

Attention, all actors. Little Theatre of Owatonna is recruiting actors to fill the cast for its upcoming production of the comedy *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, and the theatre company is looking for you to take part in the audition process.

The auditions will take place on Sunday, February 18 and Monday, February 19 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00p.m. at Little Theatre of Owatonna, 560 Dunnell Drive, Owatonna, Minnesota.

By way of introduction, my name is Jeffrey Jackson, and I am the director of the show. Here's some insight on how I run auditions — useful information, I hope for those of you who have never tried out for one of my shows — and some additional information that you can use for the auditions.

Here's what you need to do:

1. Take a look at the character descriptions page, you will notice the names of the various characters and a rough age range for each character, though some will be listed as "age flexible."

NOTE: The age range does not mean that the actor has to be in that age range, but rather has to be able to play a character in that range.

The description also contains a very brief description of what the character is like — descriptions such as "acerbic, high-energy, and high maintenance," "efficient, smart assistant," "beautiful, over-the-top stage actress," "confident, British actor, who dominates a room when he enters," "benign, somewhat daft doctor," "nosey neighbor," and so forth. Start to imagine yourself in one *or more* of the roles, but be open to other roles.

2. Take a look at the scenes that will be used at the auditions, paying special attention to the characters you are interested in, but once again — and I can't emphasize this enough — being open to playing others as well. Go over the scenes as much as possible in preparation for the auditions.

On the evenings of the audition, you will come into the theater with all the other actors trying out for a role. You will be called up to the stage — most likely several times, so stick around — to read for a role or roles. I may stop you during the reading and ask you to try something — walking a certain way, talking a certain way, give a different reading of a line. This will allow me to see your range and how well you take direction.

Your reading of various roles with various different actors allows me and my crew chiefs to see how you might act in the different roles and to see how you might act with other actors. Theater is a collaborative art, so I listen to what my crew has to say about the various actors in various roles, but ultimately, I make the decision on who I want in what role.

Above all, remember that this is a fun show. Have fun.

If there are any questions, contact the technical director, Melanie Abraham at mabraham.owatonna@gmail.com

Little Theatre of Owatonna

The Man Who Came To Dinner

Spring 2024

Character Descriptions

Sheridan Whiteside (male, mid-40s to mid-50s) — acerbic, high-energy and high maintenance radio personality who comes to dominate the Stanley household. He says and does whatever he wants regardless of the consequences. Despite his bombastic demeanor, he does have his charms, keeping us all wondering what he will do next.

Maggie Cutler (female, mid- to late 30s)— efficient, smart assistant to Sheridan. She's all business and has no time for Sheridan's narcissistic nonsense. She dispatches the details of his life with military efficiency and has developed a playful working relationship with Sheridan---making him seem more human. She's restless though---eager for a little romance and to be out from under Sheridan's shadow. When needed, she can defend herself and those she cares about.

Lorraine Sheldon (female, early 30s to early 40s) — beautiful, over-the-top stage actress who will do anything for a part. She's convinced she's right for every role and every man, and she will travel the world to land a part...or the man of her dreams.

Bert Jefferson (early 30s to early 40s) — earnest, ambitious local reporter, who is eager to interview Sheridan. He is warm and charming and clearly bright. But he's no match for the schemes of Sheridan and Lorraine. He's much better suited for the loyal and hard-working Maggie.

Mrs. Stanley (50s) —traditional, socially-ambitious, upper-class housewife of late 1930s. At first, she is delighted to have Sheridan to dinner at her house, but as his rule of terror unfolds, she finds herself juggling an impatient husband, children eager to pursue their dreams, and a penguin or two.

Mr. Stanley (50s) — the foil to Sheridan. Mr. Stanley is a conservative, proper businessman and father. He is used to order in his upscale, Ohio home. He tolerates Sheridan's chaos at first to appease his wife, but his patience wears thin. 50s

Richard Stanley (early 20s) — son of the Stanleys. He's earnest, hard-working, and well-intentioned. He respects his parents, but finds himself ready to set out on his own and pursue his dream of becoming a photographer. At first intimidated by Sheridan, he grows to admire Sheridan's zest for life.

June Stanley (early 20s) — spirited and charming daughter of the Stanley's. She, like her brother, loves her parents, but is ready to be set free. She has a secret romance with Sandy, a man who does not meet the approval of her father. 20s.

Harriet Stanley (mid-50s to mid-60s) the elusive and mysterious sister of Mr. Stanley, who is "not quite of this world." She seems to appear from nowhere and has an odd and elusive connection to Sheridan.

Miss Preen (age flexible) — no nonsense nurse, whose face tells it all. Her deadpan delivery and matter-of-fact manner contrast sharply to Sheridan's verbal calisthenics. She takes it for just so long, and then...

Beverly Carlton (early 40s to early 60s) —confident, British actor, who dominates a room when he enters. He has a rich voice and is able to sing. He sees what Sheridan and Lorraine are up to, and is ready to make mischief of his own when the occasion calls. *Actor must be able to speak in a sophisticated British accent and be able to sing.*

Banjo (mid-30s to mid-50s) — the act three dynamo who bursts onto the scene. He's a long-time friend of Sheridan. He's an energetic, funny, crazy actor — up for anything. He decides to leave the whirlwind of Hollywood to spend Christmas with Sheridan.

Prof. Metz (50s to 60s) — the world's greatest authority on insect life. Crazy hair and the mad scientist demeanor radiate from this academic character.

Dr. Bradley (late 50s to mid-70s) — the benign, somewhat daft doctor, who gets a little confused by the details of medicine. He is desperate to have his memoirs published.

John (age flexible) — the head butler of the Stanley household. He runs a tight ship, but early on develops an affinity for Sheridan's chaotic and colorful life.

Sarah (age flexible) — the chef of the house. She's exacting and diligent, eager to please. She's quite taken by Sheridan, especially when he praises her soufflé and then offers her the chance to work for him in New York.

Sandy (mid-20s to early 30s) — boyfriend of June, working-class union leader who is trying organize the men in Mr. Stanley's plant. He loves June but has disdain for Mr. Stanley and his conservative politics. *Actor will be asked to double up as a convict and/or a plain clothes policeman.*

Mrs. McCutcheon (mid-40s to early 60s) — the nosey neighbor who is out of her mind that "the" Sheridan Whiteside has arrived in town. She's a little pushy and all too eager to mix with the rich and famous.

Mrs. Dexter (mid-40s to early 60s) — Mrs. McCutcheon, friend and sidekick, who is also eager to meet and share her small-town hospitality with the Ohio's most famous guest.

Wetscott/Baker (age flexible) — **As Wescott**, radio producer, who has one task: deliver the Christmas broadcast of his lifetime, despite chaos erupting around him. **As Baker**, he is the lead guard of the three prisoners.

Deputy/Delivery Man (age flexible) — **As Deputy**, the law and order man of this small Ohio town; he's paid on the side for making sure Mr. Stanley's wishes are met.

Expressman/Convict (age flexible) — delivery man who is oblivious to the chaos he is entering; afterall, there's a job to be done.

Little Theatre of Owatonna

The Man Who Came To Dinner

Spring 2024
Audition Scenes

pages

- 6 - 8 **June, Mrs. Stanley, Miss Preen, Sarah, Mrs. McCutcheon, Mrs. Dexter**
Start with Sarah's line, "Yes,,, Yes, that's right"
End with Mrs. Stanely line, "He may even read 'Goodbye, Mr. Chips' to us."
- 16 - 17 **[Bert] Jefferson, Whiteside, Maggie**
Start with Whiteside's line, "There's nobody home! The Stanleys have been arrested for white slavery. Go away!"
End with Whiteside line, "Mmm. Pecan butternut fudge."
- 18 - 19 **Whiteside**
Start with Whiteside line, "Sit down, Jefferson. Make yourself comfortable."
End with Whiteside line, "And in the men's washroom, every Christmas Eve, the ghost `of Elias P. Crockfield appears in one of the booths."
- 24 **Harriet and Whiteside**
Start with Harriet Stanley's line, "Dear Mr. Whiteside, may I show you some mementos of the past?"
End with Harriet Stanley's line, "What happy times we had. What —"
- 25 - 27 **Mrs. Stanley, Stanley, Whiteside, June, Richard**
Start with Mrs. Whiteside's line, "Now Ernest, please."
End with Richard's line, "Thank you, Mr. Whiteside. I got a great one."
- 27 - 30 **Whiteside and Maggie**
Start with Maggie's line, "Good evening, Sherry. Really, Sherry, you've got this room looking like an old parrot cage,,"
End with Whiteside's line, "This is Mesalia 1-4-2-1. I want to talk to Miss Lorraine Sheldon — S-H-E-L-D-O-N..."
- 30 - 31 **Whiteside and Bradley**
Start with Bradley's line, "Well, well, good evening, Mr. Whiteside!"
End with Bradley's line, "You've made me very proud, Mr. Whiteside."
- 33 - 34 **John, Maggie, Sarah, and Bert [Jefferson]**
Start with John's line, "Well, I guess that's all there are, Miss Cutler. They're all under the tree."
End with Maggie's line, "All right."
- 36 - 37 **Whiteside, Bradley, Miss Preen**
Start with Whiteside's line, "I don't suppose there's any whale blubber in this town ..."
End with Miss Preen's line, "Yes, sir."

39 - 40 **Whiteside, June, Sandy**

Start with Whiteside line, "June, my lamb, you were too young to know about the Elwell murder, weren't you ..."

End with June's line, "Sandy's leaving tonight, Mr. Whiteside. He'll probably be gone for a year, We've simply got to decide. Now."

42 - 45 **Whiteside and Lorraine**

Start with Whiteside's line, "Lorraine, my blossom girl."

End with Lorraine's line, "Haven't you seen this before. Cedric gave it to me for his mother's birthday. She was simply furious."

47 - 50 **Whiteside, Beverly, Maggie**

Start with Whiteside's line, "Come in here, you Piccadilly pen pusher..."

End with Beverly's line, "Won't have time, Maggie, unless he's under the piano."

52 - 53 **Maggie and Beverly**

Start with Maggie's line, "Beverly, I'm in great trouble."

End with Beverly's line, "Goodbye, my lovely. I adore you."

54 - 56 **Maggie and Lorraine**

Start with Lorraine's line, "Hello, dear. Where's Sherry?"

End with Lorraine's line, "Goodbye, goodbye, darling. Goodbye."

66 - 67 **Harriett and Whiteside**

Start with Harriett's line, "Merry Christmas, Mr. Whiteside."

End with Whiteside's line, "Goodbye, Miss Stanley."

68 - 70 **Banjo and Whiteside**

Start with Banjo's line, "Whiteside, I'm here to spend Christmas with you. Give me a kiss."

End with Whiteside's line, "In the words of one of our greatest lyric poets, you said it."

MISS PREEN. (*Exit to library.*) No, thank you.

(*The voice is heard again as she opens the doors. "Don't call yourself a Doctor in my presence!"*) RICHARD returns from the hall L., carrying two huge packages and a sheaf of cablegrams. His entrance cue is sound of library doors closing.)

RICHARD. (*Crosses to sofa, puts packages on floor R. of sofa, telegrams on table back of sofa.*) Four more cablegrams and more packages . . . Dad is going crazy upstairs, with that bell ringing all the time.

(*Meanwhile JUNE, the daughter of the house, has come down stairs C. An attractive girl of twenty. At the same time the phone is ringing. JUNE crosses D.R. to phone.*)

MRS. STANLEY. Oh, dear! . . . June, will you go? . . . What did you say, Richard?

RICHARD. (*Examining packages.*) One's from New York and one from San Francisco.

MRS. STANLEY. There was something from Alaska early this morning. (*Before JUNE can answer the double doors are opened again. MISS PREEN appears D.R. voice calls after her: "Doesn't that bird-brain of yours ever function?"*)

RICHARD. Really?

JUNE. (*At phone.*) Yes? . . . Yes, that's right.

MRS. STANLEY. Who is it?

MISS PREEN. (*Enters D.R. Crosses L.*) I—I'll get them right away.

. . . He wants some Players' Club cigarettes.

MRS. STANLEY. Players' Club?

(*JOHN enters from stairs C. with pillows. Gives pillows to MISS PREEN D.R., exits up R.*)

RICHARD. They have 'em at Kitchener's. I'll run down and get 'em. (*He is off L.*)

JUNE. (*Still at phone.*) Hello . . . Yes, I'm waiting.

MRS. STANLEY. (*Line cue:—"and get 'em."*) Tell me, Miss Preen, is he—are they bringing him out soon?

MISS PREEN. (*Warily.*) We're getting him out of bed now. He'll be out very soon . . . Oh, thank you. (*MISS PREEN starts off R.*)

MRS. STANLEY. Oh, I'm so glad. He must be very happy.

