and Madame la Grange was next to you, and I was next to her---

DONOHUE. Then how did they sit? (*Down R.*)

CROSBY (*next to ROSALIE, L.C.*). I'm trying to remember. It's queer what a jumbled memory one has. If anyone had asked me about it I would have said I could have told how we were sitting with great accuracy. But I can't somehow.

MISS ERSKINE. I was next to you, Mr. Crosby. (*Upper L. side of circle. She turns to MRS. CROSBY, who is standing over L.*) Don't you remember, Mrs. Crosby, he said he'd always wanted to hold my hand, and we joked about it. (*Sits in her original chair.*)

MRS. CROSBY (*L., outside of circle*). Yes. I remember.

DONOHUE. That's all right, then. Who came next?

(*Down R. They all hesitate.*)

ROSALIE (*eagerly*). Inspector, I can place them all for you.

MASON (*over end of table R.*). But you said you didn't care how we sat.

(*HELEN R.C. in circle.*)

ROSALIE. So I did, sir, but I knew where you were sitting all the same. You will permit that I show you, Inspector?

DONOHUE (*after a pause*). If you will be so kind.

(*MISS STANDISH sits in circle.*)

ROSALIE. The young lady was 'ere. And this gentleman 'e was 'ere. (*Indicating TRENT'S chair.*)

TRENT (*from L., outside of circle*). By George, I couldn't have told you, but she's right. This is exactly where I was sitting. (*Sits in circle.*)

ROSALIE (*taking HELEN hastily by the shoulder and putting her in the next seat*). And this young lady was 'ere. (*HELEN looks at her for a moment and then sinks back in her chair. ROSALIE points at MASON.*) He did come next.

MASON (*over R.*). No, you're wrong there--I--You're right--I remember perfectly I was next to Miss O'Neill. (*Crosses L. and sits L. side of circle.*) I know just how her hand felt in the dark.

(*WILLIAM looks at him quickly. HELEN turns and looks at him in wonder.*)

HELEN (*seated L. side in circle*). Well really, Mr. Mason!

MASON. Oh, I don't mean it that way at all. I assure you I don't.

WILLIAM. Then why did you say it? (*Seated R.C.*)

MASON. My dear fellow, I've apologized. You are misunderstanding me.

MRS. CROSBY. I think we're all very much upset. (*L. outside circle.*) Inspector Donohue, must we go through all this again?

DONOHUE. I'm afraid so, Mrs. Crosby.

CROSBY. Then let's get it over as quickly as possible. (*Sits C. in his original chair in circle.*)

DONOHUE. Mr. Crosby, you seem to forget that this is a police investigation, and must be conducted as I see fit. Who sat next to Mr. Mason?

ROSALIE (*pointing to MISS EASTWOOD*). This young lady.

MISS EASTWOOD. I was next to Mr. Mason, wasn't I, Philip?

(*Crossing inside of circle, to chair lower L. side of circle, and sits.*)

MASON. Yes.

DONOHUE. Now then, who occupied this seat?

MRS. TRENT (L.C. *outside of circle*). Mr. Wales. I know because I sat *there*, and I was *next* to him. Shall I sit there now?

DONOHUE. If you will be so good.

(MRS. TRENT *crosses to R. and sits in circle.*)

STANDISH (*upper end of table R.*). I was next to Mrs. Trent. (*He sits.*)

MRS. CROSBY. And I was here between Mr. Standish and Billy.

(*She sits. DONOHUE moves off a step down R. and stands looking at them as they sit. ROSALIE moves over and takes her place in armchair.*)

DONOHUE. You are all sure that's where you were sitting?

MISS EASTWOOD. There's some mix up here, I know. (*ROSALIE rises.*) I wasn't next to Mr. Wales.

HELEN (*rises*). Of course you weren't. I don't see what I could have been thinking of. *I* sat where Miss Eastwood is.

MISS EASTWOOD. Yes, and I was next to Mr. Trent, between Philip and Mr. Trent. I felt sure I was in the wrong seat. (*Rises.*)

DONOHUE (*quite casually*). Then perhaps you ladies will exchange places.

(*ROSALIE gives a little sigh of relief when she sees that DONOHUE attaches no importance to the substitution she has made, and sits down again. HELEN and Miss EASTWOOD, change seats. HELEN crosses outside of circle.*)

Now we're all right, aren't we? (*Slight buzz of conversation.*) You are quite sure that you are all in the places you occupied during the seance?

CROSBY. Yes. I think so.

DONOHUE (*puts his hand on the empty chair*). We'll pretend that Mr. Wales is still sitting here. (*Slight movement from all.*) Now, Mr. Crosby, I'll ask you to tell me what happened after the seance began. But first I'll ask you this question, was there any special arrangement about the seats?

ROSALIE (*hurriedly rising*). There was not, sir. I told them that they could sit anywhere they did wish. Young Mr. Crosby must 'ave sat by the light on purpose. And I am so sorry I did make the mistake about the young ladies. I do not know 'ow I came to make a mistake like that.

DONOHUE. Oh, well, if they couldn't remember where they sat, I don't see how I can expect you to be entirely accurate. (*ROSALIE sits in arm-chair up C.*) However, we're all right now. Now, Mr. Crosby.

CROSBY. Well, after Madame la Grange had shown how she broke out of---

DONOHUE. We'll start with the seance. (*All look at DONOHUE.*) I know how mediums break the circle and all that. And you needn't describe how she went into that trance of hers.

MASON. Inspector, I don't think you're fair to this woman. I think there's something pretty important that you haven't been told.

(*All look at MASON.*)

DONOHUE. Then you'd better tell me now.

MASON. In order that there should be no deception, we had Madame la Grange searched.

DONOHUE. I see.

MASON. And while she was out of the room--

DONOHUE. Oh, she left the room?

(*All look at DONOHUE.*)

MASON. Yes, and all of the ladies went with her. Then someone suggested that we ask Madame la Grange about some special thing, and Mr. Wales said he was going to ask her to get in communication with Spencer Lee and see if we couldn't find out who killed him---

STANDISH. Most ridiculous thing--

MASON. As soon as she went into her trance, or whatever it was, Spencer Lee's spirit tried to talk to us.

DONOHUE. She began to give you messages from Spencer Lee without knowing that this was what you were trying to get?

MASON (*in triumph*). Exactly. And there's no use in trying to tell me that there's nothing in spiritualism, because now I know better.

DONOHUE. Thank you very much, Mr. Mason. What you've told me is extremely important. I'm anxious to know what was said, because I'm a good deal interested in the Spencer Lee case myself.

(MRS. TRENT *turns and faces door, still sitting in her chair.*)

MASON. Then you think there's something in this spiritualism. I never did until to-day, but, by Jove, you know you can't explain this any other way.

DONOHUE. Madame la Grange went into a trance. We'll grant that much, anyway. What happened then?

CROSBY. After a few minutes she began talking to us in the voice of a little child.

ROSALIE. That was Laughing Eyes, my spirit control.

DONOHUE. Just what did Laughing Eyes say?

CROSBY. It was all mixed up; none of it very clear. But she seemed to be trying to talk *for* someone *to* someone. She kept calling for Ned. Then suddenly she spoke deeply, in a man's voice.

DONOHUE. Did the man's message have any importance? I mean, did it seem to make sense?

CROSBY. It was perfectly coherent at any rate. I can't give you the exact words, but--

MASON (*interrupting*). I can. He said, "Ned--I want Ned. Why in *Hell* don't Ned answer me?"

DONOHUE (*standing at lower end of table B.*). And did anyone answer?

CROSBY. Eventually Wales replied.

DONOHUE. I want you all to be extremely careful in what you tell me. I don't want any surmises. In the first place, did the message come for anyone but Mr. Wales?

CROSBY. There was at no time mention of Wales' name. The calls were always for "Ned."

DONOHUE. I see. Did anyone else answer the calls?

STANDISH. I asked two or three questions, but no attention was paid to them.

DONOHUE. What did Mr. Wales say to all this?

CROSBY. I don't think Mr. Wales spoke at all until the message about saving his life came.

DONOHUE. And after that?

MISS EASTWOOD. There was a regular conversation between them.

CROSBY. Then there was some mention about some letters. I remember, too, that Mr. Wales said, "Are you trying to tell me who killed you?"

DONOHUE. What was the reply to that?

MRS. CROSBY. All we got were the words, "Ask--ask--ask."

CROSBY. And then I said, "Do you know who killed you?"

DONOHUE. Did you get an answer?

CROSBY. Not directly. The message was another cry for "Ned."

DONOHUE. What happened then?

CROSBY. Then Mr. Wales said, "Do you know who killed you?"

DONOHUE (*eagerly*). What answer did he get?

CROSBY. None. The medium began to moan and cry. Then Mr. Wales asked her again and again for the name. He kept crying, "Tell me who killed you; I want the name." He must have asked her two or three times. Then he cried out that he was hurt.

DONOHUE. And then?

CROSBY. That's all.

(*Enter DUNN from door L.*)

DUNN. The matron is here now, sir.

DONOHUE. Just a minute. Just one more question, Mr. Crosby. Did you get the impression that if Mr. Wales had not been killed his question would have been answered?

CROSBY. If you grant that the seance was real, it would be impossible to arrive at any other conclusion.

DONOHUE. It was well established in your mind that Wales was the only person able to get a message?

CROSBY. Yes.

DONOHUE. It follows then that he was killed in order to prevent his question being answered.

CROSBY. That's the impression I got.

DONOHUE. This leads to the conclusion that whoever killed Wales knew who had killed Spencer Lee.

CROSBY. I should think so.