(*And again we hear the invalid's voice as MISS PREEN pauses into the room, R. "Tripped like a rat in this hell-hole!"*)

JUNE. (*At phone.*) Two o'clock? Yes, I think he could talk then. All right. (*She hangs up.*) Well, who do you think that was? Mr. H. G. Wells from London.

MRS. STANLEY. (*Wild-eyed.*) H. G. Wells? On our telephone? (*The door-bell again.*)

JUNE. (*Crosses L. to door L. Exit.*) I'll go. This is certainly a busy house. (*Meanwhile SARAH, the cook, has come from dining-room up R. with a pitcher of orange juice—Entrance cue: door-bell.*)

SARAH. I got his orange juice.

MRS. STANLEY. (*As SARAH knocks on double doors D.R.*) Oh, that's fine, Sarah. Is it fresh?

SARAH. Yes, ma'am. (*She knocks on door. The doors are opened; SARAH hands orange juice to the nurse. The voice roars once more: "You move like a broken-down truck horse!"*)

SARAH. (*Beaming.*) His voice is just the same as on the radio. (*She disappears into dining-room as JUNE returns from entrance hall, L., ushering in two friends of her mother's, MRS. DEXTER and MRS. MCCUTCHEON. One is carrying a flowering plant, partially wrapped; the other is holding, with some care, what turns out to be a jar of calf's-foot jelly.*)

LADIES. (*Enter L. Cross to C.*) Good morning.

MRS. STANLEY. (*To them.*) Girls, what do you think? He's getting up and coming out this morning!

MRS. MCCUTCHEON. You don't mean it!

MRS. DEXTER. Can we stay and see him?

MRS. STANLEY. Why, of course—he'd love it.

(*JUNE enters L. Crosses to stairs.*)

Girls, do you know what just happened?

JUNE. (*Departing upstairs.*) I'll be upstairs, Mother, if you want me.

MRS. STANLEY. What? . . . Oh, yes, June, tell your father he'd better come down, will you? Mr. Whiteside is coming out.

JUNE. Yes, Mother. (*She exits upstairs.*)

MRS. DEXTER. Is he really coming out this morning? I brought him a plane—do you think it's all right if I give it to him?

MRS. STANLEY. Why, I think that would be lovely.

MRS. MCCUTCHEON. And some calf's-foot jelly.

MRS. STANLEY. Why, how nice! Who do you think was on the phone just now? H. G. Wells, from London. And look at those cablegrams. (*The ladies cross L.*) He's had calls and messages from all over this country and Europe. The *New York Times*—and Felix Frankfurter, and Dr. Dafoe, the Mount Wilson Observatory—I just can't tell you what's been going on, I'm simply exhausted. (*Crosses R., sits chair R.C.*)

MRS. DEXTER. (*Crossing to MRS. STANLEY R.*) There's a big piece about it in this week's *Time*. Did you see it?

MRS. STANLEY. No—really?

MRS. MCCUTCHEON. (*Crosses R., gives MRS. DEXTER calf's-foot jelly, reads from Time.*) Your name's in it too, Daisy. Listen: "Portly Sheridan Whiteside, critic, lecturer, wit, radio orator, intimate friend of the great and near great, last week found his celebrated wit no weapon with which to combat an injured hip. The Falsaffian Mr. Whiteside, trekking across the country on one of his annual lecture tours, met his Waterloo in the shape of a small piece of ice on the doorstep of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest W. Stanley, of Mesalia, Ohio. Result: Cancelled lectures and disappointment to thousands of adoring clubwomen in Omaha, Denver, and points West. Further result: The idol of the air waves rests until further notice in home of surprised Mr. and Mrs. Stanley. Possibility: Christmas may be postponed this year." What's *that* mean?

MRS. STANLEY. (*She takes magazine; reads.*) "A small piece of ice on the doorstep of Mr. and Mrs. . . . " Think of it!

MRS. MCCUTCHEON. (*Crosses L. to sofa D.L., sits.*) Of course if it were *my* house, Daisy, I'd have a bronze plate put on the step, right where he fell. (*MRS. DEXTER eases back of couch.*)

MRS. STANLEY. Well, of course, I felt terrible about it. He just never goes to dinners anywhere, and he finally agreed to come here, and then *this* had to happen. Poor Mr. Whiteside! But it's going to be so wonderful having him with us, even for a little while. Just think of it! We'll sit around in the evening, and discuss books and plays, all the great people he's known. And he'll talk in that wonderful way of his. He may even read "Goodbye, Mr. Chips" to us.

(MR. STANLEY, *solid, substantial—the American business man—is descending stairs C.*)

STANLEY. (*Coming down C.*) Daisy, I can't wait any longer. If Mr. Whiteside—ah, good morning, ladies.

LADIES. Good morning.

MRS. STANLEY. (*Rises, crosses C.*) Ernest, he's coming out any minute, and H. G. Wells telephoned from London, and we're in *Time*. Look. (*She hands Time to STANLEY.*)

STANLEY. (*As he hands magazine back to her.*) I don't like this kind of publicity at all, Daisy. When do you suppose he's going to leave?

MRS. STANLEY. Well, he's only getting up this morning—after all, he's had quite a shock, and he's been in bed for two full weeks.

bar wants to meet Ginger Rogers. Let's face it. Oscar Wilde."

MAGGIE. (*Crossing L. to couch, sits.*) He does travel, doesn't he. You know, it would be nice if the world went around Beverly Carlton for a change.

WHITESIDE. Hollywood next week—why couldn't he stop over on his way to New York? Send him a cable. "Beverly Carlton, Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Honolulu." (*The door-bell rings. WHITESIDE is properly annoyed.*) If these people intend to have their friends using the front door . . . (*JOHN enters #p L.*)

MAGGIE. What do you want them to do—use a rope ladder? (*JOHN at L.C., crosses to exit L.*)

WHITESIDE. I will not have a lot of mildewed pus-bags rushing in and out of this house while I am—

(*He stops as the voice of JOHN is heard at front door.*) "Oh, good morning, Mr. Jefferson." *The answering voice of JEFFERSON: "Good morning, John."* Roaring—MAGGIE rises, crosses to #p L.) There's nobody home! The Stanleys have been arrested for white-slavery! Go away!

(*But the visitor, meanwhile, has already appeared in the arch-way, L. JEFFERSON is an interesting-looking young man in his early thirties.*)

JEFFERSON. (*Crossing to her, back of couch.*) Good morning, Mr. Whiteside. I'm Jefferson, of the Mesalia Journal.

WHITESIDE. (*Sotto voce, to MAGGIE.*) Get rid of him.

MAGGIE. (*Brusquely.*) I'm sorry—Mr. Whiteside is seeing no one.

JEFFERSON. Really?

MAGGIE. So will you please excuse us? Good day.

JEFFERSON. (*Not giving up.*) Mr. Whiteside seems to be sitting up and taking notice.

MAGGIE. I'm afraid he's not taking notice of the Mesalia Journal.

Do you mind?

JEFFERSON. (*Sizing up MAGGIE.*) You know, if I'm going to be insulted I'd like it to be by Mr. Whiteside himself. I never did like carbon copies.

WHITESIDE. (*Looking around; interested.*) M-m, touché, if I ever heard one. And in Mesalia too, Maggie dear.

MAGGIE. (*Still on the job.*) Will you please leave?

JEFFERSON. (*Ignoring her. Crosses to C. MAGGIE crosses to R.C.*) How about an interview, Mr. Whiteside?

WHITESIDE. I never give them. Go away.

JEFFERSON. Mr. Whiteside, if I don't get this interview, I lose my job.

WHITESIDE. That would be quite all right with me.

JEFFERSON. Now you don't mean that, Mr. Whiteside. You used to be a newspaper man yourself. You know what editors are like. Well, mine's the toughest one that ever lived.

WHITESIDE. You won't get around me that way. If you don't like him, get off the paper.

JEFFERSON. Yes, but I happen to think it's a good paper. William Allen White could have got out of Emporia, but he didn't.

WHITESIDE. You have the effrontery, in my presence, to compare yourself with William Allen White?

JEFFERSON. Only in the sense that White stayed in Emporia, and I want to stay here and say what I want to say.

WHITESIDE. Such as what?

JEFFERSON. (*Crossing to below couch L.*) Well, I can't put it into words, Mr. Whiteside—it'd sound like an awful lot of hokey. But the Journal was my father's paper. It's kind of a sentimental point with me, the paper. I'd like to carry on where he left off.

WHITESIDE. Ah—ahh. So you own the paper, eh?

JEFFERSON. That's right.

WHITESIDE. Then this terrifying editor, this dread journalistic Apocalypse is—you yourself?

JEFFERSON. In a word, yes.

WHITESIDE. (*Chuckles with appreciation.*) I see.

MAGGIE. (*Annoyed, starts off R.*) In the future, Sherry, let me know when you don't want to talk to people, I'll usher them right in. (*She goes into library D.R.*)

WHITESIDE. Young man . . . Come over here. I suppose you've written that novel?

JEFFERSON. (*Eases R.*) No. I've written that play.

WHITESIDE. Well, I don't want to read it. Ah, do these old eyes see a box of goodies over there? Hand them to me, will you?

JEFFERSON. (*Crossing D.R. to small desk table.*) The trouble is, Mr. Whiteside, that your being in this town comes under the heading of news. Practically the biggest news since the depression. So I just got to get a story. (*Crossing to L. of WHITESIDE. As he passes candy.*)

WHITESIDE. (*Examining candy.*) M-m, pecan butternut fudge.

(*MISS PREEN, on her way to kitchen with empty plate on tray, from*

library R. stops short as she sees WHITESIDE with candy in his hand. She leaves doors open.)

MISS PREEN. (*Crossing D.R.*) Oh, my! You mustn't eat candy, . . .
WHITESIDE. It's very bad for you.

WHITESIDE. (*Turning.*) My Great-aunt Jennifer are a whole box of candy every day of her life. She lived to be a hundred and two, and when she had been dead three days she looked better than you do now. (*He swings blandly back to his visitor as he eats a candy.*) What were you saying, old fellow? You were about to say?

JEFFERSON. (*As MISS PREEN makes a hasty exit up R.*) I can at least report to my readers that chivalry is not yet dead.

WHITESIDE. We won't discuss it. . . . Well, now that you have won me with your pretty ways, what would you like to know?

JEFFERSON. (*Crossing in a step to WHITESIDE.*) Well, how about a brief talk on famous murders? You're an authority on murder as a fine art.

WHITESIDE. My dear boy, when I talk about murder I get paid for it. I have made more money out of the Snyder-Gray case than the lawyers did, so don't expect to get it for nothing.

JEFFERSON. Well, then, what do you think of Mesalia, how long are you going to be here, where are you going, things like that.

WHITESIDE. Very well. (A) Mesalia is a town of irresistible charm; (B) I cannot wait to get out of it, and (C) I am going from here to Crockfield, for my semi-annual visit to the Crockfield Home for Paroled Convicts, for which I have raised over half a million dollars in the last five years. From there I go to New York. Have you ever been to Crockfield, Jefferson?

JEFFERSON. No, I haven't. I always meant to.

WHITESIDE. As a newspaper man you ought to go, instead of wasting your time with me. It's only about seventy-five miles from here. Did you ever hear how Crockfield started? (*Candy box in basket on arm of his wheelchair.*)

JEFFERSON. (*Crossing L.*) No, I didn't.

WHITESIDE. Sit down, Jefferson. . . . make yourself comfortable (*JEFFERSON sits on arm of couch.*) It is one of the most endearing and touching stories of our generation. One misty St. Valentine's Eve—the year was 1901—a little old lady who had given her name to an era, Victoria, lay dying in Windsor Castle. Maude Adams had not yet caused every young heart to swell as she tripped across the stage as Peter Pan; Irving Berlin had not yet written the first note of a ragtime rigadon that was to set the nation's feet a-tapping, and

Elias P. Crockfield was just emerging from the State penitentiary. Destitute, embittered, cruel of heart, he wandered, on this St. Valentine's Eve, into a little church. But there was no godliness in his heart that night, no prayer upon his lips. In the faltering twilight, Elias P. Crockfield made his way toward the poor-box. With callous fingers he ripped open this poignant testimony of a simple people's faith. Greedily he clutched at the few pitiful coins within. And then a child's wavering treble broke the twilight stillness. "Please, Mr. Man," said a little girl's voice, "won't you be my Valentine?" Elias P. Crockfield turned. There stood before him a bewitching little creature of five, her yellow curls cascading over her shoulders like a golden Niagara, in her tiny outstretched hand a humble valentine. In that one crystal moment a sealed, door opened in the heart of Elias P. Crockfield, and in his mind was born an idea. Twenty-five years later three thousand ruddy-checked convicts were gambling on the broad lawns of Crockfield Home, frolicking in the cool depths of its swimming pool, broadcasting with their own symphony orchestra from their own radio station. Elias P. Crockfield has long since gone to his Maker, but the little girl of the golden curls, now grown to lovely womanhood, is known as the Angel of Crockfield, for she is the wife of the warden.

(*Enter MAGGIE, stands D.R.*)

And in the main hall of Crockfield, between a Rembrandt and an El Greco, there hangs, in a simple little frame, a humble valentine.

MAGGIE. (*Who has emerged from library in time to hear the finish of this.*) And in the men's washroom, every Christmas Eve, the ghost of Elias P. Crockfield appears in one of the booths. . . . Will you sign this, please! (*Hands him letter—door-bell is heard.*)

WHITESIDE. (*JEFFERSON rises, crosses to C.*) This ageing debutante, Mr. Jefferson, I retain in my employ only because she is the sole support of her two-headed brother. (*Signs letter and hands it back to MAGGIE.*)

JEFFERSON. (*Crossing to couch for hat and starting for arch L.*) I understand. . . . Well, thank you very much, Mr. Whiteside—you've been very kind. By the way, I'm a cribbage player, if you need one while you're here.

(*JOHN enters up L.C. crosses to hall L.*)

WHITESIDE. Fine. How much can you afford to lose?

JEFFERSON. I usually win.

WHITESIDE. We won't discuss that. Come back at eight-thirty. We'll play three-handed with Elsie Dinsmore. . . .

JOHN. Sarah!

SARAH. Why, it kind of takes my breath away.

JOHN. It would be wonderful, Mr. Whiteside, but what would we say to Mr. and Mrs. Stanley?

WHITESIDE. Just "Good-bye."

SARAH. But—but they'd be awfully mad, wouldn't they? They've been very kind to us.

WHITESIDE. (*Lightly.*) Well, if they ever come to New York we can have them for dinner, if I'm not in town. Now run along and thin it over. This is our little secret—just between us. And put plenty of sherry in that terrapin . . . Miss Preen! (SARAH and JOHN with draw, in considerable excitement. Up R. WHITESIDE raises his voice to a roar.) Miss Preen!

MISS PREEN. (*Appearing, breathless, drying her hands.*) Yes, sir! Yes, sir?

WHITESIDE. What have you got in there, anyway? A sailor?

MISS PREEN. I was—just washing my hands.

WHITESIDE. What time did Miss Cutler go out?

MISS PREEN. Oh, couple hours ago.

WHITESIDE. Mr. Jefferson called for her?

MISS PREEN. Yes, sir.

WHITESIDE. (*Impatiently.*) All right, all right. Go back to your sex-life. (MISS PREEN goes. WHITESIDE tries to settle down to his book, but his mind is plainly troubled. He shifts a little; looks anxiously toward outer door. HARRIET STANLEY comes softly down steps. She seems delighted to find WHITESIDE alone.)

HARRIET. (*Opening cardboard portfolio she has brought with her—crossing down C.*) Dear Mr. Whiteside, may I show you a few mementoes of the past? I somehow feel that you would love them as I do.

WHITESIDE. I'd be delighted. (*Observing her.*)

Miss Stanley, haven't we met somewhere before?

HARRIET. Oh, no. I would have remembered. It would have been one of my cherished memories—like these. (*She spreads portfolio before him.*) Look! Here I am with my first sweetheart, under our lovely beechwood trees. I was eight and he was ten. I have never forgotten him. What happy times we had! What—(*She stops short as she hears footsteps on stairway.*)

STANLEY. (*From upstairs.*) But I tell you I'm going to.

HARRIET. There's someone coming! I'll come back! . . . (*She gathers up portfolio and vanishes into dining-room U.R. WHITESIDE*

looks after her, puzzled. It is STANLEY who comes down the stairs. He is plainly coming into the room for a purpose—this is no haphazard descent. He is carrying a slip of paper in his hand, and he is obviously at the boiling-point. A few steps behind comes MRS. STANLEY, apprehensive and nervous.)

MRS. STANLEY. (*From stairs.*) Now, Ernest, please—

STANLEY. (*To C.*) Be quiet, Daisy . . . Mr. Whiteside, I want to talk to you. I don't care whether you're busy or not. I have stood all that I'm going to stand.

WHITESIDE. Indeed?

STANLEY. This is the last straw. I have just received a bill from the telephone company for seven hundred and eighty-four dollars. (*He reads from slip in his hand.*) Oklahoma City, Calcutta, Hollywood, Australia, Rome, New York, New York, New York, New York.—(*His voice trails off in an endless succession of New Yorks.*) Now I realize, Mr. Whiteside, that you are a distinguished man of letters—

MRS. STANLEY. (*C.*) Yes, of course, we both do.

STANLEY. Please . . . But in the past week we have not been able to call our souls our own. We have not had a meal in the dining-room *once*. I have to tiptoe out of the house in the mornings.

MRS. STANLEY. Now, Ernest—

STANLEY. (*Waving her away.*) Oh, I come home to find convicts sitting at my dinner-table—butcher-shop murderers. A man putting cockroaches in the kitchen.

MRS. STANLEY. They just escaped, Ernest.

STANLEY. That's not the point. I go into my bathroom and bump into twenty-two Chinese students that you invited here. I tell you I won't stand for it, no matter *who* you are.

WHITESIDE. Have you quite finished?

STANLEY. No, I have not. I go down into the cellar this morning and trip over that octopus that William Beebe sent you. I tell you I won't stand it. Mr. Whiteside, I want you to leave this house—(*MRS. STANLEY starts to tap STANLEY's shoulder.*)

as soon as you can, and go to a hotel. . . . Stop pawing me, Daisy . . . That's all I've got to say, Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE. And quite enough, I should think. May I remind you again, Mr. Stanley, that I am not a willing guest in this house. I am informed by my doctor that I must remain quiet for another ten days, at which time I shall get out of here so fast that the wind will knock you over, I hope. If, however, you insist on my leaving before

that, thereby causing me to suffer a relapse, I shall sue you for every additional day that I am held inactive, which will amount I assure you, to a tidy sum.

STANLEY. (*To Mrs. Stanley.*) This is outrageous. Outrageous!—
WHITESIDE. As for the details of your petty complaints, those twenty-two Chinese students came straight from the White House, where I assure you they used the bathroom, too!

MRS. STANLEY. Mr. Whiteside, my husband didn't mean—

STANLEY. Yes, I did. I meant every word of it.

WHITESIDE. There is only one point that you make in which I see some slight justice. I do not expect you to pay for my telephone calls, and I shall see to it that restitution is made. Can you provide me with the exact amount?

STANLEY. I certainly can, and I certainly will.

WHITESIDE. Good. I shall instruct my lawyers to deduct it from the hundred and fifty thousand dollars that I am suing you for. (*Stanley starts to speak, but simply chokes with rage. Furious, he storms up steps again.*)

MRS. STANLEY. (*Following.*) Now, Ernest—

WHITESIDE. (*Calling after him.*) And I'll thank you not to trip over that octopus, which once belonged to Chauncey Depew.

MRS. STANLEY. You—you mustn't get excited. Remember Mr. Whiteside is a guest here. (*Exit upstairs. Left alone, Whiteside enjoys his triumph for a moment, then his mind jumps to more important matters. He looks at his watch, considers a second, then wheels himself over to the telephone.*)

WHITESIDE. Give me the Mesalia Journal, please. (*He peers at Roach City while waiting, then taps peremptorily on the glass.*) Hello, Journal? . . . Is Mr. Jefferson there? . . . When do you expect him? (*Richard and June enter U.L.*) No. No message. (*He hangs up; drums impatiently on arm of his chair. Then he turns sharply at sound of outer door opening. But it is the younger Stanley's, Richard and June, who enter. They are in winter togs, with ice-skates under their arms. In addition, Richard has a camera slung over his shoulder. Their attitudes change as they see that Whiteside is in the room. They slide toward stairs, obviously trying to be as unobtrusive as possible. Enter L., crossing up, then down to bite you . . . Now look here. I am by nature a gracious and charming person. If I veer at it, it is on the side of kindness and amiability—I have been observing you two for this past week, and*

you seem to me to be extremely likable young people. I am afraid that when we first met I was definitely unpleasant to you. For that I am sorry, and I wish that in the future you would not treat me like something out of Edgar Allan Poe. How do you like my new tie?

JUNE. (*C.*) Thank you, Mr. Whiteside. This makes things much pleasanter. And I think the tie is very pretty.

RICHARD. Well, now that we're on speaking terms, Mr. Whiteside, I don't mind telling you that I have been admiring all your ties.

WHITESIDE. Do you like this one?

RICHARD. I certainly do.

WHITESIDE. It's yours. (*He takes it off and tosses it to him.*)

RICHARD. (*Crosses R.*) Oh, thank you.

WHITESIDE. Really, this curious legend that I am a difficult person is pure fabrication. . . . Ice-skating, eh? Ah, me! I used to cut figure eights myself, arm in arm with Betsy Ross, waving the flag behind us.

JUNE. It was wonderful on the ice today. Miss Cutler and Mr. Jefferson were there.

WHITESIDE. Maggie? Ice-skating?

RICHARD. Yes, and she's good, too. I got a marvelous picture of her.

WHITESIDE. Were they still there when you left?

RICHARD. I think so.

JUNE. Yes, they were.

RICHARD. Mr. Whiteside, mind if I take a picture of you? I'd love to have one.

WHITESIDE. Very well. Do you want my profile? (*He indicates his stomach.*)

JUNE. (*Starting up stairs.*) I'm afraid you're done for, Mr. Whiteside. My brother is a camera fiend. (*Whiteside, slightly startled, turns his head sharply, and in that instant Richard clicks camera.*)

RICHARD. Thank you, Mr. Whiteside. I got a great one. (*He and June go up stairs as Maggie enters from hallway. They call "Hello, Miss Cutler!" as they disappear upstairs.*)

MAGGIE. (*Enters L., puts bag and gloves on table back of couch.*)

Hello there . . . Good evening, Sherry. Really, Sherry, you've got this room looking like an old parrot-cage . . . Did you nap while I was out? (*Crossing R. to C. Whiteside merely glowers at her.*) What's the matter, dear? Cat run away with your tongue?

WHITESIDE. (*Furious.*) Don't look at me with those great cow-eyes, you sex-ridden hag. Where have you been all afternoon? Alley-cating around with Bert Jefferson?

MAGGIE. (*Her face aglow, crossing to him.*) Sherry, Bert read his play to me this afternoon. It's superb. It isn't just that play written by a newspaperman. It's superb. (*To him.*) I want you to read it tonight. (*She puts it in his lap.*) It just cries out for Cornell. Will you send it to her, Sherry? And will you read it tonight?

WHITESIDE. No, I will not read it tonight or any other time. And while we're on the subject of Mr. Jefferson, you might ask him if he wouldn't like to pay your salary, since he takes up all your time.

MAGGIE. (*She is on her knees, gathering up debris L. of wheel-chair.*) Oh, come now, Sherry. It isn't as bad as that.

WHITESIDE. I have not even been able to reach you, not knowing what haylofts you frequent.

MAGGIE. (*Crossing to back of sofa with box of debris.*) Oh, stop behaving like a spoiled child, Sherry.

WHITESIDE. Don't take that patronizing tone with me, you flea-bitten Cleopatra. I am sick and tired of your sneaking out like some love-sick high-school girl every time my back is turned.

MAGGIE. Well, Sherry—I'm afraid you've hit the nail on the head. (*Taking off hat and putting it on table back of couch.*)

WHITESIDE. Stop acting like Zazu Pitts and explain yourself.

MAGGIE. (*To C.*) I'll make it quick, Sherry. I'm in love.

WHITESIDE. Nonsense. This is merely delayed puberty.

MAGGIE. No, Sherry, I'm afraid this is it. You're going to lose a very excellent secretary.

WHITESIDE. You are out of your mind.

MAGGIE. Yes, I think I am, a little. But I'm a girl who's waited a long time for this to happen, and now it has. Mr. Jefferson doesn't know it yet, but I'm going to try my darndest to marry him. (*Ease L.*)

WHITESIDE. (*As she pauses.*) Is that all?

MAGGIE. Yes, except that—well—I suppose this is what might be called my resignation, as soon as you've got someone else.

WHITESIDE. (*A slight pause.*) Now listen to me, Maggie. We have been together for a long time. You are indispensable to me, but I think I am unselfish enough not to let that stand in the way where your happiness is concerned. Because whether you know it or not, I have a deep affection for you.

MAGGIE. (*Ease R.*) I know that, Sherry.

WHITESIDE. That being the case, I will not stand by and allow you to make a fool of yourself.