DONOHUE (*front of table R.*). And it is not difficult to surmise that the person who killed Wales was actuated by the strongest of all motives--self-protection. So in all human probability the murderer of Wales was also the murderer of Spencer Lee. You see, ladies and gentlemen, that by the use of a little patience we have come a long way in our investigation. (*There is a long pause.*) I don't wish to put you all through the humiliation of a search. I should like to end this inquiry here and now. (*Moves a step R. There is another pause.*) No? Then we'll have to go on. (*Moves briskly to below table R.*) There is a police matron in the other room who will search the ladies of the party. Sergeant Dunn will perform a similar duty with the men. Mike, you will take them one at a time. It makes no difference to me in what order they go.

MASON. Well, I've got nothing to conceal. (*He rises and places chair up L., then moves to door L.*)

ROSALIE. Neither 'ave I. (*She rises and moves down C.*)

DONOHUE. I'd rather you waited for a few minutes, Madame la Grange. (*ROSALIE looks at him sharply.*) Any of the other ladies will do.

MRS. CROSBY (*rising*). Suppose I set the others a good example.

DONOHUE. Thank you very much. (*MRS. CROSBY comes down C., then crosses to door L. DONOHUE looks at the others, where they are still seated.*) And thank you all for the great help you've given me. You need not sit there any longer, unless you wish.

(*MISS STANDISH crosses R. to back of table R. MRS. CROSBY, MASON, and SERGEANT DUNN go out L. DUNN closes the door. HELEN goes up C. TRENT moves one chair up to L. of door L.C., then one chair to R. of door L.C., right back of chesterfield C. MISS ERSKINE crosses to back of table R. MRS. TRENT seated R.C. WILLIAM in front of chesterfield C.*)

MISS EASTWOOD (*crossing to DONOHUE R.*). Inspector, I think you're perfectly wonderful.

DONOHUE. Oh, we haven't done very much yet, Miss Eastwood. Give the police a little time. (*He turns and crosses*

to L.C. *With an abrupt change of tone.*) Madame la Grange, there's a question I wish to ask you.

ROSALIE (*coming down to L.C.*). Anything at all, sir.

DONOHUE (L.C.). When Mr. Wales asked you for the name, why didn't you answer him?

ROSALIE. I do not know. I was in a trance. (*She moves down L.*)

DONOHUE. Then you didn't hear the question.

ROSALIE. How could I?

DONOHUE. I didn't ask you that. I want to know why you didn't answer him.

ROSALIE. I've already told you, I was in a trance. I did not know what was going on.

DONOHUE. Why didn't you tell the name that you had agreed with Wales you would tell?

ROSALIE (L.C., *astonished*). Agreed?

DONOHUE. You heard what I said. (*There is a pause.*) Well, why didn't you carry out your part of the bargain? (*CROSBY moves to front of chesterfield C.*) Why didn't you give him the name as you'd planned?

ROSALIE. I do not know what you do mean.

DONOHUE. My words are perfectly plain. I asked you why you didn't carry out your part of the bargain?

ROSALIE. There was not any bargain?

DONOHUE. Your whole seance was a fake. (*Slight movement from others.*) It was not only planned but rehearsed between you and Wales. He thought that a woman had killed his friend. He told you about it, and asked your help to discover the murderer,

ROSALIE. I do not know what you talk about.

DONOHUE (*ignoring her reply*). Every detail of this seance was planned. When he asked you the name you were to tell him the name of a woman----

(*MRS. TRENT moves up R. and joins TRENT and MISS ERSKINE at table R.*)

ROSALIE. Inspector, I've never 'eard one word of this before,

DONOHUE. Not a word?

ROSALIE. Not a word.

DONOHUE (L.C., *taking paper out of the inside pocket of his coat, and reading aloud*). "What do you want? Answer. Don't forget the swimming pool. Don't ever forget the swimming pool. Do you mean the time he went in after me? When we were little boys. Spencer Lee says he can't rest." And so on and so on, down to. "Do you know who killed you?" (*He turns to the others.*) The answer to that should have been "Yes." What did she say?

CROSBY (*now in front of table R.*). She didn't answer that question.

DONOHUE (*looks at paper again L.C.*). The next question is, "Can you tell the name?" And then she was to have told that woman's name. Just the first name. Mrs. Crosby, what did she reply to that question?

CROSBY. She moaned and cried.

DONOHUE. What did she say after that?

CROSBY. Nothing. She moaned again and came out of the so-called trance.

DONOHUE. Why didn't you do as you agreed?

ROSALIE (*down L.C., left side of DONOHUE. Stonily*). I do not know what you talk about.

DONOHUE. The police know that some woman killed Spencer Lee. Something was taken from the inside pocket of his coat. We think it was a package of letters. This woman left traces. We have her finger-prints--many of them. Eventually we'll find her. For three or four weeks Mr. Wales has been working among the people who knew Lee. His

theory was that this woman wanted to get back her letters--in fact, did get them back. He felt reasonably sure that he had found the woman--that one of you ladies here to-night is probably the woman we are hunting. He thought that he could play on her superstitious fears, and that when her name seemingly came from the spirit of the dead man she would confess. He told Madame la Grange the name, explained to her just what he wanted, and together he and I worked out the exact wording of the messages that were supposed to come from Spencer Lee's spirit. (*He turns suddenly to ROSALIE, who is down L.C.*) You agreed to all this; why didn't you speak the name?

ROSALIE. I do not know anything about it. He--he must 'ave forgotten to tell it to me.

DONOHUE. Oh, no, he didn't.

(MISS EASTWOOD *down in front of table R.*)

ROSALIE (*with great decision*). There was no name. He did not tell to me any name.

DONOHUE. My good woman, you mustn't take me for a fool. You agreed to use a certain name; you came here for that purpose, and then after you got here, something happened to make you change your plans. Something unexpected happened. (*He stops for a moment; turns to MISS EASTWOOD.*) Miss Eastwood, what did you say was your first name?

MISS EASTWOOD. Mary.

DONOHUE (*to MISS ERSKINE*). And yours?

MISS ERSKINE (*back of table R.*). Elizabeth.

DONOHUE. Yours?

MISS STANDISH. Grace.

DONOHUE. Mr. Crosby, your wife's name is?

CROSBY. Alicia.

DONOHUE. Mrs. Trent?

MRS. TRENT (R.C.). Helen.

DONOHUE, Miss O'Neill?

HELEN (*up C., in front of chesterfield*). Helen.

(*There is a long pause.*)

DONOHUE (L.C. WILLIAM *comes to HELEN C.*). Helen, I see. So there are two Helens. Two Helens. (*He stands looking first at one and then at the other of the two women.*) Mr. Crosby, when Madame la Grange first came to-night, did she show any surprise at seeing any of the people here?

CROSBY (R.C.). Not that I noticed.

MISS EASTWOOD (*below table R.*). Oh, yes, she did. Miss O'Neill wasn't in the room when she arrived. Later when she came in Madame la Grange seemed upset; she said something to her that none of us could hear. Then I remember she argued with Mr. Wales and said she didn't feel like having a seance.

DONOHUE. Now we're getting it.

(WILLIAM *stands R. of HELEN O'NEILL up C.*)

Everything was going along smoothly, until Miss O'Neill came in. The extra Helen. (*He turns to CROSBY.*) Mr. Crosby, your daughter was in the room when Madame la Grange came in?

CROSBY. Yes.

DONOHUE. You noticed nothing unusual in this woman's manner?

CROSBY. I'd never seen her before.

DONOHUE. I mean, she did nothing to attract your attention; the fact that Helen Trent was in the room made no impression on her?

CROSBY. Seemingly not.

DONOHUE. Then Helen O'Neill came in. (*Goes up to HELEN C., then crosses down to ROSALIE L. Sharply to her.*) Rosalie la Grange, what's that girl to you?

ROSALIE. Nothing at all.

DONOHUE (C.). Nothing at all! Then why did you try to deceive me as to where she sat. Why did you place her so that I would not know she was sitting next to Mr. Wales when he was stabbed?

ROSALIE. It was just my mistake. I did not do it on purpose.

DONOHUE. I'm afraid that won't do. It's perfectly apparent that the name you were to speak was--Helen, What's the use of lying to me! You've tried your best to shield this girl. I want to know why.

ROSALIE. There's no reason. I never saw the young lady before in all my life.

DONOHUE. What's that girl to you?

ROSALIE. Nothing, nothing at all----

DONOHUE (*starts to ROSALIE*). *Damn you, you old harridan, you come across----*

HELEN (*springing forward from up R.C. down to L.C. and pushing DONOHUE up stage*). Let my mother alone, let my mother alone.

(*She goes to ROSALIE, puts her arms around her. Pause. ROSALIE weeps.*)

DONOHUE (*very quietly*). I thought perhaps I'd get it that way.

HELEN (*getting L. side of ROSALIE*). There, there, dear, it's all right, it's all right.

DONOHUE (*with a grim smile, coming down C.*). Of course it's all right! We've got the finger-prints and--

WILLIAM (*interrupting him--coming down to C.*). If you think for one minute I'm going to let you----

CROSBY. My boy, wait! (*grabbing him and pinning down his arms to his sides C.*). Think what----

WILLIAM. Think nothing. (*He shakes himself free and goes to DONOHUE L.C.*) That's the girl I love, and I'll be damned if I let you take her finger-prints.

DONOHUE. Young man, don't be a fool. I'm sorry, but it's too clear.

ROSALIE (*breaking away from her daughter and moving to DONOHUE C.*). Clear--how is it too clear? Inspector, you are never going to accuse my little girl of a thing like that?

DONOHUE (C.). She was next to him; she had only to free one hand and strike, and then take his hand again!

ROSALIE. There was something else she had to do before she could ever do that. She had to have murder in her heart.

DONOHUE. Well?

ROSALIE (*turns suddenly; seizes her daughter by the hand, turns her to him. ROSALIE stays between DONOHUE and HELEN*). Look at 'er. Look in 'er eyes--look at the face of 'er. Is there murder there? 'Ave you not eyes in your 'ead.

(DUNN enters from L.)

DUNN. It's not on either of them.

DONOHUE. I know where it is. Tell the matron she'll find the knife on this girl.

ROSALIE (*to DONOHUE C.*). Inspector, I will tell to you anything I know, only keep your hands off my little girl. I did come 'ere like you say, and when I see my little girl I lose my 'ead. I tried to save 'er and I 'ave made it worse. You 'ave looked at 'er, the poor young thing that would not 'arm a fly, and you think she could do a thing like that.

DONOHUE. Yes.

ROSALIE (*still crying bitterly*). Then, Inspector Donohue, you are a damn fool, and with God's 'elp I will prove it.

CURTAIN.

ACT III

The same SCENE half an hour later.

ROSALIE is discovered by table R.

ROSALIE. Father in 'Eaven, help me. My little girl is in terrible trouble and there is not anyone to 'elp 'er but me. She is a good girl--you know all things, you know she is a good girl. Show me the way. I 'ave been a fakir all my life. I 'ave tricked them and fooled them, but I 'ave never meant to 'arm a soul, I 'ave never done 'arm to any person. And there is a power. It 'as come to me before, a power that I could not understand. I felt it, and I showed it. Oh God, give it to me again. Do this for my little girl, for the sake of your Son. Amen.

(Turns and goes up stage and then to the window at R. She pulls up the blind and raises the window. The light comes up from the street lamp, throwing out her figure in strong silhouette, and showing a square patch of light on the ceiling. In the C. of this patch, sticking point up in the heavy wooden panelling, can be seen the knife. ROSALIE stands for a few moments looking out at the night. DONOHUE enters down L. He turns on the lights from the switch below the door down L.)

DONOHUE (*crosses to L.C.*). Who turned off the lights?

ROSALIE (*at window R.*). I did, sir.

DONOHUE. Why?

ROSALIE. I was praying. (*Coming to above table R.*)

DONOHUE. Praying? What for?

ROSALIE. Guidance.

DONOHUE (*with a laugh*). I hope you get it.

ROSALIE (*with conviction*). I will, sir, I will. (*She starts toward the door L.*) I will join the others now.

DONOHUE. I think'd you better wait. (*Calls off L.*) Mike!

(ROSALIE is C. DUNN enters from L.)

DUNN. Yes, Inspector.

DONOHUE. Did Madame la Grange see you as she came in here?

DUNN (*down L.*). No, sir. I followed your instructions and kept out of sight.

DONOHUE (*L.C.*). How long has she been here?

DUNN. About ten minutes.

DONOHUE. Time enough for her to find what we couldn't.

DUNN. I'll bet she's got it.

DONOHUE. Take her to Mrs. MacPherson. She's not to go near anyone or speak to anyone. Tell Mrs. Mac to search her. (*He turns to ROSALIE, who is C.*) Unless, of course, you want to give up that knife now.

ROSALIE. I 'ave not any knife, and I 'ave been searched once.

DONOHUE (L.C.). Exactly, and then you were allowed to come back into this room. We're rather anxious to see what you've found while you were in here. Well?

ROSALIE. I 'ave found nothing that would be any good to you.

DONOHUE. I'm the best judge of that. What was it you found?

ROSALIE. I found comfort, sir. A feeling that the innocent would come to no 'arm.

DONOHUE (*dryly*). Take her to Mrs. MacPherson. Come back as soon as you turn her over to the matron.

DUNN. Yes, Inspector. Come on--come on, you.

ROSALIE (*crossing L.*). I will come!

(They go out. He stands looking after them for about five seconds, when DUNN re-enters and says:)

DUNN (*above door L.*). Mrs. Mac's got her.

DONOHUE. She turned out that light. I wonder why? What did she want in the dark.

(He goes over toward the light switch at L. and puts out his hand. He stops suddenly as his attention is attracted by a POLICEMAN coming feet foremost down the chimney. DONOHUE gives a little start and then comes L.C. The POLICEMAN jumps down all the way in fireplace, and comes into the room to console table L. end of chesterfield. His uniform is covered with soot, and so are his face and hands. DUNN goes down L. below door.)

DUNN. I sent him to see if they'd hidden that knife up there?

DONOHUE. Good. (*To POLICEMAN.*) Find anything?

POLICEMAN. Nothing but dirt. Who pays for this uniform?

DONOHUE. You don't, anyway. Could you hear anything while you were up there?

POLICEMAN. Not a thing.

DONOHUE. You are sure?

POLICEMAN. Certain.

DONOHUE. Go and get a bath.

POLICEMAN. 'Tain't Saturday.

(He exits at L. DONOHUE crosses R. Pause.)

DUNN (*down L. After a pause*). Don't it beat *Hell*?

DONOHUE. Why?

DUNN. That knife couldn't have flew away.

DONOHUE (*coming C.*). We'll find it eventually. It's in this room somewhere.

DUNN. No, sir, it ain't.

DONOHUE. Where have you looked?

DUNN. Everywhere.

DONOHUE. Not hidden in the furniture?

DUNN. I'll gamble it ain't. Took up all the rugs, shook 'em. Dug through the upholstery in the furniture, looked back of mat on the wall. It's not in the bric-a-brac, or whatever these swells call their jugs.

(DONOHUE crosses towards table R.)

DONOHUE. Unless we find it on the old woman, it's still in this room.

DUNN. I suppose you noticed that she opened the window.

DONOHUE (*upper end of table R.*). Yes, I noticed that. Mike, you've the makings of a great detective.

DUNN. I'm a darned good detective now.

(DONOHUE goes to window at R. and calls out.)

DONOHUE. Say, Doolan! See anything?

DOOLAN (*outside window R.*). A woman put up the window just now. She stood there a while looking up in the air. (*Pause.*) Watching the stars, I guess.

DONOHUE. Have anything in her hand?

DOOLAN. No, sir. The light from this lamp was shinin' right on her. I could see everything.

DONOHUE. Throw anything out of the window?

DOOLAN. No, Inspector.

DONOHUE. All right. You're to arrest anyone leaving the house.

DOOLAN. I gotcha.

(DONOHUE comes below table R. and turns to DUNN. Crosses to L.C.)

DONOHUE. We'll find the knife eventually. We've got to. Get me Mr. Crosby, the O'Neill girl--that's the order I want to see them in here.

(DUNN exits L. DONOHUE crosses up R. end of chesterfield to chest up R., starts to cross L. below chesterfield. CROSBY enters down L. and closes the door. DONOHUE comes down to C. by R. end of chesterfield.)

CROSBY(L.C.). Your man told me to come here.

DONOHUE. Yes. Sorry to have to give orders in your house. If you don't like it I can take everyone down to Police Headquarters. You know what will happen--what the newspapers will do if I take all these ladies and gentlemen down town. In the end this way will be the best for you and your friends. Well, how about it?

CROSBY(L.C.). Thank you. I think you'd better regard this house as your own for the present.

DONOHUE(C.). All right. If you don't mind I'll use this room as a headquarters for the present.

CROSBY. I have already told you to use this house as your own.

DONOHUE. Thank you. Good evening.

CROSBY(*with a laugh*). I'm dismissed?

DONOHUE. You're dismissed. (CROSBY walks toward door L.) Why did Wales object to the engagement of your son and Helen O'Neill?

CROSBY(*turns to DONOHUE*). Who told you that? (*Moving a few steps.*)

DONOHUE. It doesn't matter. I know that he did. Why?

CROSBY(*turning front*). I can't talk about it.

DONOHUE(C.). All right. You're the best judge of that. Only I'm attaching a great deal of importance to this fact. If I'm unduly emphasizing its value, don't you think you'd better set me straight about it?

CROSBY. What possible bearing can it have on---

DONOHUE. Motive, my dear sir, motive.

CROSBY. Come now. You can't think that this girl killed Wales because she heard him ask us to wait before we

sanctioned her engagement to my son.

DONOHUE. She did hear Mr. Wales make that objection. That's just what I wanted to know.

CROSBY(L.). I think I'd better send for my lawyer.

DONOHUE (C.). Well, you can do as you like about that. Frankly, I don't understand your attitude at all. I can appreciate your desire to spare your son all the unhappiness that you can. But if this young woman killed Wales and Lee, the sooner we find it out the better for you and your family.

CROSBY. Oddly enough I was thinking only of Miss O'Neill at the moment.

DONOHUE. You'd better think of yourself and your family first. (*Moves R. a few steps.*)

CROSBY. That's for me to decide. I certainly am not going to allow that child to be bullied and badgered in the usual police fashion. (*Moves R. a step.*)

DONOHUE. You're going to do as you are told, sir. If you warn that girl, if you caution her in any way, I'll drag every one of you down town. You and your wife and your son and the girl and all your friends. Be reasonable, Mr. Crosby. If the girl is innocent, telling me the truth won't hurt her. If she's guilty, and I think she is, by God, I'm going to drag the truth out of her and her mother. (*There is a knock on the door down L.*) Come in.

(HELEN enters L.)

HELEN (L.). You wanted me?

DONOHUE. Yes, come in. Sit down, please.

(*Indicating chair below table R. HELEN crosses and sits. CROSBY starts to move R.*)

CROSBY. Helen---

DONOHUE. What you are planning to do, Mr. Crosby, will only make matters worse, I promised you that.

(*After a moment's pause CROSBY exits L. and leaves door open. DONOHUE turns, closes door and turns sharply to HELEN. Crosses towards the table.*)

Now then, young woman, let's hear what you've got to say.

HELEN. Nothing.

DONOHUE (C.). Nothing? I don't suppose it's necessary for me to tell you that you're under grave suspicion.