MAGGIE. I'm not, Sherry.

WHITESIDE. You are, my dear. You are behaving like a Booth Tar-kington heroine. It's—it's incredible. I cannot believe that a girl who for the past ten years has had the great of the world served up on a platter before her, I cannot believe that it is anything but a kind of temporary insanity when you are swept off your feet in seven days by a second-rate, small-town newspaper man.

MAGGIE. (*To him.*) Sherry, I can't explain what's happened. I can only tell you that it's so. It's hard for me to believe, too, Sherry. Here I am, a hard-bitten old cynic, behaving like True Story Magazine, and liking it. Discovering the moon, and ice-skating—I keep laughing to myself all the time, but there it is. What can I do about it, Sherry? I'm in love.

WHITESIDE. (*With sudden decision.*) We're leaving tomorrow. Hip or no hip, we're leaving here tomorrow. I don't care if I fracture the other one. Get me a train schedule and start packing. I'll pull you out of this, Miss Stardust. I'll get the ants out of those moonlit pants.

MAGGIE. (*Crosses L.*) It's no good, Sherry. It's no good. I'd be back on the next streamlined train.

WHITESIDE. It's completely unbelievable. Can you see yourself, the wife of the editor of the Mesalia Journal, having an evening at home for Mr. and Mrs. Stanley, Mr. and Mrs. Poop-Face, and the members of the Book-of-the-Month Club?

MAGGIE. (*Crosses R.*) Sherry, I've had ten years of the great figures of our time, and don't think I'm not grateful to you for it. I've loved every minute of it. They've been wonderful years, Sherry. Gay, and stimulating—I don't think anyone has ever had the fun we've had. But a girl can't laugh all the time, Sherry. There comes a time when she wants—Bert Jefferson. You don't know Bert, Sherry. He's gentle and he's unassuming, and—well, I love him, that's all. (*Ease L.*)

WHITESIDE. I see. Well, I remain completely unconvinced. You are dragging yourself into this Joan Crawford fantasy, and before you become completely anesthetized I shall do everything in my power to bring you to your senses.

MAGGIE. (*Wheeling on him.*) Now listen to me, Whiteside. I know you. Lay off. I know what a devil you can be. I've seen you do it to other people, but don't you dare do it to me. Don't drug yourself into the idea that all you're thinking of is my happiness. You're thinking of yourself a little bit, too, and all those months of breaking in somebody new. I've seen you in a passion before when your

life has been disrupted, and you couldn't dine in Calcutta on July twelfth with Boo-Boo. Well, that's too bad, but there it is. (*Crosses to stairs.*) I'm going to marry Bert if he'll have me, and don't you dare try any of your tricks. I'm on to every one of them. So lay off. That's my message to you, Big Lord Fauntleroy. (*And she is up the stairs.*) (*Left stewing in his own juice, WHITESIDE is in a perfect fury. He bangs arm of his chair, then slaps at manuscript in his lap. As he does so, the dawn of an idea comes into his mind. He sits perfectly still for a moment, thinking it over. Then, with a slow smile, he takes manuscript out of its envelope. He looks at title page, ruffles through the script, then stops and thinks again. His face breaks out into one great smile. He reaches for phone receiver.*)

WHITESIDE. (*In a lowered voice, meanwhile discarding cables from basket until he finds right one.*) Long distance, please. I want to put in a Transatlantic call. (*He looks at cablegram again for confirmation.*) Hello. Transatlantic operator? . . . This is Mesalia 1-4-2. I want to talk to Miss Lorraine Sheldon—S-h-e-l-d-o-n. She's on the Normandie. It sailed from Southampton day before yesterday. (*Door-bell.*) Will it take long? . . . All right. My name is Whiteside . . . thank you.

(*He hangs up. He goes back to manuscript again and looks through it. JOHN then ushers in DR. BRADLEY.*)

BRADLEY. (*Offstage.*) Good evening, John.

JOHN. Good evening, Doctor. (*Exits swinging-door U.L.*)

BRADLEY. (*Crosses to R.*) (*Heartily as usual.*) Well, well! Good evening, Mr. Whiteside!

WHITESIDE. Come back tomorrow—I'm busy.

BRADLEY. (*Turning cute.*) Now what would be the best news that I could possibly bring you?

WHITESIDE. You have hydrophobia.

BRADLEY. (*Laughing it off.*) No, no . . . Mr. Whiteside, you are a well man. You can get up and walk now. You can leave here tomorrow.

WHITESIDE. What do you mean?

BRADLEY. (*Ease R.*) Well, sir! I looked at those X-rays again this afternoon, and do you know what? I had been looking at the wrong X-rays. I had been looking at old Mrs. Moffat's X-rays. You are perfectly, absolutely well!

WHITESIDE. Lower your voice, will you?

BRADLEY. What's the matter? Aren't you pleased?

WHITESIDE. Delighted . . . naturally . . . Ah—this is a very unexpected bit of news, however. It comes at a very curious moment. (*He is thinking fast; suddenly he gets an idea. He clears his throat and looks around apprehensively.*) Dr. Bradley, I—ah—have some good news for you, too. I have been reading your book—ah—"Fifty Years"—what is it?

BRADLEY. (*Eagerly crossing to WHITESIDE.*) "An Ohio Doctor"—Yes.

WHITESIDE. I consider it extremely close to being one of the great literary contributions of our time.

BRADLEY. Mr. Whiteside!

WHITESIDE. So strongly do I feel about it, Dr. Bradley, that I have a proposition to make to you. Just here and there the book is a little uneven, a little rough, and what I would like to do is to stay here in Mesalia and work with you on it.

BRADLEY. (*All choked up.*) Mr. Whiteside, I would be so terribly honored—

WHITESIDE. Yes. But there is just one difficulty. You see, if my lecture bureau and my radio sponsors were to learn that I am well, they would insist on my fulfilling my contracts, and I would be forced to leave Mesalia. Therefore we must not tell anyone—not anyone at all—that I am well.

BRADLEY. I see. I see.

WHITESIDE. Not even Miss Cutler, you understand.

BRADLEY. No, I won't. Not a soul. Not even my wife.

WHITESIDE. That's fine.

BRADLEY. Mr. Whiteside. When do we start work—tonight? I've got just one patient that's dying and then I'll be perfectly free. (*Phone rings.*)

WHITESIDE. (*Waving him away—Doctor starts to go.*) Ah—tomorrow morning. This is a private call—would you forgive me? . . . Hello . . . Yes, I'm on. (*He turns again to Doctor.*) Tomorrow morning.

BRADLEY. Tomorrow morning it is. Goodnight. I'll be so proud

to work with you. You've made me very proud, Mr. Whiteside. (*He exits up L.*)

WHITESIDE. Yes, yes, I know—very proud. (*Again on phone.*)

Yes, yes, this is Mr. Whiteside on the phone. Put them through . . . Hello. Is this my Blossom Girl? How are you, my lovely? . . . No, no, I'm all right . . . Yes, still out here . . . Lorraine dear, when do you land in New York? . . . Tuesday? That's fine

ACT TWO

Scene is the same.

A week later, late afternoon.

The room is now dominated by a large Christmas tree, set in the curve of the staircase, and hung with customary Christmas ornaments. JOHN is standing at L. of tree. SARAH and JOHN are passing in and out of library, bringing forth huge packages which they are placing under tree. MAGGIE sits at a little table D.R., going through a pile of correspondence.

JOHN. (*To tree, then D.R.*) Well, I guess that's all there are, Miss Cutler. They're all under the tree.

MAGGIE. Thank you, John.

SARAH. My, I never saw anyone get so many presents. I can hardly wait to see what's in 'em.

JOHN. When'll Mr. Whiteside open them, Miss Cutler?

MAGGIE. (*Rises, crosses to table back of sofa with papers—first switching on lights.*) Well, John, you see Christmas is Mr. Whiteside's personal property. He invented it and it belongs to him. First thing tomorrow morning Mr. Whiteside will open each and every present and there will be the God-damnedest fuss you ever saw!

SARAH. (*Turns on C. lamp and crossing to R. of tree. JOHN crosses to L. of tree. Then bending over packages.*) My, look who he's got presents from! Shirley Temple, William Lyon Phelps, Billy Rose, Ethel Waters, Somerset Maugham—my, I can hardly wait for tomorrow. (*MAGGIE crosses R. to D.R. desk. Sits.*) (*The door-bell rings. JOHN departs for door L., switching on lights on his way. SARAH comes downstage.*) My it certainly is wonderful. And Mr. Whiteside's tree is so beautiful, too. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley had to put theirs in their bedroom, you know. They can hardly undress at night. (*It is BERT JEFFERSON who enters L.*)

BERT. Good evening, John.

JOHN. Good evening, Mr. Jefferson, Merry Christmas.

BERT. Hello, Maggie. Merry Christmas, Sarah.

SARAH. Merry Christmas, Mr. Jefferson. (*SARAH disappears into dining-room. JOHN exits up L.*)

BERT. (*Crossing to C.*) (*Observing pile of packages under tree.*) Say, business is good, isn't it? My, what a little quiet blackmail and

a weekly radio hour can get you. What did his sponsors give him?

MAGGIE. They gave him a full year's supply of their product—Cream of Mush.

BERT. Well he'll give it right back to them, over the air.

MAGGIE. (*Rises, crosses to couch with papers.*) Wait until you hear tonight's broadcast, old fellow. It's so sticky I haven't been able to get it off my fingers since I copied it.

BERT. (*To C.*) I'll bet. . . . Look, I'll come clean. Under the influence of God knows what I have just bought you a Christmas present.

MAGGIE. (*Surprised, crossing to him.*) Why, Mr. Jefferson, sir.

BERT. Only I'd like you to see it before I throw away my hard-earned money. Can you run downtown with me and take a look at it?

MAGGIE. (*To him.*) Bert, this is very sweet of you. I'm quite touched. What is it? I can't wait.

BERT. A two years' subscription to Pic, Click, and Look and Listen. Say, do you think I'm going to tell you? Come down and see.

MAGGIE. (*Crosses R., then to L. to get coat.*) All right. (*She calls into library.*)

Sherry! I'm going out for a few minutes. With Horace Greeley. I won't be long. (*She goes into hallway for her coat and hat.*)

BERT. (*Raising his voice.*) Noel, Noel, Mr. W.! How about some cribbage after your broadcast tonight? (*Crossing to WHITESIDE.* *The Whiteside wheelchair is rolled in by MISS PREEN, D.R. She then exits D.R., closing doors.*)

WHITESIDE. (*R.C.*) No, I will not play cribbage with you, Klondike Harry. . . . Where are you off to now, Madam Butterfly?

MAGGIE. (*To C.*) I'm being given a Christmas present. Anything you want done downtown?

WHITESIDE. Yes. Bring baby a lollipop. . . . What are you giving me for Christmas, Jefferson? I have enriched your feeble life beyond your capacity to repay me.

BERT. Yes, that's what I figured, so I'm not giving you anything.

WHITESIDE. I see. Well, I was giving you my old truss, but now I shan't. . . . (*BERT eases upstage.*) Maggie, what time are those radio men coming?

MAGGIE. (*Crosses D.R., places phone on stool beside WHITESIDE.*) About six-thirty—I'll be here. You've got to cut, Sherry. You're four minutes over. Oh, by the way, there's a wire here from Beverly Carlton. He doesn't know what train he can get out of Chicago, but he'll be here some time this evening.

WHITESIDE. Therefore you came in. (Before MISS PREEN can reply, however, JOHN enters from dining-room up R. crosses L. to exit L.) Hereafter, please knock.

JOHN. (En route to front door up L.) There're some expressmen here with a crate, Mr. Whiteside. I told them to come around the front.

WHITESIDE. Thank you, John . . . Don't stand there, Miss Preen. You look like a frozen custard. Go away.

MISS PREEN. (Controlling herself as best she can.) Yes, sir. (She exits up R. At the same time an EXPRESSMAN carrying a crate enters from front door.)

JOHN. (Up L.) Bring it right in here. Careful there—don't scrape the wall. Why, it's some kind of animals.

(Enter EXPRESSMAN to up L.)

EXPRESSMAN. (Crossing R. to up C.) I'll say it's animals. We had to feed 'em at seven o'clock this morning.

WHITESIDE. Who's it from, John?

JOHN. (Crossing R.) (Reading from top of crate as they set it down.) Admiral Richard E. Byrd. Say!

WHITESIDE. Bring it over here. (EXPRESSMAN carries it to chair. JOHN crosses to chair.)

(Peering through slats.) Why, they're penguins. Two—three—four penguins. Hello, my pretties.

EXPRESSMAN. (Crossing L.) Directions for feeding are right on top. Two of those slats are loose.