HELEN. No, I realize that.

DONOHUE. Now, the best way to help yourself if you're innocent is to be quite frank with me. (*She simply looks at him, but does not speak.*) Well?

HELEN. I've already told you that there is nothing that I can say.

DONOHUE. Someone has advised you not to answer me. Who was it? (*There is a pause.*) You'd better tell me. (*Moves R.C.*)

HELEN. I am not going to answer any of your questions.

DONOHUE. I told you that if you were innocent, nothing that you could say would hurt you. If you're guilty--well that's a different matter.

HELEN. You know that I didn't do it.

DONOHUE (*in front of table R.*). Well, there you are. Why not answer my question then? The sooner we find out who is guilty the sooner you'll be freed from suspicion. You see that, don't you?

HELEN. Yes.

DONOHUE (*brings chair and sits in front of table R.*). Now we're getting along. How well did you know Spencer Lee? (*HELEN does not answer him--looking front.*) You'd better make up your mind to talk. Do you hear? (*HELEN does*

not speak. Losing his temper.) Why, you little fool, do you think you can fight me? (He turns sharply to face her, turning his back on the door at L.) You were the last person to see Spencer Lee alive. Yes, and you saw him dead, too. You heard Wales threaten to tell these fine people what he knew about you; you knew he'd prevent your marriage to this young millionaire, and then----

(ROSALIE enters quietly from L. and stands for a moment watching them.)

When your chance came in the dark you killed him. Now then, you come across with the truth.

ROSALIE. She'll come across with nothing. *(Crosses R. to table.)*

(DONOHUE rises and stands by table R.C. HELEN rises.)

You said that she was the one that did it and you would find the knife on 'er. Well, you did not, did you? You think that she is the person that killed Spencer Lee?

DONOHUE. Yes.

ROSALIE. Well, she is not. You say you 'ave the finger-prints of the girl who was in his rooms. Well, take 'er finger-prints and put them side by side with the others, and then you will see. I dare you to do that.

HELEN *(with a cry)*. Mother---- *(She stops suddenly.)*

DONOHUE. What were you going to say?

HELEN. Nothing.

(DUNN enters with box and envelope.)

DONOHUE. That's very wise of you.

DUNN. Got it, Inspector. *(Crosses to C.)*

DONOHUE *(down R.)*. Do they compare?

DUNN. To a T.

(ROSALIE C., HELEN down R. DONOHUE in front table between HELEN and ROSALIE.)

DONOHUE. All right. Let me have 'em. Now ask Mr. Crosby and his son to come here at once.

(DUNN turns and exits L. DONOHUE up C. crosses to back of table R.)

I already have your daughter's finger-prints, Madame la Grange.

ROSALIE. 'Ave you really? ... You are very smart.

(HELEN crosses to ROSALIE R.C. ROSALIE puts her arms about the girl and swings her L. of her. When DONOHUE opens box at the back of table CROSBY and WILLIAM enter from L. accompanied by DUNN.)

DONOHUE. That's all, Mike.

(DUNN exits L. and closes door. CROSBY L. of HELEN. WILLIAM L. of CROSBY.)

Mr. Crosby, I told you that I'd settle this case in a few minutes. The end has come sooner than I thought. I am now ready to make an arrest. I have sent for you and your son because---- *(He suddenly turns toward HELEN.)* This is the woman we have been hunting.

ROSALIE. That is a lie! *(R. end of chesterfield.)*

(WILLIAM goes to HELEN.)

DONOHUE *(picking up cup and holding it out toward them)*. Here is the cup--

(CROSBY crosses down R. to below table--moves chair over R.)

which we took from Spencer Lee's rooms. These are the finger-prints of the woman who used it. (*Ignoring CROSBY for the moment.*) Here is the saucer that she used. More finger-prints. A few minutes ago I sent this young woman a note. The man who gave it to her wore gloves, so did I when I addressed the envelope. Hers are the only naked hands that have touched it. (*He picks up the envelope gingerly by one corner, and holds it outward to them.*) They are unquestionably Helen O'Neill's finger-prints. (*HELEN is in WILLIAM'S arms. DONOHUE puts down the envelope. Then he picks up the cup and points to the finger-marks on it.*) And so, Mr. Crosby, are these. There can be no doubt about it. There is never any doubt about this method of identification. In twenty years there has never been one mistake. We now have what we've been hunting for: the woman who went to Spencer Lee's rooms.

(DONOHUE steps back with a little gesture of triumph. CROSBY stands staring at the girl. ROSALIE comes to R. of HELEN, turns to her.)

ROSALIE (C.). Look at me, my darling. Look at your mother. (*She takes HELEN'S face in her hands and looks at her closely. Then with a little cry of contentment stands R. of HELEN. ROSALIE and HELEN back up to chesterfield.*) Now, darling, you must not be frightened. Look up, child. Why do not you say something?

HELEN. I can't.

(*Sits on chesterfield. DONOHUE gives a short laugh.*)

DONOHUE. What can she say?

WILLIAM (*going to her*). Dear, tell him it's a lie.

CROSBY. Wait. Let me talk to her. (*CROSBY comes over to HELEN and sits beside her on the chesterfield, R. side. WILLIAM is at L. end.*) My dear, you understand that none of us believe--what the Inspector wants us to believe. We know that you have never done anything--that you are no more guilty of this atrocious crime than I am. We all want to help you. We believe in you and trust you and love you. You understand that, don't you?

HELEN. Yes.

WILLIAM. I won't have this.

CROSBY. I'm afraid you must, Will. (*He turns again to HELEN.*) We want to help you, so, my dear, you must be perfectly frank with us. Inspector Donohue says he can prove that you went to that man's rooms. Is that true?

HELEN (*slowly and reluctantly*). Yes.

(DONOHUE gives a short laugh. Sits back of table R.)

ROSALIE (R. of chesterfield). And what if she did? She had a good errand. What did you go for, darling?

HELEN. I can't tell you.

WILLIAM. Dear, you must tell us. (*She looks at him suddenly. He comes over and kneels beside her and talks to her as if to a little child.*) My dear, it isn't that we don't trust you. Surely you know how we all love you? But we must know the truth--because we have to show *him* how wrong he is.

DONOHUE (*seated back of table R.*). Yes, and I'm waiting to be shown.

WILLIAM (*kneeling L. of HELEN*). Why did you go to Spencer Lee?

HELEN (*sitting on chesterfield*). You mustn't ask me that. I can't tell you.

CROSBY (*still on chesterfield*). But if you don't tell us, how can we help you?

HELEN. I didn't do anything, I didn't do anything.

CROSBY. We know that, my child. But why did you go? (*HELEN does not answer.*) Did you know Spencer Lee?

WILLIAM. Of course she didn't.

DONOHUE (*seated back of table R.*). Why don't she speak for herself?

WILLIAM. Because I'll speak for her.

CROSBY. Can't you answer even that question?

(HELEN *shakes her head and makes a despairing gesture.*)

WILLIAM. But, dear, don't you see what they'll think? Helen, you must tell me.

HELEN. Could I speak to mother, alone? (*She rises.*)

DONOHUE. You cannot.

(CROSBY *and WILLIAM rise. CROSBY moves to L. end of chesterfield.*)

ROSALIE (*R. end of chesterfield*). Where is the 'arm in that? A child 'as the right to talk to 'er own mother any time she does want.

DONOHUE. Anything you wish to say you can say in front of me.

ROSALIE (*coming to HELEN C.*). Darling, you need not mind the nice Inspector. I well know that there was never anything in your mind that you could not say before all the world. (*There is a pause.*) Tell your mother, my darling.

(CROSBY *is now C. WILLIAM stands below him C.*)

HELEN (*beginning to cry*). I can't. I can't.

ROSALIE (*C.*). Stop, there 'as been crying enough. I did lose my 'ead through that. Stop crying or I will beat you. (*She too begins to cry and takes her daughter in her arms again.*) There, there, my dear. Your mother is not going to let anyone 'urt you--not anyone at all. (*They cry together for a moment, and then ROSALIE gets her self-control back. She blows her nose vigorously.*) We will both be the better for that. Now then, tell me.

HELEN. Mother, I can't.

ROSALIE (*R.C.*). Who did you promise you would not?

HELEN (*surprised*). Why, how did you---

ROSALIE. She is shielding someone.

HELEN. No. No.

ROSALIE. That is the first lie you 'ave ever told me. I want to know who it is you are shielding? (*HELEN does not answer. ROSALIE suddenly turns to WILLIAM.*) She is your girl?

WILLIAM (*L.C.*). Yes.

ROSALIE. Then make her tell.

WILLIAM (*to HELEN C.*). Nell dear, you must---

HELEN. Billy, I can't.

CROSBY (*drops down L. of group*). My dear, even if you're protecting someone else, I think you ought to tell us.

HELEN (*with a sudden outburst*). Why are you all against me? Why are you all trying to make me break my--

(*Moves to R. end of chesterfield. WILLIAM comes to her. CROSBY is L.C.*)

ROSALIE (*interrupting HELEN, coming to R.C.*). Break your word? You shall not. You need not tell. I know it myself now--I 'ave been blind. (*She turns suddenly on the INSPECTOR--moves to down table R., above him.*) You are the one that found out there was two Helens. The extra Helen, you said. Well, please to send for the other Helen and ask her.

HELEN. Mother, stop!

ROSALIE. Stop? I will not.

CROSBY(C.). Wait, please. Is it my daughter you're protecting? (HELEN *does not answer.*) Because if it is---much as we love her---my dear, we can't accept that sacrifice from you. I'm her father, and you must tell me the truth. Did my daughter send you? (*There is a long pause.*) Did you go for my daughter?

HELEN (*slowly*). Yes.