JOHN. (Reading.) "To be fed only whale blubber, eels and cracked lobster."

EXPRESSMAN. They got Coca-Cola this morning. And liked it. (He goes L.)

WHITESIDE. (Peering through slats again.) Hello, hello, hello. You know, they make the most entrancing companions, John. I want these put right in the library with me. Take 'em right in.

JOHN. (Crossing R., exits D.R.) (Picking up crate.) Yes, sir.

WHITESIDE. Better tell Sarah to order a couple of dozen lobsters.

JOHN. Yes, sir.

WHITESIDE. I don't suppose there's any whale blubber in this town.

BRADLEY. (Enters L.) Good evening.

WHITESIDE. Oh, yes, there is. (This last is addressed to BRADLEY, who has entered from hall as JOHN and crate disappear into library.)

BRADLEY. The door was open, so I—Merry Christmas. (Crosses to C.)

WHITESIDE. Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas. Do you happen to know if eels are in season, Doctor?

BRADLEY. How's that?

WHITESIDE. Never mind. I was a fool to ask you. (JOHN returns from library, carefully closing doors.)

JOHN. (Crossing upstairs.) I opened those two slats a little, Mr. Whiteside—they seemed so crowded in there.

WHITESIDE. Thank you, John.

BRADLEY. Mr. Whiteside—(JOHN goes on his way, carrying pillow-cases.)

WHITESIDE. Good-bye, Doctor. I'm sorry you happened to drop in now. I have to do my Yogi exercises. (He folds his arms, leans back and closes his eyes.)

BRADLEY. But, Mr. Whiteside, it's been a week now. My book—you know—when are we going to start work on my book? (WHITESIDE places fingers to his lips.) I was hoping that today, maybe—(He stops as MISS PREEN enters from U.R.) Good evening, Miss Preen.

MISS PREEN. Good evening, Doctor Bradley. (She opens door into library, then freezes in her tracks. She closes the doors again and turns to BRADLEY, glassy-eyed. She raises a trembling hand to her forehead, and goes to R. of chair.) Doctor, perhaps I'm not well—but, when I opened the doors just now I thought I saw a penguin with a thermometer in his mouth.

WHITESIDE. What's this? Have those penguins gotten out of their crate?

MISS PREEN. Penguins? Did you say penguins?

WHITESIDE. Yes, Doctor, will you go in and capture them, please, and put them back in the crate. There're four of them.

BRADLEY. (Crosses R.) Capture the penguins, yes! (JOHN's entrance cue.)

WHITESIDE. Yes. And, Miss Preen, will you entertain them, please, until I come in? (She crosses to door R.)

MISS PREEN. (Swallowing hard.) Yes, sir.

JOHN. (Descending the stairs.) The Christmas tree in the bedroom just fell on Mr. Stanley. He's got a big bump on his forehead. (JOHN exits U.R.)

WHITESIDE. (Brigbly.) Why, isn't that too bad? (RICHARD enters from hall L. as MISS PREEN goes through library door.) . . . Go

Whiteside. You've been swell and I'll never forget it.

WHITESIDE. Righto, Richard.

RICHARD. (WHITESIDE takes book from ottoman.) June, are you coming upstairs?

JUNE. Ah—in a few minutes, Richard.

RICHARD. Well—knock on my door, will you? I want to talk to you. (Exits upstairs.)

JUNE. Yes, I will. (Turning back to WHITESIDE.) Mr. Whiteside

...

WHITESIDE. June, my lamb, you were too young to know about the Elwell murder, weren't you? Completely fascinating. I have about five favorite murders and the Elwell case is one of them. Would you like to hear about it?

JUNE. Well, Mr. Whiteside, I wanted to talk to you. Would you mind, for a few minutes? It's important.

WHITESIDE. Why, certainly, my dear. I take it this is all about your young Lothario at the factory?

JUNE. (Nodding.) Yes. I just can't seem to make Father understand. It's like talking to a blank wall. He won't meet him—he won't even talk about it. What are we going to do, Mr. Whiteside? Sandy and I love each other. I don't know where to turn.

WHITESIDE. My dear, I'd like to meet this young man. I'd like to see him for myself.

JUNE. Would you, Mr. Whiteside? Would you meet him? He's—he's outside now. He's in the kitchen. (Crosses up a little.)

WHITESIDE. Good! Bring him in.

JUNE. (Then down to WHITESIDE again.) Mr. Whiteside, he's—he's a very sensitive boy. You will be nice to him, won't you?

WHITESIDE. God damn it, June, when will you learn that I am always kind and courteous! Bring this idiot in!

JUNE. (Up to door U.R. Calling through the dining room, in a low voice.) Sandy. Sandy.

(She stands aside as a YOUNG MAN enters. Twenty-three or four, keen-looking, neatly but simply dressed.)

Here he is, Mr. Whiteside. This is Sandy. (Coming down with SANDY.)

SANDY. How do you do, sir?

WHITESIDE. How do you do? Young man, I've been hearing a good deal about you from June this past week. It seems, if I have been correctly informed, that you two babes in the woods have quietly gone out of your minds.

JUNE. There's another name for it. It's called love.

WHITESIDE. Well, you've come to the right place. Dr. Sheridan Whiteside, Broken Hearts Mended, Brakes Relined, Hamburgers. Go right ahead.

SANDY. Well, if June has told you anything at all, Mr. Whiteside, you know the jam we're in. You see, I work for the labor union, Mr. Whiteside. I'm an organizer. I've been organizing the men in Mr. Stanley's factory, and Mr. Stanley's pretty sore about it.

WHITESIDE. I'll bet!

SANDY. Did June tell you that?

WHITESIDE. Yes, she did.

SANDY. Well, that being the case, Mr. Whiteside, I don't think I have the right to try to influence June. If she marries me it means a definite break with her family, and I don't like to bring that about. But the trouble is Mr. Stanley's so stubborn about it, so arbitrary. You know, this is not something I've done just to spite him. We fell in love with each other. But Mr. Stanley behaves as though it were all a big plot—John L. Lewis sent me here just to marry his daughter.

JUNE. He's tried to fire Sandy twice, out at the factory, but he couldn't on account of the Wagner Act, thank God!

SANDY. Yes, he thinks I wrote that, too.

JUNE. If he'd only let me talk to him. If he'd let Sandy talk to him. SANDY. Well, we've gone over all that, June. Anyway, this morning I got word I'm needed in Chicago. I may have to go on to Frisco from there. So you see the jam we're in.

JUNE. Sandy's leaving tonight, Mr. Whiteside. He'll probably be gone a year. We've simply got to decide. Now.

WHITESIDE. My dear, this is absurdly simple. It's no problem at all. Now to my jaundiced eye—(As phone rings. Nods.) Oh! Hello

... Yes ... This is Whiteside. (To JUNE and SANDY.) Excuse me—it's a Trans-Atlantic call ... (Back to phone. SANDY crosses to L. of JUNE.) Yes? ... Yes, I'm on. Who's calling? ... Oh! Put him on. (Again an aside.) It's Walt Disney in Hollywood. (Into phone.) Hello ... Hello ... , Walt. How's my little dash of genius? ... Yes, I hoped you would. How'd you know I was here? ... I see ... Yes. Yes, I'm listening. Now? Ten seconds more? (To SANDY and JUNE.) Mr. Disney calls me every Christmas—(Into phone again.) Yes, Walt ... Yes I hear it. It sounds just like static. ... June! (He extends receiver to her; she listens a second, then crosses back to SANDY C.) Hello ... Thanks, old

presents over to the Dexters'.

JUNE. No—no, thank you, Mother. I—I have to write some letters. *(She goes up stairs.)*

STANLEY. Come along, Daisy.

WHITESIDE. Why, Mr. Stanley, what happened to your forehead? Did you have an accident?

STANLEY. No, Mr. Whiteside. I'm taking boxing lessons. . . . Go ahead, Daisy. *(They go L.)* *(HARRIET, who has been hovering at head of stairs, hurries down as the STANLEYS depart. She is carrying a little Christmas package.)*

HARRIET. *(Crosses R.)* Dear Mr. Whiteside, I've been trying all day to see you. To give you—*this*.

WHITESIDE. Why, Miss Stanley. A Christmas gift for me?

HARRIET. It's only a trifle, but I wanted you to have it. It's a picture of me as I used to be. It was taken on another Christmas Eve, many years ago. Don't open it till the stroke of midnight, will you?

(The doorbell rings. HARRIET looks apprehensively over her shoulder.) Merry Christmas, dear Mr. Whiteside. Merry Christmas. *(JOHN enters up L. to exit L.)*

WHITESIDE. Merry Christmas to you, Miss Stanley, and thank you. *(She glides out of the room, up R.)* *(In hallway, as JOHN opens door, we hear a woman's voice, liquid and melting: "This is the Stanley residence, isn't it?" "Yes, it is." "I've come to see MR. Whiteside. Will you tell him Miss Sheldon is here?")*

Lorraine! My Blossom Girl!

LORRAINE. *(Coming into view. Enter L. to up L.)* Sherry, my sweet! *(And quite a view it is. LORRAINE SHELDON is known as the most chic actress on the New York or London stage, and justly so. She glitters as she walks. She is beautiful, and even, God save the world, glamorous. . . . Her rank as one of the Ten Best Dressed Women of the World is richly deserved. She is, in short, a siren of no mean talents, and knows it.)* *(Crossing R. to him—wasting no time.)* Oh, darling, look at that poor sweet tortured face! Let me kiss it! *(She does.)* You poor darling. How drawn you are. Sherry, my sweet, I want to cry.

WHITESIDE. All right. You've made a very nice entrance, dear. Now relax.

LORRAINE. But, Sherry, darling, I've been so worried. And now seeing you in that chair. . . .

WHITESIDE. This chair fits my fanny as nothing else ever has. I feel better than I have in years, and my only concern is news of the out-

side world. So take off that skunk and tell me everything. How are you, my dear?

LORRAINE. *(Crossing L. to sofa.)* *(Removing a cascade of silver fox from her shoulders.)* Darling, I'm so relieved. You look perfectly wonderful—I never saw you look better. My dear, do I look a wreck? I just dashed through New York. Didn't do a thing about Christmas. Hatie Carnegie and had my hair done, and got right on the train. *(Sits arm of couch. Uses her compact.)* And the Norman-die coming back was simply hectic. Fun, you know, but simply exhausting. Jock Whimsey, and Cary Grant, and Dorothy di Frasso—it was *too* exhausting. And of course London before that was so magnificent, my dear—well, I simply never got to bed at all. *(Rises. Crosses to C.)* Darling, I've so much to tell you I don't know where to start.

WHITESIDE. Well, start with the dirt first, dear—that's what I want to hear.

LORRAINE. *(Sits on stool.)* Let me see. Sybil Cartwright was thrown right out of Ciro's—it was the night before I left. She was wearing one of those new cellophane dresses, and you could absolutely see —is suing his mother for disorderly conduct. It's just shocked everyone. And oh! before I forget: Anthony Eden told me he's going to be on your New Year's broadcast, Sherry, and Beatrice Lillie gave me a message for you. She says for you to take off twenty-five pounds right away and send them to her by parcel post. She needs them.

WHITESIDE. I'll pack 'em in ice. . . . Now come, dear, what about you? What about your love life? I don't believe for one moment you never got to bed at all, if you'll pardon the expression.

LORRAINE. Sherry dear, you're dreadful.

WHITESIDE. What about that splendid bit of English mutton, Lord Bottomley? Haven't you hooked him yet?

LORRAINE. Sherry, please. Cedric is a very dear friend of mine.

WHITESIDE. Now, Blossom Girl, this is Sherry. Don't try to pull the bedclothes over my eyes. Don't tell me you wouldn't like to be Lady Bottomley, with a hundred thousand pounds a year and twelve castles. By the way, has he had his teeth fixed yet? Every time I order Roquefort cheese I think of those teeth.

LORRAINE. Sherry, really! . . . Cedric may not be brilliant, but he's rather sweet, poor lamb, and he's very fond of me, and he does represent a kind of English way of living that I like. Surrey, and

London for the season—shooting-box in Scotland—that lovely old castle in Wales. You were there, Sherry—you know what I mean.

WHITESIDE. Mm. I do indeed.

LORRAINE. Well, *really*, Sherry, why not? If I can marry Cedric, I don't know why I shouldn't. Shall I tell you something, Sherry? I think, from something he said just before I sailed, that he's finally coming around to it. It wasn't definite, mind you, but—don't be surprised if I *am* Lady Bottomley before very long.

WHITESIDE. Lady Bottomley! Won't Kansas City be surprised! However, I shall be a flower-girl and give the groom an iron toothpick as a wedding present. Come ahead, my blossom,—let's hear some more of your skulduggery.