ROSALIE. I did know it. (*Above table R.*)

CROSBY. My daughter sent you. What for?

HELEN (R.C.). Some letters.

WILLIAM (*in front of chesterfield C.*). Why didn't she go herself?

HELEN. She was afraid.

DONOHUE (*still seated back of table R.*). Well, go on.

(HELEN *does not speak.*)

WILLIAM (R.C.). Tell him, dear, it's all right.

HELEN. I don't know what to say.

DONOHUE. Why not tell the truth? (*Rises and comes to chair below table R.*)

ROSALIE. Tell the Inspector what happened, dearie. (*Putting HELEN in chair front of table R.*)

HELEN. Nothing happened. That's the funny part of it. The minute Mr. Lee understood that I knew about the letters, everything was changed. I said that unless he gave them to me I'd tell Mr. Crosby about them. He seemed terribly upset. He said he hadn't meant to frighten Helen. That he loved her, and was desperate. I thought it was a funny kind of love, but I didn't tell him that. Then he gave me the letters.

DONOHUE. Was this before or after you had tea with him?

HELEN. Before.

DONOHUE. Go on. He gave you the letters?

HELEN (*seated in front of table R.*). Yes. And he seemed terribly unhappy. He begged me to stay and talk to him for a few minutes, and I did. He asked me to have some tea with him, and I did that too.

DONOHUE. How charming! What did you do after tea?

(ROSALIE *is at the back of the chair in the front of the table.*)

HELEN. I came home and gave Helen her letters.

DONOHUE. And that's all?

HELEN. That's all.

DONOHUE. Why did you do this?

HELEN. She's Billy's sister.

DONOHUE. My compliments, young woman. That was beautifully done. And she looks so innocent too.

WILLIAM (C). You don't believe---

DONOHUE. Not a word of it. Not one word.

ROSALIE. And why not?

DONOHUE. That I *don't* is sufficient. Her story is preposterous. Your daughter's--

WILLIAM. It is the truth.

DONOHUE. Do you expect me to believe for a minute that a man like Lee would threaten your daughter, and then when a total stranger comes to him and asks for the letters, give them up without a word? Why, no jury in the world

would believe your story.

WILLIAM. Jury? You're not going to arrest her?

DONOHUE. She is arrested.

ROSALIE. You 'ave not proof.

DONOHUE (*below table R.*). All the proof that I need. If she was innocent, why didn't she tell me all this when I first questioned her? Why did she wait until she knew that I had proof--that she had been in Spencer Lee's rooms?

WILLIAM. She was protecting my sister.

DONOHUE. Women don't hang together like that.

ROSALIE (*upper end of table R.*). Oh, they do, they do! The poor creatures!

DONOHUE (*down R.*). They do not. I know them. (*He turns to WILLIAM.*) She wasn't protecting your sister. She was protecting herself. She went for the letters, of course; and they had tea before she asked for them, not afterwards.

CROSBY (*R.C. to L. of WILLIAM*). How do you know that?

DONOHUE. She couldn't take tea with a man she's just killed.

WILLIAM. Why, *damn* you---- (*Starts R.*)

CROSBY (*grabbing WILLIAM by shoulders*). Billy!

WILLIAM (*breaks up stage a few steps, then down stage again*). I'm sorry. I didn't mean to lose my temper. I suppose we've got to take this thing calmly. Inspector, you honestly believe that Nelly killed this man?

DONOHUE. Yes.

WILLIAM. Why should she?

DONOHUE. She was engaged to you--he had compromising letters she had written to him--he was threatening her with exposure--she went to get her letters. They had tea together--she's admitted that, after we proved it, and then when he wouldn't give up her letters she killed him. So much for the first murder. (*Turns away.*) Now for the second: she was sitting next to Wales; he had already threatened her with exposure; in another minute the medium would have told her name as that of the person who had been at Spencer Lee's rooms. She pulled her hand away from his, struck and took his hand again. (*There is a pause.*) Young man, you'll have a hard time tearing apart that chain of evidence.

ROSALIE. Except for the fact that she did never write the man a letter in 'er life, it is a grand case you 'ave, Inspector.

WILLIAM (*down C. a step. CROSBY goes above WILLIAM C.*). Of course. Dad, we've lost our brains. She didn't go for her own letters. (*WILLIAM turns to the INSPECTOR.*) You were talking of juries. Do you think any jury will believe that a young girl would kill a man to get back another woman's letters for her? (*He starts toward door L.*)

CROSBY. Where are you going?

WILLIAM. To get my sister.

DONOHUE. Wait. (*WILLIAM stops.*) I'll send for Mrs. Trent.

WILLIAM (*crosses L.C.*). But I want to ask her----

DONOHUE (*interrupting him*). I'll ask my own questions. If you want to help this investigation, you might call Sergeant Dunn for me.

(*WILLIAM opens door at L.*)

WILLIAM. Sergeant Dunn, the Inspector wants you. (*He turns back to the girl, and DUNN enters L.*)

DONOHUE. Ask Mrs. Trent to come here.

(*DUNN exits at L. ROSALIE is at the R. end of chesterfield. HELEN is in the chair in front of the table R. WILLIAM C. CROSBY walks up L., then back to L.C. DONOHUE below the table looking at them with a grim smile. After a pause of about ten seconds MRS. TRENT and TRENT enter from L., followed by DUNN, who stands below the*

door.)

I sent for Mrs. Trent.

TRENT (L.C.). I know that. What do you want to see her about?

DONOHUE. Mrs. Trent, did you ask this girl to go to Spencer Lee's rooms to get letters you had written to him?

TRENT (*L. of* MRS. TRENT). Did she what?

DONOHUE. Did you, Mrs. Trent?

MRS. TRENT (L.C.). Certainly not.

HELEN. Why---- (*Rises from chair in front of table R.*)

DONOHUE (*sternly*). Keep still, you. (*To* MRS. TRENT.) Are you sure?

TRENT (*L. of* MRS. TRENT). Of course she's sure.

DONOHUE. Mr. Trent, you must stop these interruptions. (*To* MRS. TRENT.) Will you please answer my question?

MRS. TRENT. I never wrote a letter to Spencer Lee in my life. (*She suddenly turns to* HELEN.) How dare you say I sent you there?

HELEN. You did! You did! (*In front of table.*)

MRS. TRENT (*down* L.C.). I don't know what she's told you, Inspector, but----

DONOHUE. Never mind what she told me. I want to be very sure of this. You did not ask this girl to go to Spencer Lee's rooms?

MRS. TRENT. No.

DONOHUE (*down* R.). He had no letters of yours?

MRS. TRENT (L.C.). No.

DONOHUE. Do you know whether this girl had written to him?

MRS. TRENT. I don't know anything about it.

WILLIAM (*coming* L. *of* MRS. TRENT. CROSBY *comes* C.). But Nell didn't know Lee, and you did, Helen.

DONOHUE (*still down* R.). How about that, Mrs. Trent?

MRS. TRENT. I hadn't seen Mr. Lee for two or three years. He used to come here a good deal. He wanted to marry me, but I didn't like him. And I certainly never wrote him letters of any sort. That is all I can tell you.

DONOHUE. Thank you very much. That is all that I want to know.

WILLIAM (*turning on his sister*). You're lying to save yourself. You've got to tell the truth.

TRENT. She is telling you the truth.

WILLIAM. She's not.

CROSBY (*after a pause, putting his hand on his son's shoulder*). I'm sorry, Billy.

(*WILLIAM goes up to chesterfield C. and sits. CROSBY looks coldly at HELEN and turns to his daughter.*)

MRS. TRENT. Father, you know that----

CROSBY. Yes, dear, I know. Inspector, do you want us any more?

DONOHUE. Not any more, thank you.

CROSBY. Come then, children. (*He exits with* MR. *and* MRS. TRENT *down* L.)

(*HELEN is still in front of the table R. As the door closes, DONOHUE crosses to L.C.*)

DONOHUE. Mike, take her down town.

ROSALIE (C.). I would not if I was you. Inspector, I do know who 'as done it.

(WILLIAM *rises.*)

DONOHUE (*turning to ROSALIE C.*). You know! Who was it?

ROSALIE. I cannot tell you yet. (DONOHUE *laughs.* WILLIAM *goes to HELEN.*) But I will! I will!

DONOHUE. Telling's not enough. There's just one thing that will convince me that she didn't kill Spencer Lee.

WILLIAM (*down E.*). What, Inspector, what?

DONOHUE. The confession of the one who did. (*He turns to ROSALIE.*) Bring me that and I'll set your daughter free.

ROSALIE (C.). Inspector, give me a chance. Do not arrest my little girl. Give me time. I do know who 'as done it and I will get for you what you want.

DONOHUE (L.C.). Nonsense!

ROSALIE (*moves up to INSPECTOR*). Give me one hour, sir. Keep them all here one hour more.

DONOHUE. No.

WILLIAM (*in front of table R.*). Give her a chance. We are all here--no one will get away. What difference will a few minutes make?

(*There is a pause. DONOHUE takes out his watch and looks at it.*)

DONOHUE. I'll give her ten minutes. Mike, tell Doolan again to arrest anyone trying to leave the house, and get on the front door yourself and stay there until I tell you. (DUNN *turns and exits at L.*) You've got just ten minutes.

(*He follows DUNN off L.*)

ROSALIE. Ten minutes! Ten minutes!

(WILLIAM *crosses to door L. and closes it.*)

WILLIAM (L.C.). Why didn't you *tell* who did it?

ROSALIE (C.). How could I? I 'ave no idea in the world. But I am going to find out. I am going to find out.

HELEN (B.C.). But how, mother, how?

ROSALIE. Call them back. Make them all come, too. I want them all. (HELEN *runs off L.*) Sir, run down into the 'all. Do you know which is Mr. Wales' overcoat?