LORRAINE. Well . . .

(*The library doors are quietly opened at this point and the DOCTOR'S head appears D.R.*)

BRADLEY. (*In a heavy whisper.*) Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE. What? No, no—not now. I'm busy. (*The DOCTOR disappears D.R., closes doors.*)

LORRAINE. Who's that?

WHITESIDE. He's fixing the plumbing . . . Now come on, come on—I want some news.

LORRAINE. But, Sherry, what about this play? After all, I've come all the way from New York—even on Christmas Eve—I've been so excited ever since your phone call. Where is it? When can I read it?

WHITESIDE. Well, here's the situation. This young author—his name is Bert Jefferson—brought me the play with the understanding that I send it to Kit Cornell. It's a magnificent part, and God knows I feel disloyal to Kit.

LORRAINE. Sherry.

WHITESIDE. Anyhow, there you are. Now I've done *this* much—the rest is up to you. He's young and attractive—now, just how you'll go about persuading him, I'm sure you know more about than I do.

LORRAINE. (*Rises, to C.*) Darling, how can I ever thank you? Does he know I'm coming—Mr. Jefferson, I mean?

WHITESIDE. No, no. You're just out here visiting me. You'll meet him, and that's that. Get him to take you to dinner, and work around to the play. Good God, I don't have to tell you how to do these things. How did you get all those other parts?

LORRAINE. (*Crossing L. to sofa for furs and then back.*) Sherry!

. . . Well, I'll go back to the hotel and get into something more attractive. I just dumped my bags and rushed right over here. Darling, you're wonderful. (*Lightly kissing him. Crosses to C.*)

WHITESIDE. All right—now run along and get into your working clothes. Then come right back here and spend Christmas Eve with Sherry and I'll have Mr. Jefferson on tap . . . By the way, I've got a little surprise for you. Who do you think's paying me a flying visit tonight? None other than your old friend and co-star, Beverly Carlton.

LORRAINE. (*Crosses to R. of couch.*) (*Not too delighted.*) Really? Beverly? I thought he was being glamorous again, on a tramp steamer.

WHITESIDE. Come, come dear—mustn't be bitter because he got better notices than you did.

LORRAINE. Don't be silly, Sherry. I never read notices. I simply wouldn't care to act with him again, that's all. He's not staying here, is he? I hope not.

WHITESIDE. Temper, temper, temper. No, he's not. . . . Where'd you get that diamond clip, dear? That's a new bit of loot, isn't it? LORRAINE. (*To him.*) Haven't you seen this before? Cedric gave it to me for his mother's birthday. She was simply furious. Look, darling, I've got a taxi outside. If I'm going to get back here— (*Crossing L. to C.*) (*At this point the voice of MAGGIE is heard in hallway.*)

MAGGIE. (*Entering L.*) Sherry, what do you think? I've just been given the most beautiful . . . (*She stops short and comes to a dead halt as she sees LORRAINE.*)

LORRAINE. Oh, hello, Maggie. I knew you must be around somewhere. How are you, my dear?

WHITESIDE. (*MAGGIE eases down.*) Santa's been at work, my pet. Blossom Girl just dropped in out of the blue and surprised us.

MAGGIE. (*Up L., quietly.*) Hello, Lorraine.

WHITESIDE. (*As JEFFERSON appears L.*) Who's that—Bert? Come in, Bert. This is Mr. Bert Jefferson, Lorraine. Young newspaper man. Miss Lorraine Sheldon.

BERT. How do you do, Miss Sheldon?

LORRAINE. How do you do? I didn't quite catch the name—Jefferson?

WHITESIDE. (*Sweetly.*) That's right, Pet.

LORRAINE. (*Crossing up L.*) (*MAGGIE puts coat off and lays it on stool up L.*) (*Full steam ahead.*) Why, Mr. Jefferson, you don't

a few days . . . (He reads from his manuscript.) "At this joyous season of the year, when in the hearts of men—" I can't cut that.

MAGGIE. Isn't it curious? There was Lorraine, snug as a bug in somebody's bed on the Normandie—

WHITESIDE. (So busy with his manuscript.) "Ere the Yuletide season pass—"

MAGGIE. (Quietly taking manuscript out of his hands.) (Crossing R. to him, then back to C.) Now, Sherry dear, we will talk a bit.

WHITESIDE. Now look here, Maggie. Just because a friend of mine happens to come out to spend Christmas with me— (The door-bell rings.) I have a hunch that's Beverly. Maggie, see if it is. Go ahead—*run! run!*

(JOHN enters up L. to exit off L.) (MAGGIE looks at him—right through him, in fact. Then she goes slowly toward door L. "Maggie"—from BEVERLY. We hear her voice at the door: "Beverly!" Then, in clipped English tones: "A large, moist, incestuous kiss for my Maggie!")

(WHITESIDE, roaring.) Come in here, you Piccadilly pen-pusher, and gaze upon a soul in agony. (JOHN exits up L.) (BEVERLY CARLTON enters L., crosses to C. arm in arm with MAGGIE. Very confident, very British, very Beverly Carlton. He throws his coat over newel-post, MAGGIE puts his hat on table back of couch.)

BEVERLY. Don't tell me how you are, Sherry dear. I want none of the tiresome details. I have only a little time, so the conversation will be entirely about me, and I shall love it. Shall— (Eases R.) I tell you how I glittered through the South Seas like a silver scimitar, or would you rather hear how I frolicked through Zambesia, raping the Major-General's daughter and finishing a three-act play at the same time? (Crosses to MAGGIE L.) Maggie dear, you are the moon-flower of my middle age, and I love you very much. Say something tender to me.

MAGGIE. Beverly, darling.

BEVERLY. That's my girl. (Turning to WHITESIDE.) Now then. Sherry dear, without going into mountainous waves of self-pity, how are you? (A quick nod of the head.)

WHITESIDE. I'm fine, you presumptuous Cockney . . . Now, how was the trip, wonderful? (MAGGIE sits arm of sofa.)

BEVERLY. (Crosses R., then U.L.) Fabulous. I did a fantastic amount of work. By the way, did I glimpse that little boudoir butterfly, La Sheldon, in a motor-car as I came up the driveway?

MAGGIE. You did indeed. She's paying us a Christmas visit.

BEVERLY. Dear girl! They do say she set fire to her mother, but I don't believe it . . . Sherry, (*Sits on stool R.C.*) my evil one, not only have I written the finest comedy since Molière, but also the best revue since my last one, and an operetta that frightens me it's so good. I shall play it for eight weeks in London and six in New York—that's all. No matinees. Then I am off to the Grecian Islands . . . Magpie, why don't you come along? Why don't you desert this cannon-ball of fluff and come with me?

MAGGIE. Beverly dear, be careful. You're catching me at a good moment.

WHITESIDE. (*Changing the subject.*) Tell me, Beverly, did you have a good time in Hollywood? How long were you there?

BEVERLY. (*Rises, crosses to C.*) Three unbelievable days. I saw everyone from Adrian to Zanuck. They came, poor dears, as to a shrine. I was insufferably charming and ruthlessly firm in refusing seven million dollars for two minutes' work.

WHITESIDE. What about Banjo? Did you see my wonderful Banjo in Hollywood?

BEVERLY. I did. He gave a dinner for me. I arrived, in white tie and tails to be met at the door by two bewigged butlers, who quietly proceeded to take my trousers off. I was then ushered, in my lemon silk drawers, into a room full of Norma Shearer, Claudette Colbert, and Aldous Huxley, among others. Dear, sweet, incomparable Banjo. (*Crossing to couch, he puts his arm about MAGGIE's shoulder.*)

WHITESIDE. I'll never forget that summer at Antibes, when Banjo put a microphone in Lorraine's mattress, and then played the record the next day at lunch.

BEVERLY. (*Crossing C.*) I remember it indeed. Lorraine left Antibes by the next boat.

MAGGIE. (*Half to herself.*) I wish Banjo were here now.

BEVERLY. (*Back to MAGGIE.*) What's the matter, Magpie? Is Lorraine being her own sweet sick-making self?

MAGGIE. You wouldn't take her to the Grecian Islands with you, would you, Beverly? Just for me?

WHITESIDE. Now, now. Lorraine is a charming person who has gallantly given up her own Christmas to spend it with me.

BEVERLY. (*Crosses to C.*) Oh, I knew I had a bit of dirt for us all to nibble on. (*He draws a letter out of his pocket.*) (*Again library doors are opened and the DOCTOR's head comes through, D.R.*)
BRADLEY. Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE. No, no, not now. Go away.

(*DOCTOR withdraws D.R., closing doors.*)

BEVERLY. Have you kidnapped someone, Sherry?

WHITESIDE. Yes, that was Charley Ross . . . Go ahead. Is this something juicy?

BEVERLY. (*To stool L. of wheelchair—sits.*) Juicy as a pomegranate. It is the latest report from London on the winter manoeuvres of Miss Lorraine Sheldon against the left flank—in fact, all flanks—of Lord Cedric Bottomley. Listen: "Lorraine has just left us in a cloud of Chanel Number Five. Since September, in her relentless pursuit of His Lordship, she has paused only to change girdles and check her oil. She has chased him, panting, from castle to castle, till he finally took refuge, for several week-ends, in the gentlemen's lavatory of the House of Lords. Practically no one is betting on the Derby this year; we are all making book on Lorraine. She is sailing tomorrow on the Normandie, but would return on the Atlantic Clipper if Bottomley so much as belches in her direction." Have you ever met Lord Bottomley, Magpie dear? (*Rise to C.*)

MAGGIE. No, I haven't. (*He goes immediately into an impersonation of His Lordship. Very British, very full of teeth, stuttering.*) "Not v-v-very good shooting today, blast it. Only s-s-six partridges, f-f-four grouse and the D-D-Duke of Sutherland. Haw, haw."

WHITESIDE. (*Chuckling.*) My God, that's Bottomley to his very bottom.

BEVERLY. (*Still in character.*) "R-r-ripping debate in the House today. Old Basil spoke for th-th-three hours. D-d-dropped dead at the end of it. Ripping. Haw!" (*Eases L.*)

MAGGIE. You're making it up, Beverly. No one sounds like that.

WHITESIDE. It's so good it's uncanny . . . Damn it, Beverly, why must you face right out of here? I never see enough of you, you ungrateful moppet.

BEVERLY. (*Crosses R. to WHITESIDE.*) Sherry darling, I can only tell you that my love for you is so great that I changed trains at Chicago to spend ten minutes with you and wish you a Merry Christmas. Merry Christmas, my lad. My little Magpie. (*MAGGIE rises to C.*)

MAGGIE. Beverly!

BEVERLY. (*A look at his watch, crosses L. to piano D.L.*) And now I have just time for one magnificent number, to give you a taste of how brilliant the whole thing is. It's the second number from my new revue. (*He strikes chord on piano, but before he can go further the phone rings.*)

WHITESIDE. Oh, damn! Get rid of them, Maggie. (MAGGIE crosses to phone D.R. on large ottoman R. of wheelchair. MAGGIE, whose mind is on other things, abstractedly reaches for phone.)

MAGGIE. Hello . . . Oh, hello, Bert. Oh! Well, just a minute. Beverly, would you talk to a newspaper man for just two minutes? I kind of promised him.

BEVERLY. (During phone conversation, softly playing a few bars of a "former" hit.) Won't have time, Magpie, unless he's under the piano.

MAGGIE. Oh! (Into phone.) Wait a minute. (To BEVERLY again.) Would you see him at the station, just for a minute before the train goes? (BEVERLY nods.) Bert, go to the station and wait for him. He'll be there in a few minutes . . . 'Bye.

WHITESIDE. The stalls are impatient, Beverly. Let's have this second-rate masterpiece. (MAGGIE at stool R.C.)

BEVERLY. (His fingers rippling over the keys.) It's called: "What Am I To Do?"¹

"Of in the nightfall
I think I might fall

Down from my perilous height;

Deep in the heart of me,

Always a part of me,

Quivering, shivering light.

Run, little lady,

Ere the shady

Shafts of time,

Barb you with their winged desire,

Singe you with their sultry fire.

Softly a fluid

Druid

Meets me,

"Olden

and golden

the dawn that greets me;

Cherishing,

So perishing,

Up to the stars

I climb.

1. For music see page 82.

have his diapers changed. (*He is gone.*)

BEVERLY. (*Gathering up his hat and coat.*) Maggie, come get a kiss. MAGGIE. (*Crossing up L.*) (*Emerging from library and closing doors behind her.*) Beverly, I want one minute. I must have it. You'll make the train. The station's a minute and a half from here.

(BRADLEY enters D.R.)

BEVERLY. Why, what's the matter, Maggie? (*At which the library doors are opened and DOCTOR emerges rather apologetically.*)

WHITESIDE. (*Offstage.*) Go away!