WILLIAM. Yes, I think so.

ROSALIE. See if you can find for me a glove or something of 'is--and 'urry, *mon Dieu*, 'urry!

(WILLIAM *runs off L.* ROSALIE *stands in thought for a moment, then she places a chair C. facing up stage.*
WILLIAM *runs on again and hands her a glove.*)

Did you get it?

WILLIAM (L.C.). What are you going to do?

ROSALIE (L.C.). Trick them. Lie to them. It is for Nelly. Do you blame me?

WILLIAM. What can I do to help?

ROSALIE. You are a man after my own 'eart. I am going to do something to put the fear of God into the 'eart of that murderer. Do not pay any attention to me. Watch *them*. Do not look at me, do not take your eyes off them. I am looking for one of them to do something that will show us the way. It is our only chance.

(HELEN runs in L.)

HELEN. They're coming.

ROSALIE. Leave the door open so we can hear them. (HELEN does so and returns to her mother, standing L. of ROSALIE.) Child, kiss me for luck. (They kiss.) It will do no harm to kiss him, too. (They kiss.) Now, my boy, can you lie?

WILLIAM. Can I!

ROSALIE (C.). I am going into a trance. When they do come into the room you will tell them that I asked for Mr. Wales' glove and the minute I have it in my hand I went off like they see me. Tell them you thought there might be some reason for it. And then leave the rest to me. (She sits in the chair C., facing the back of the stage.)

WILLIAM. I understand.

ROSALIE. You stand here at the back of me. I wish for them all to be in front of me. (WILLIAM crosses back of ROSALIE to R. side of ROSALIE'S chair. HELEN crosses R. of ROSALIE above her.) Nelly, stand close by me. (To WILLIAM.) Go farther back. (HELEN moves to R. of ROSALIE.) That's right. Now don't you move from there. This will be the realest trance and the grandest fake. When I come out, make them go away, tell them you are afraid and that it will kill me to see anyone.

(She suddenly stiffens in her chair. Lying rigid with her head thrown back on the head-rest, and the hand in which she is holding WALES' glove stretched out straight in front of her. Enter down L., CROSBY, MISS EASTWOOD, STANDISH, TRENT, MRS. CROSBY, MRS. TRENT, MISS ERSKINE and MISS STANDISH.)

CROSBY (crossing to up L.C.). What is it, Billy?

(MISS EASTWOOD goes to the L. side of ROSALIE'S chair, MRS. TRENT and MRS. CROSBY L. of chesterfield C.; TRENT, MISS ERSKINE and STANDISH lower L. end of chesterfield.)

STANDISH. What's happened?

WILLIAM (R. side of ROSALIE'S chair). I don't know, exactly. We were talking about this awful thing. She knew, of course, that her daughter couldn't have done it, and she asked me to get her something that had belonged to poor Wales. I got a glove out of Wales' overcoat pocket and handed it to her, and then all of a sudden she went stiff like that. I don't know what it means.

(The others draw closer to ROSALIE. MISS EASTWOOD comes to ROSALIE and lays her hand on her forehead.)

MISS EASTWOOD. She's like ice, she's not--- (Backing up C. a few steps.)

HELEN. Oh, no, it's a trance.

(MASON enters L.)

MASON. I wouldn't touch her if I were you.

ROSALIE. (Speaking as LAUGHING EYES.) Hello, everybody! What are you all so solemn about? I've got a message from a new friend. He do not want me to send it--he wants to talk; ha, ha, ha, he thinks he can talk, and he 'as only been here a little while. (Still speaking as LAUGHING EYES.) He says you are all fools. It is so plain, so plain. He is looking right at the one who did it, right straight at the one who did it.

WALES' VOICE. I'm coming to you until you tell. I can't speak names. You've got to tell, I'm coming, again and again and again, until you tell. Find the knife. You must find the knife. The marks will show. The marks will show.

(MISS EASTWOOD shrieks and faints on L. end of chesterfield. MASON is below end of chesterfield looking at her. WILLIAM is standing R. side and back of ROSALIE looking eagerly about him. HELEN turns and looks at MISS EASTWOOD. MRS. CROSBY goes to MISS EASTWOOD on chesterfield.)

MASON. This has got to stop. (Starts to move to ROSALIE'S chair--L. side of it.)

HELEN (R. *side of ROSALIE'S chair*). You mustn't touch her.

MASON. It's all right as far as the men are concerned, but look at that girl. (*He points to MISS EASTWOOD on the chesterfield.*) They'll all be fainting if this isn't stopped.

(TRENT *goes to ROSALIE.*)

WALES' VOICE. Trent, let the medium alone. Do you understand? Let the medium alone.

TRENT. That's Wales' voice--and Wales is dead.

(MASON *goes slowly to ROSALIE'S chair. TRENT moves L. above MASON to STANDISH. ROSALIE begins to mutter and moan. Suddenly she brings her hands together, and then throws her arms wide apart. WALES' glove sails out of her hand and strikes MASON on the face. It falls to the floor.*)

(STANDISH *exits very quietly door down L. MASON picks glove up, holding it in his hand--looks at it--suddenly drops it to the floor--turns to MRS. CROSBY.*)

MASON. Mrs. Crosby, shall I take Miss Eastwood to your room for you?

MRS. CROSBY. Yes, please, Philip.

(MISS ERSKINE *moves to door L. MASON assists MISS EASTWOOD and helps her from the room, exiting door down L. MRS. CROSBY goes out L. TRENT wipes his hands with handkerchief. ROSALIE stirs uneasily and moans.*)

HELEN (*standing R. side of ROSALIE'S chair*). Please leave her to me. I'm afraid seeing you all here will trouble her. I'm afraid she'll--- Oh, won't you please go.

(*The others turn, move towards the door down L. and go out.*)

CROSBY (*below L. end of chesterfield*). Let me know if there's anything I can do.

(ROSALIE *moans again.*)

HELEN. Yes, yes. Only please go now.

(CROSBY *goes out L. WILLIAM runs quickly to the door at L., closes it and then turns to ROSALIE, who is sitting up in her chair.*)

ROSALIE (*rises and crosses a step R.*). Well?

HELEN (R.C.). It was the Eastwood girl. Her face was terrible. I was glad when she fainted.

WILLIAM (L.C.). I think you're wrong. Standish ran away. He couldn't bear it.

ROSALIE. And *that* is all you saw? I told you to use your eyes and the brains that are at the back of them.

WILLIAM. Well, of course, there was Trent. You can't mean Trent? Why, he's the kindest man in the world. (*There is a pause.*) The letters. If he's known the truth about the letters. (*Breaks L. a step.*)

HELEN (*coming down to L. of ROSALIE'S chair and picking up glove*). Mother, why did you throw that glove at Mason?

ROSALIE. Did it hit him? Well, well! Well, any'ow it was a good seance.

(ROSALIE *crosses down R.C.*)

HELEN (*moving to L. side of ROSALIE*). Mother, you know? You've found out?

(WILLIAM *takes ROSALIE'S chair up L. and then comes down L.*)

ROSALIE. It is one thing to know and another to prove.

HELEN (L. of ROSALIE). Mother, who was it?

ROSALIE. Child, child, do you think it is a game we do play? I 'ave two or three minutes. What I 'ave to do I 'ave to do quickly.

HELEN. But what, mother, what?

ROSALIE. I do not know! I do not know! Child, if you do not get away from me you will drive me mad.

WILLIAM. But can't we----

ROSALIE. This is no work for children. Leave me alone and let me think.

(WILLIAM and HELEN run off L., closing door.)

ROSALIE. He will never tell in the world. Never in all this world. (L.C. *Half in thought.*) Laughing Eyes, you are no good to me in the world. We 'ave faked all our lives, and now when I want the real thing I get nothing at all. If I could find the knife, there would be marks of a 'and on that. But it is gone. It is gone. I cannot let 'im get away. I want a sign. I want a sign. Laughing Eyes, are we going to be beaten by a scheming, cold-hearted murderer?

(Two knocks are heard outside the door down L. After five seconds two further knocks. ROSALIE starts and looks hastily around the room.)

I did not do that. I did not do that. (She lifts her skirt and sees that her feet are still in her shoes.) It is come! After all the years, a real message. A real message. I will 'ave it in the dark, believing and trusting that I am to be shown.

(She crosses down to door L. and switches off the light. All the lights in the room are out. The spot from the window shines on the ceiling, brilliantly illuminating the knife. ROSALIE moves C.)

Laughing Eyes, have you a message for me? (She looks up at knife in ceiling.) Look at it! The knife!

(The door at L. opens, POLLOCK stands in the doorway. He sees that the lights are out and turns them on. Then he sees ROSALIE, who is standing C., facing front as in a trance.)

POLLOCK. Excuse me, madam. I knocked twice, but you didn't hear me.

ROSALIE. I 'eard you. Just the same, it was a message.

POLLOCK. The Inspector says, have you got anything you want to tell him?

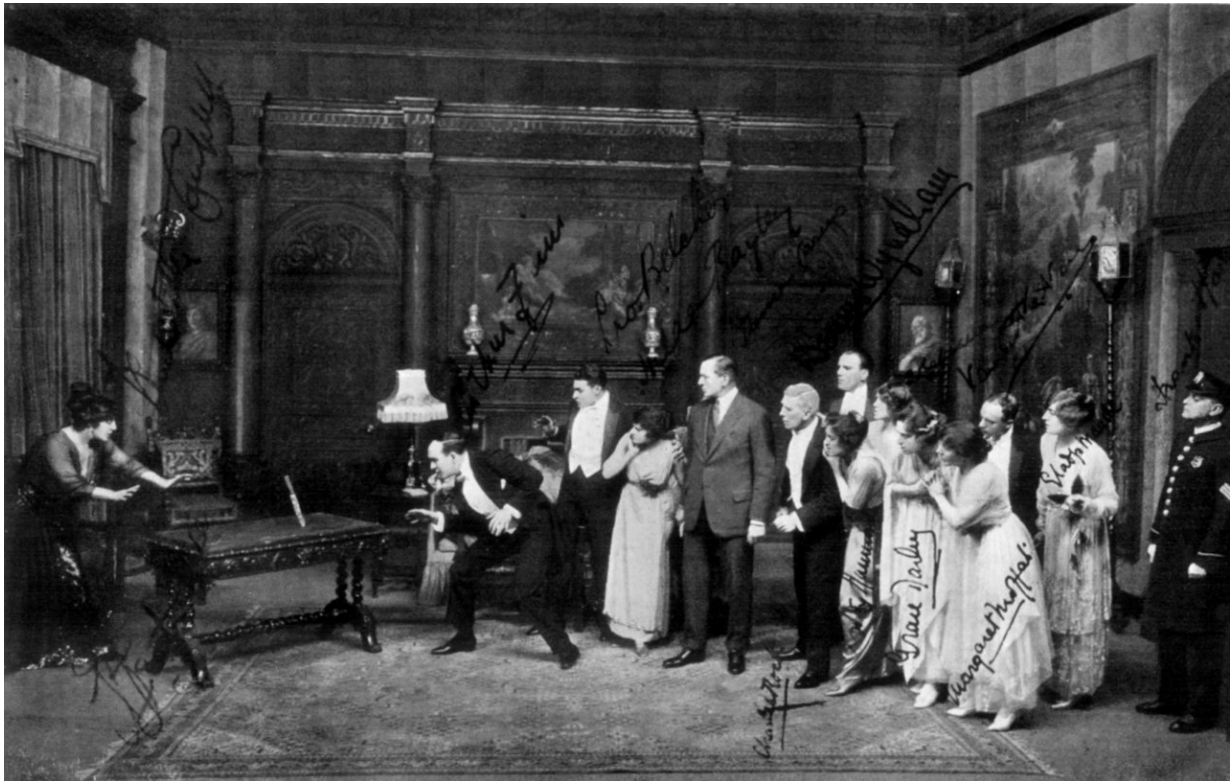
(ROSALIE stands lost in thought. POLLOCK looks at her for a moment and then nervously begins to place the chair below table to up R. corner of scene. He notices that the window blind is up, goes over and pulls it down and draws the curtains. He then comes back to ROSALIE, above table R.)

The Inspector says, have you got anything you want to tell him.

(ROSALIE drops down R. in front of table. DONOHUE enters from L.)

DONOHUE (moving C). Time's about up. (He laughs.) Well?

ROSALIE (below table R.). I want them all here. All of them. Everyone.



DONOHUE. What for?

ROSALIE. You are going to 'ear the murderer confess.

DONOHUE. Pollock, ask Mr. Crosby to bring everyone here, (*Crosses R. to above table.*)

POLLOCK. Very good, sir.

(*He exits L. DONOHUE takes out his watch and stands with it in his hand watching ROSALIE. She stands lost in her dreams. DUNN enters with HELEN O'NEILL down L.*)

DUNN. Here she is, Inspector.

DONOHUE. Come here, miss. (*HELEN crosses to DONOHUE. To DUNN.*) Go and get a taxi.

(*DUNN turns and exits L. The others enter and stand crowding in the doorway. WILLIAM pushes through and crosses and stands by HELEN up R.C. right end of chesterfield.*)

CROSBY (*up L.C.*). What is it? You sent for us.

DONOHUE (*between table and chesterfield*). She says her daughter's not guilty. I gave her ten minutes to find out who is. The time's up. (*He puts his watch back in his pocket. He turns to ROSALIE.*) Well?

(*ROSALIE stands rigid. There is a long pause.*)

ROSALIE (*below table R.*). You that is 'iding, come out!

DONOHUE. Come on. (*He takes HELEN by the hand. They go up R. above table.*)

ROSALIE (*lower end of table R.*). You that is skulking, come out! I call on the spirit of Edward Wales. I call on the spirit of Edward Wales. Now, you that's killed two men, look!

(*The door at L. of fireplace slowly swings open. MASON with a cry of horror pushes through the crowd at the doorway, which parts to let him through. He follows the spirit he sees moving across the stage until he is C. and*

a little above the table. MRS. TRENT, MISS ERSKINE and STANDISH below door down L. TRENT, MRS. CROSBY, MISS EASTWOOD C. above door L. WILLIAM up R.C. All watch MASON. Suddenly the window curtains are thrown back, the blind runs up noisily and the lights go down. The street light strikes the knife in the ceiling, as it begins to fall. MASON'S eye follows the light. He sees the knife and gives a cry of horror as it strikes the table and sticks in front of him. MASON rushes up stage end of table R.)

MASON (*with a cry*). I can't fight the dead. I can't fight the dead!

(Slowly ROSALIE points at him. The others stand and stare.)

ROSALIE. Go on, tell it. (*Lower R. side of table R.*)

MASON. I had to do it. I was afraid Mr. Wales would know.

ROSALIE. You did kill them both?

MASON. Yes.

ROSALIE. Mr. Wales to prevent 'im finding out about Spencer Lee?

MASON. Yes.

ROSALIE. And Spencer Lee?

MASON. He ought to have been killed. I'd been waiting for years to kill him.

ROSALIE. Why?

MASON. That's between him and me. He smashed my life, and by God, I got him. He knows why I killed him, I told him I would. I'm glad I did. I only wish I could have done it over and over again. That's all.

ROSALIE. Why did you kill Spencer Lee?

MASON. He took her away from me. She was the one thing in the world and he took her away from me. I went to Paris to forget and all I could do was to remember. Then she died, and I made up my mind that he must die too.

DONOHUE. How did you get the knife in the ceiling?

MASON. I threw it. Just as I threw a knife into Spencer Lee's back. I stood in the doorway of his room and told him I'd come to kill him, and he ran for his revolver and as he ran I threw the knife into his back. Then I picked up my knife and walked away. No one saw me. I was quite safe. Quite safe until she came. And unseen hands pushed me forward. Unseen hands have pointed the way. She's not human. Lee's message came through her—you all heard Wales speak; out of her lips we heard Wales' voice. He said he'd come back, again and again and again. And then he came! I saw him as he came through the door! God Almighty, you can't fight the dead!

(He turns suddenly and walks to door L. As he opens it SERGEANT DUNN steps into the room.)

DONOHUE. That's your man, Sergeant.

DUNN (*putting his hand on MASON'S arm*). You got him?

DONOHUE. Yes, I got him.

DUNN. Great work, chief, great work. (*He takes MASON off down L.*)

(HELEN crosses down to lower end of table R.)

ROSALIE (*as they disappear from view*). The poor young man! the poor young man!

DONOHUE. Ladies and gentlemen, you are all quite at liberty.

(He goes toward door L.)

CROSBY. Thank you, Inspector, for your consideration.

DONOHUE. Not at all, it was the best way out of it.

ROSALIE. Inspector! (Coming below table R. to R.C.)

DONOHUE (halfturning). Yes.

ROSALIE. My congratulations.

(He looks at her for a moment, then turns back and shakes hands with her.)

DONOHUE. You were quite right about me. I was a damn fool.

(He exits at L. HELEN comes below table R.)

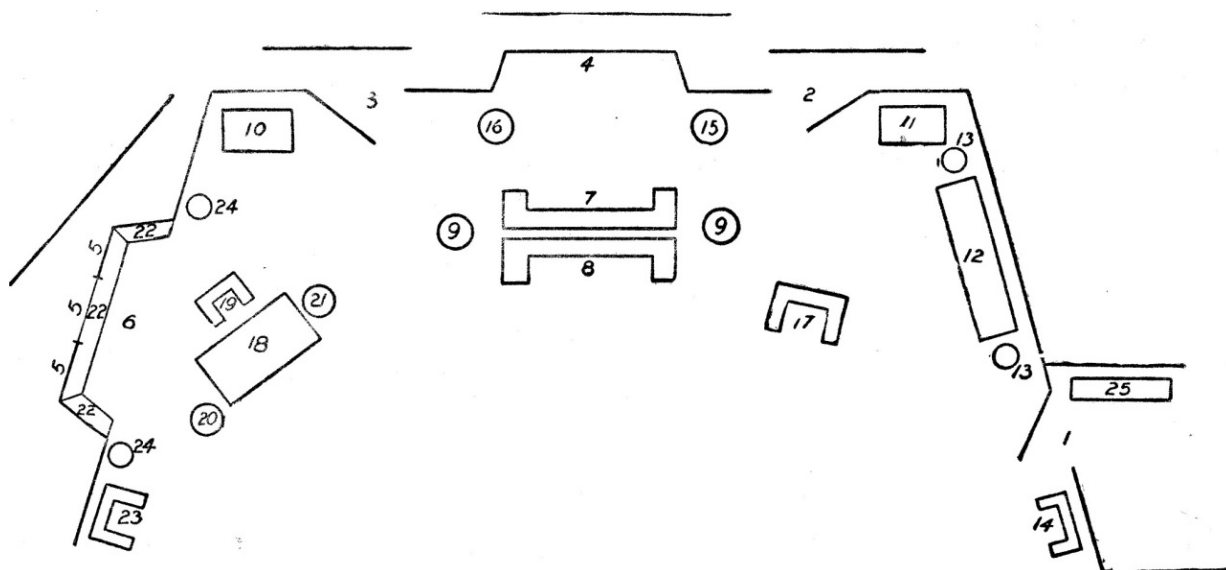
MRS. TRENT (turning to her father up L.C. with a cry). Oh, daddy, daddy! I lied about her! I lied about her!