DOCTOR. I'm—I'm just waiting in the kitchen until Mr.—excuse me. (*He darts out through dining-room. Exits up R.*)

BEVERLY. (*Back of sofa.*) Who is that man?

MAGGIE. Never mind . . . Beverly, I'm in great trouble.

BEVERLY. Maggie, dear, what is it?

MAGGIE. I've fallen in love.

BEVERLY. No! (*Taking her hands.*)

MAGGIE. Yes. For the first time in my life. Beverly, I'm in love. I can't tell you about it—there isn't time. But Sherry is trying to break it up. In his own fiendish way he's doing everything he can to break it up.

BEVERLY. Why, the old flounder! What's he doing?

MAGGIE. Lorraine. He's brought Lorraine here to smash it up.

BEVERLY. Oh, it's somebody here? In this town?

MAGGIE. (*Nodding.*) He's a newspaper man—the one you're going to see at the station—and he's written a play, and I know Sherry must be using that as bait. You know Lorraine—she'll eat him up alive. You've got to help me, Beverly.

BEVERLY. Of course I will, Maggie. What do you want me to do?

MAGGIE. I've got to get Lorraine out of here—the further away the better—and you can do it for me. (*WESTCOTT opens library doors.*)

BEVERLY. But how? How can I? I'm leaving. (*The library doors are opened, and WESTCOTT emerges.*)

WESTCOTT. Have you a carbon of the broadcast, Miss Cutler?

MAGGIE. There's one on that table.

WESTCOTT. Thank you. One of those penguins ate the original. (*Exit D.R., closing doors.*)

MAGGIE. (*Crossing L. of BEVERLY.*) (*She lowers her voice.*) Here's what I want you to do. (*Manoeuvring him into hall up L.*) We see her whisper to him; his head bobs up and down quickly in assent. Then he lets out a shriek of laughter.)

BEVERLY. I'd love it. I'd absolutely love it. (*MAGGIE puls a quick finger to his lips; peers toward the WHITESIDE room. But WESTCOTT has gone in; doors are closed.*) It's simply enchanting, and bitches Sherry and Lorraine at the same time. It's pure heaven! I adore it, and I shall do it up brown. (*He embraces her.*)

MAGGIE. Darling, the first baby will be named Beverly. You're wonderful.

BEVERLY. Of course I am. Come to Chislewick for your honeymoon and I'll put you up. Goodbye, my lovely. I adore you. (*Sees time on his wrist-watch.*) Mercy! Let me out of here! (*He is gone, L.*) (*MAGGIE comes back into room, highly pleased with herself. She even sings a fragment of BEVERLY's song, "What Am I To Do?" "Trala-la-la-la."*) (*JOHN entering from dining-room, up R., breaks the song.*)

JOHN. (*Crosses down, pulls stool up R. of tree.*) Shall I straighten up the room for the broadcast, Miss Cutler?

MAGGIE. (*Crosses to C.*) No, John, it isn't television, thank God, they only hear the liquid voice.

JOHN. He's really wonderful, isn't he, Mr. Whiteside? The things he finds time to do.

MAGGIE. (*Crossing R.*) Yes, he certainly sticks his nose into everything, John.

WESTCOTT. (*Enters from library D.R.*) Are the boys out there, Miss Cutler?

MAGGIE. (*As she exits into library, closing doors.*) Yes, they are, Mr. Westcott.

WESTCOTT. (*As he goes into dining-room up R.*) Thank you.

(*JOHN crosses to table L., putting room in order as he closes a cigarette box on piano D.L. Suddenly JUNE comes quietly down stairs. She is dressed for the street and is carrying a suitcase.*)

JOHN. (*At down-stage side piano.*) Why, Miss June, are you going away?

JUNE. (*R. of staircase.*) Why—no, John. No—Mr. Whiteside is in there, I suppose?

JOHN. Yes, he's getting ready to go on the radio.

JUNE. Oh! Would you—no, never mind. Look, John—(*Just then RICHARD comes downstairs carrying a light bag and a couple of cameras.*)

RICHARD. Where is he? In the library?

JUNE. Yes, he's busy.

RICHARD. Oh! Well, maybe we ought to—(*Door-bell rings again.*)

Come on. (RICHARD immediately scoots out, also via dining-room up R., shooing JUNE before him. JOHN meanwhile has gone to front door off L.)

LORRAINE. Thank you, John. (It is LORRAINE who comes in, resplendent now in evening dress and wrap, straight from Paris. At same time MAGGIE emerges from library D.R. and JOHN goes on his way up L. MAGGIE puts the phone back on console D.R.) (LORRAINE to C.) Hello, dear. Where's Sherry?

MAGGIE. Inside working—he's broadcasting very soon. (MAGGIE puts present from ottoman under tree U.C.)

LORRAINE. (Surveying the room.) Oh, of course—Christmas Eve. What a wonderful man Sheridan Whiteside is. You know, my dear, it must be such an utter joy to be secretary to somebody like Sherry.

MAGGIE. Yes, you meet such interesting people . . . (LORRAINE crosses to couch.) That's quite a gown, Lorraine. Going anywhere? (Chair D.R.)

LORRAINE. This? Oh, I just threw on anything at all. (Sits on sofa.) Aren't you dressing for dinner?

MAGGIE. (Crosses to back of sofa.) No, just what meets the eye. (She has occasion to carry a few papers across room at this point. LORRAINE's eyes watch her narrowly. As MAGGIE reaches C. she gives LORRAINE a polite social smile, then continues to D.R.)

LORRAINE. Who does your hair, Maggie?

MAGGIE. A little Frenchwoman named Maggie Cutler comes in every morning.

LORRAINE. You know, every time I see you I keep thinking your hair could be so lovely. I always wanted to get my hands on it.

MAGGIE. (Sits; quietly.) I've always wanted to get mine on yours, Lorraine.

LORRAINE. (Absently.) What, dear? (One of the RADIO MEN drifts into room with a table for control board, puts it L. of tree, drifts out again. As he reaches arch U.R. he grins broadly. LORRAINE's eyes follow him idly. Then she turns to MAGGIE again.) By the way, what time does Beverly get here? I'm not over-anxious to meet him.

MAGGIE. He's been and gone, Lorraine.

LORRAINE. Really? Well, I'm very glad . . . Of course, you're great friends, aren't you—you and Beverly?

MAGGIE. Yes, we are. I think he's a wonderful person.

LORRAINE. Oh, I suppose he is. But really, when I finished acting with him, I was a perfect wreck. All during that tender love scene

that the critics thought was so magnificent, he kept dropping peanut shells down my dress. I wouldn't act with him again if I were starving.

MAGGIE. (Rise, crosses to C.) Tell me, Lorraine, have you found a new play yet?

LORRAINE. (At once on guard.) No—no, I haven't. There was a pile of manuscripts waiting in New York for me, but I hurried right out here to Sherry.

MAGGIE. Yes, it was wonderful of you, Lorraine—to drop everything that way and rush to Sherry's wheel-chair.

LORRAINE. Well, after all, Maggie, dear, what else has one in this world but friends? . . .

MAGGIE. (Crosses R. to D.R.) That's what I always say . . . (RADIO MAN enters up R. with control board, puts it on table.) Everything O.K.?

RADIO MAN. Yes, thank you. (Starting off, never taking his eyes off LORRAINE. He reaches library doors, realizes his mistake, exits into dining-room U.R.)

LORRAINE. How long will Sherry be in there?

MAGGIE. (Crosses to C.) Not long . . . Did you know that Mr. Jefferson has written quite a good play? The young man that drove you to the hotel.

LORRAINE. Really? No, I didn't. Isn't that interesting?

MAGGIE. (Sits.) Yes, isn't it?

(Considerable pause. The ladies smile at each other.)

LORRAINE. (Evading MAGGIE's eyes.) They've put a polish on my nails I simply loathe. I don't suppose Elizabeth Arden has a branch in this town.

MAGGIE. (Busy with her papers.) Not if she has any sense.

LORRAINE. (Rises, to back of sofa, then to piano.) Oh, well, I'll just bear it, but it does depress me. (She wanders aimlessly for a moment. Picks up a book from table.) Have you read this, Maggie, everybody was reading it on the boat. I hear you simply can't put it down.

MAGGIE. I put it down—right there. (LORRAINE casually strikes a note or two on piano.) (The phone rings.) (Taking up receiver a little too casually.) Hello . . . yes . . . Yes . . . Miss Lorraine Sheldon? Yes, she's here . . . There's a Trans-Atlantic call coming (Rises.) through for you, Lorraine.

LORRAINE. (Crossing R. to phone.) Trans-Atlantic—for me? Here? Why, what in the world—

MAGGIE. (*As she hands over receiver—eases up c.*) It's London.
LORRAINE. London? . . . Hello. (*Then in a louder tone.*) Hello . . . Cedric! Cedric, is this you? . . . Why, Cedric, you darling! Why, what a surprise! How'd you know I was here? What . . . ? Darling, don't talk so fast and you won't stutter so . . . That's better . . . Yes, now, I can hear you . . . Yes, very clearly. It's as though you were just around the corner . . . I see . . . What? . . . Darling! (*Realizing MAGGIE is listening.*) Cedric, dearest, would you wait just one moment? (*She turns to MAGGIE.*) Maggie, would you mind? It's Lord Bottomley—a very personal call. Would you mind?

MAGGIE. Oh, not at all. (*She goes into dining-room, up R., almost does a little waltz step as she goes.*)

LORRAINE. Yes, my dearest—now tell me . . . Cedric, please don't stutter so. Don't be nervous. (*She listens for a moment again.*) Oh, my darling. Oh, my sweet. You don't know how I've prayed for this, every night on the boat . . . Darling, yes! YES, a thousand times Yes! . . . I'll take a plane right out of here and catch the next boat . . . What? Cedric, don't stutter so . . . Yes, and I love you, my darling—oh, so much! . . . Oh, my dear sweet. My dearest darling. Yes, yes! I will, I will, darling! I'll be thinking of you every moment . . . You've made me the happiest girl in the world . . . Good-bye, good-bye, darling. Goodbye. (*Puts phone on ottoman D.R.*) (*Bursting with her news, she turns to library to call WHITESIDE, opens doors, crosses to C.*) Sherry! Sherry, Sherry! Do you know what happened? Cedric just called from London—he's asked me to marry him.

WHITESIDE. (*Wheeling himself on. He is smoking a cigarette in a long holder.*) What!

LORRAINE. Sherry, think of it! At last! I've got to get right out of here and catch the next boat.

MAGGIE. (*Emerging, mouse-like, from dining-room, up R.*) May I come in?

LORRAINE. (*Crossing L.*) Maggie, dear, can I get a plane out of here right away? I've simply got to get the next boat to England. When is it—do you know? Is there a newspaper here?

MAGGIE. (*Eases down.*) The Queen Mary sails Friday. What's happened?

LORRAINE. (*Crossing up R., embraces MAGGIE.*) Maggie, the most wonderful thing in the world has happened. Lord Bottomley has asked me to marry him. Oh, Maggie! (*A gesture toward phone.*)

WHITESIDE. I look, Bert, I suggest you tell us all about this later. Now, why don't you—

(*He stops as DR. BRADLEY enters from hallway.*)

BRADLEY. (C.) Oh, excuse me! Merry Christmas, everybody. Merry Christmas.

BERT. God bless us all, and Tiny Tim.

BRADLEY. Yes . . . Mr. Whiteside, I thought perhaps if I came very early . . .

BERT. (*Crosses back of WHITESIDE to BRADLEY.*) You know what, Doc? I'm going to Lake Placid for three weeks—isn't that wonderful? Ever hear of Lorraine Sheldon, the famous actress? Well, we're going to Lake Placid for three weeks.

WHITESIDE. Dr. Bradley, would you do me a favor? I think Mr. Jefferson would like some black coffee and a little breakfast. Would you take care of him please?

BRADLEY. Yes, yes, of course . . .

BERT. Dr. Bradley, I'm going to buy breakfast for you—biggest breakfast you ever had.

BRADLEY. Yes, yes, Jefferson.

BERT. (*Putting arm about BRADLEY, he starts him off.*) You know what, Doctor? Let's climb down a couple of chimneys. I got a friend that doesn't believe in Santa Claus—let's climb down his chimney and frighten the hell out of him. (*He exits with BRADLEY, L.*)

WHITESIDE. Now listen to me, Maggie. I am willing to forgive your cawdry outburst and talk about this calmly.

MAGGIE. I love him so terribly. Oh, Sherry, Sherry, why did you do it? Why did you do it? (*She goes stumbling into library—closes doors after her.*)

(WHITESIDE, left alone, looks at his watch; heaves a long sigh. Then HARRIET comes down steps, dressed for the street.)