(CROSBY takes her in his arms, up L. HELEN crosses to ROSALIE from below table R.)

ROSALIE (C.). There is nothing but 'appiness coming to you. The spirits tell me you are the favourite child of fortune. You will 'ave wealth and prosperity and 'appiness. You will marry the man you love, and you will be 'appy.

The CURTAIN falls.

ACT I.



The Explanation of the Figures is given on the Opposite Page.

Italian Room in ROSCOE CROSBY'S home. New York. A handsomely furnished square room. 1. Door opening on stage down L. 2. Door opening on stage at back L.C. 3. Door opening on stage R.C. 4. Large fireplace C. at back. The fireplace with antique fire-dogs must be large enough for man to make an entrance coming through chimney. 5. Large window over R. in arch. 6. Platform one step high running full length of window, which is three sashes long. Trick blind on centre pane. Curtains on pole on centre windows to work on cue. 7. Up C. in front of fireplace facing up stage, large chesterfield sofa two feet wide. 8. Facing audience another large chesterfield sofa, C., sofas back to back. 9. At each end of sofas small console tables. Console table at right end of sofa is the trick table which ROSALIE lifts. On console tables at either end of sofa, table lamps. On console table left end of sofa, fancy cigarettes box with cigarettes and match-box and ash-tray. 10. Right of the door, R.C., large antique Italian chest. 11. Left of door, L.C., large antique chest. Vases on chests. On flat over L. large tapestry. 12. Against wall over L. running up and down stage long ornate Italian chest. 13. At either end of this chest Italian lamps, seven feet high, standing on floor. Below door down L., on flat, an antique clock. 14. Below door down L., arm-chair. 15. Left side of fireplace chair with cushion seat. On mantel two large

antique vases. 16. Right side of fireplace, chair with cushion seat. 17. Large arm-chair. 18. Over right is a large library table sitting diagonally up and down stage. On table: book-rack with four books, desk-pad, stationery-holder with stationery, pens, pencils, ink-box, magazines. 19. Arm-chair back of table. 20. Chair below table. 21. Chair above table. 22. On platform in window arch, long seat. 23. Below window arch long arm-chair. 24. Large wall lanterns, on up stage and down stage, end of window arch. Plush valence or drapery for windows. Rugs on ground cloth. On flat right of doors up R.C. small-sized, painted, image of the Virgin. Interior backing for door down L., up L.C., and R.C. Fireplace backing. Exterior backing for window over R. 25. Off stage down L. large Italian table with two bronze vases, and a shrine of the Virgin on it. Off stage R.C. are eight small chairs, to be brought on stage on cue during First Act. In ceiling, directly over table R., is a double slot to hold knives. During First Act, after WILLIAM puts out table lamp, after MISS EASTWOOD'S *scream*, the knife in down stage slot is let down in sight of audience. *Seen with point sticking in ceiling*. Between Second and Third Acts, the knife that falls on cue, during Third Act, is placed up stage slot in ceiling, with point downwards. Setting the knife down in view of audience in First Act, as well as releasing the second knife so that it falls, and sticks in table during Third Act, is worked by strings off stage R.

LIGHT PLOT.

Foots full rose, ambers 3/4 at rise. Light switch down stage side of door down L. Hanging lamps, post lamps, table lamps, lit. Amber strip in doorway down L. lit. One light strip amber, in doorway R.C. and L.C. Two light strip amber, hung on fireplace backing. Two blue bunches outside window R., lit. Baby amber shooting across stage from window R. Baby amber striking mantel up C. from window R. Baby amber down L. at proscenium arch shooting across stage, lit. Blue baby focused to strike ROSALIE in chair C. from window R., OUT AT RISE. White frost spot in position outside of window R. to strike ceiling on cue, OUT AT RISE.

1ST CUE.--When ROSALIE lifts table first time sneak off baby down stage L., also baby from window R. that starts across stage.

2ND CUE.--After POLLOCK locks door down L., all entrance strips and baby down L., out.

3RD CUE.--When CROSBY pushes button, all foots out. Brackets out, lamp posts out. Amber babies at window R., out. At same time, white spot light on ceiling LIT.

4TH CUE.--When WILLIAM pulls chain on table lamp right end of chesterfield, table lamp out. Two babies from window out.

5TH CUE.--When CROSBY says, "The reflection on the ceiling is too strong," WILLIAM pulls chain on table lamp right end of chesterfield, table lamp and two babies from window right, LIT.

6TH CUE.--WILLIAM pulls down window shade, spot on ceiling and blue bunches OUT. Then when WILLIAM pulls chain on the table lamp right end of chesterfield, table lamp, two babies outside window R., OUT.

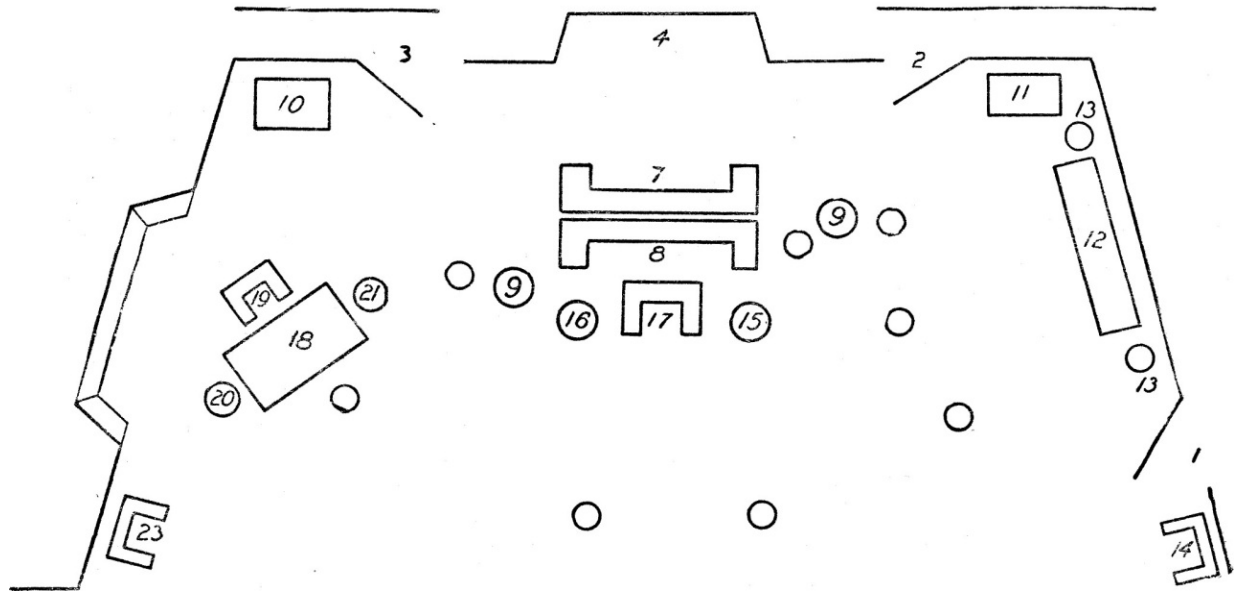
7TH CUE.--When CROSBY calls for light, table lamp right end of chesterfield, LIT. Two babies from window LIT. Amber foots 1/4 LIT. Bring on blue baby outside window R.

8TH CUE.--When WILLIAM pulls chain on table lamp right end of chesterfield, table lamp, two babies, amber foots, OUT, leaving blue spot, LIT.

9TH CUE.--When CROSBY calls for light, table lamp right end of chesterfield, LIT; two amber babies, LIT; amber foots, 3/8 LIT.

NOTE.--All house lights in front (Auditorium) must be OUT when ROSALIE and ladies enter after ROSALIE has been searched. This is very important.

ACT II.



The Position of the Chairs at the Commencement of the Act.

LIGHTING PLOT FOR ACT II.

Amber foots, half up. Hanging brackets, lamp posts, table lamps, entrance strips, LIT. Amber baby down in L. first entrance, LIT. Blue bunches outside of window R., LIT. Fireplace, LIT. Lights stand during this Act.

ACT III.

The eight small chairs that were brought on in the First Act are taken off stage. The big arm-chair that ROSALIE sat in has been taken up the left corner of set. Table has been moved up and on stage about a foot. The knife that is to fall on given cue has been placed in slot in ceiling. The window blind is pulled down, the curtains on window are opened. Arm-chair back of table R. Chair below table R. Chair above table R. Chesterfield has been moved down stage C. about a foot. Shelf back of chesterfield has been fixed for WALES to lie on. Console table back in its original position, right end of chesterfield C. Chairs with upholstered seats put back to left and right sides of fireplace. Door down L., open.

Be sure to clear everything off table R.C. for knife.

LIGHTING PLOT FOR ACT III.

Everything OUT at RISE except amber strip and amber baby in left first entrance and blue bunches outside of window, R., which are LIT.

1ST CUE.--After prayer, ROSALIE raises window shade, white spot on knife in ceiling, LIT.

2ND CUE.--Inspector pushes switch, lights lit, amber foots 1/2, table lamps, brackets, post lights, LIT.

NOTE.--No lights in entrance R.C., L.C., and fireplace.

3RD CUE.--ROSALIE pushes light switch, foots, table lamps, brackets, post lights, OUT. Spot on knife from outside window R., LIT.

4TH CUE.--POLLOCK pushes light switch, amber foots, table lamps, brackets, post lights, LIT same as AT RISE. Spot on knife, out.

5TH CUE.--ROSALIE says, "I call on the spirit of Edward Wales," start to dim foots to 1/8. Must be down on word "look." As window shade flies up, spot on knife, LIT. As knife leaves ceiling spot OUT and amber foots, flash up, full.

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