HARRIET. (*To C.*) Merry Christmas, Mr. Whiteside.

WHITESIDE. Oh! . . . Merry Christmas, Miss Stanley.

HARRIET. (*Nervously.*) I'm afraid I shouldn't be seen talking to you, Mr. Whiteside—my brother is terribly angry. I just couldn't resist asking—did you like my Christmas present?

WHITESIDE. I'm very sorry, Miss Stanley—I haven't opened it. I haven't opened any of my presents yet.

HARRIET. Oh, dear, I was so anxious to—it's right here, Mr. Whiteside. (*She goes to tree.*) Won't you open it now?

WHITESIDE. (*As he undoes string.*) I appreciate your thinking of me, Miss Stanley. This is very thoughtful of you. (*He takes out*

gift—an old photograph.) Why it's lovely. I'm very fond of these old photographs. Thank you very much.

HARRIET. I was twenty-two when that was taken. That was my favorite dress . . . Do you really like it?

WHITESIDE. I do indeed. When I get back to town I shall send you a little gift.

HARRIET. Will you? Oh, thank you, Mr. Whiteside. I shall treasure it—(*She starts to go.*) Well, I shall be late for church. Good-bye. Good-bye.

WHITESIDE. Good-bye, Miss Stanley.

(*As she goes out front door WHITESIDE's eyes return to gift. He puzzles over it for a second, shakes his head. Mumbles to himself—"What is there about that woman?" Shakes his head again in perplexity.*) (JOHN comes from dining-room, carrying a breakfast tray.)

JOHN. Sarah's got a little surprise for you, Mr. Whiteside. She's just taking it out of the oven. (*Crossing from U.R. to upstairs.*)

WHITESIDE. Thank you, John. (JOHN disappears up stairs.) (Then suddenly there is a great ringing of the doorbell. It stops for a second, then picks up violently again.) Miss Preen! Miss Preen! (MISS PREEN comes hurrying from library.)

MISS PREEN. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

WHITESIDE. Answer the door, will you? John is upstairs. (MISS PREEN, obviously annoyed, hurries to door.) (WHITESIDE puts package in chair basket.) (*We hear her voice from hallway "Who is it?" An answering male voice: "Polly Adler's!" Then a little shriek from MISS PREEN, and in a moment we see the reason why. She is carried into the room in the arms of a pixie-like gentleman, who is kissing her over and over.*)

THE GENTLEMAN. (*Carrying MISS PREEN.*) (*Coming D.C.*) I love you madly—madly. Did you hear what I said—madly! Kiss me. Again! Don't be afraid of my passion. Kiss me! I can feel the hot blood pounding through your varicose veins.

MISS PREEN. (*Through all this.*) Put me down! Put me down! Do you hear? Don't you dare kiss me! Who are you! Put me down or I'll scream. Mr. Whiteside! Mr. Whiteside!

WHITESIDE. Banjo, for God's sake! Banjo!

BANJO. Hello, Whiteside. Will you sign for this package, please?

MISS PREEN. Mr. Whiteside!

WHITESIDE. Banjo, put that woman down. That is my nurse, you mental delinquent.

BANJO. (*Putting MISS PREEN on her feet.*) Come to my room in half an hour and bring some rye bread. (*Slaps MISS PREEN's fatty.*) MISS PREEN. (*Outraged.*) Really, Mr. Whiteside! (*She adjusts her clothes with a quick jerk or two and marches into library—closes doors.*) (JOHN, at the same time, comes hurrying down stairs; BANJO beckons to him. Bending his leg and raising it, BANJO puts it in JOHN's hand. Amazed, JOHN rushes off U.R.)

BANJO. (*Crosses to C.*) Whiteside, I'm here to spend Christmas with you. Give me a kiss.

WHITESIDE. Get away from me, you reform school fugitive. How did you get here anyway?

BANJO. (C.) Darryl Zanuck loaned me his reindeer. Whiteside, we finished shooting the picture yesterday and I'm on my way to Nova Scotia. Flew here in twelve hours—borrowed an airplane from Howard Hughes. Whiteside, I brought you a wonderful Christmas present. (*He produces a little tissue-wrapped package. Crosses to WHITESIDE.*) This brassiere was once worn by Hedy Lamarr. (*Dropping it in WHITESIDE's lap.*)

WHITESIDE. Listen, you idiot, how long can you stay?

BANJO. Just long enough to take a bath. I'm on my way to Nova Scotia. Where's Maggie?

WHITESIDE. Nova Scotia? What are you going to Nova Scotia for? BANJO. I'm sick of Hollywood and there's a dame in New York I don't want to see. So I figured I'd go to Nova Scotia and get some smoked salmon . . . Where the hell's Maggie? I want to see her . . . What's the matter with you? Where is she?

WHITESIDE. Banjo, I'm glad you're here. I'm very annoyed at Maggie. Very!

BANJO. What's the matter?

(WHITESIDE rises, crosses to L.) Say, what is this? I thought you couldn't walk. (*Crossing to C.*)

WHITESIDE. Oh, I've been all right for weeks. That isn't the point. I'm furious at Maggie. She's turned on me like a viper. You know how fond I am of her. Well, after these years she's repaying my affection by behaving like a fishwife.

BANJO. What are you talking about?

WHITESIDE. (*A step L.*) But I never believed for a moment she was really in love with him.

BANJO. In love with who? I just got here—remember? (*BUSINESS of pointing to himself.*)

WHITESIDE. (*Pace L.*) Great God, I'm telling you, you Hollywood

nitwit. A young newspaper man here in town.

BANJO. Maggie finally fell—well, what do you know? What kind of a guy is he?

WHITESIDE. (*Crosses to him.*) Oh, shut up and listen, will you?

BANJO. Well, go on. What happened?

WHITESIDE. (*Pacing L.*) Well, Lorraine Sheldon happened to come out here and visit me.

BANJO. Old hot-pants—here?

WHITESIDE. (*Back to BANJO.*) Now listen! This young fellow, he'd written a play. You can guess the rest. He's going away with Lorraine this afternoon. To "rewrite." So there you are. Maggie's in there now, crying her eyes out. (*Crosses to sofa—sits.*)

BANJO. (*Crosses L.*) Gee! . . . Say, wait a minute. What do you mean Lorraine Sheldon happened to come out here? I smell a rat, Sherry—a rat with a beard.

WHITESIDE. Well, all right, all right. But I did it for Maggie—because I thought it was the right thing for her.

BANJO. (*Crosses R.*) Oh, sure. You haven't thought of yourself in years . . . Gee, poor kid. Can I go in and talk to her?

WHITESIDE. No—no. Leave her alone.

BANJO. (*Crosses L.*) Any way I could help, Sherry? Where's this guy live—this guy she likes? Can we get hold of him?

WHITESIDE. (*Rises—crosses to BANJO.*) Now wait a minute, Banjo. We don't want any phony warrants, or you pretending to be J. Edgar Hoover. I've been through all that with you before. (*He paces again L.*) I got Lorraine out here and I've got to get her away.

BANJO. It's got to be good, Sherry. Lorraine's no dope. (*Crosses U.R.*) . . . Now, there must be something that would get her out of here like a bat out of hell. (*Crosses to L.*) Say! I think I've got it! That fellow she's so crazy about over in England—what's his name again?—Lord Fanny or whatever it is. Bottomley—that's it! Bottomley!

WHITESIDE. (*With a pained expression.*) No, Banjo. No.

BANJO. Wait a minute—you don't catch on. We send Lorraine a cablegram from Lord Bottomley—

WHITESIDE. I catch on, Banjo. Lorraine caught on too. It's been tried.

BANJO. (*Crosses R.*) Oh! . . . I told you she was no dope . . . (*He sits in wheelchair.*) Well, we've got a tough proposition on your hands.

WHITESIDE. The trouble is there's so damned little time. Get out of

my chair! (WHITESIDE sits in chair as BANJO gets out of it and crosses to C.) Lorraine's taking him away with her this afternoon. Oh, damn, damn, damn. There must be some way out. The trouble is I've done this job too well. Hell and damnation!

BANJO. (C.) Stuck, huh?

WHITESIDE. In the words of one of our greatest lyric poets, you said it.

BANJO. Yeh. Gee, I'm hungry. We'll think of something, Sherry—you watch. We'll get Lorraine out of here if I have to do it one piece at a time. (SARAH enters from dining-room, bearing a tray on which reposes the culinary surprise which JOHN has mentioned which she is hiding behind her back.)

SARAH. (To L. of chair.) Merry Christmas, Mr. Whiteside . . . Excuse me. (This last is to BANJO.) I've got something for you . . . (BANJO lifts the latest delicacy and proceeds to eat it as she presents the empty plate to WHITESIDE.)

SARAH. But, Mr. Whiteside, it was for you.

WHITESIDE. Never mind, Sarah. He's quite mad.

BANJO. Come, Petrushka, we shall dance. We shall dance in the snow! (He clutches SARAH and waltzes her toward kitchen U.R., loudly humming the Merry Widow Waltz.)

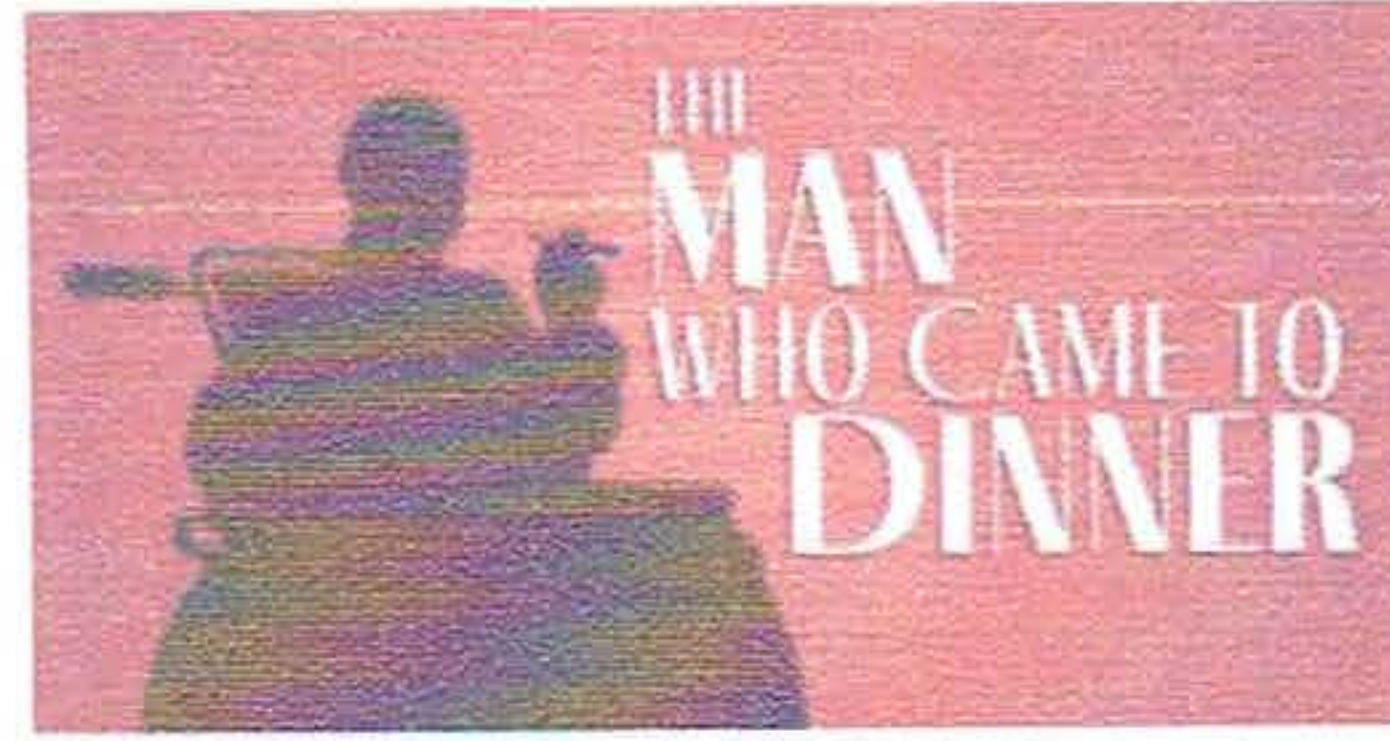
SARAH. (As she is borne away.) Mr. Whiteside! Mr. Whiteside! WHITESIDE. Just give him some breakfast, Sarah. He's harmless. (WHITESIDE barely has a moment in which to collect his thoughts before library doors are opened and MISS PREEN emerges. She is dressed for the street and carries a bag.) (She plants herself to L. of WHITESIDE, puts down her bag and starts drawing on a pair of gloves.)

And just what does this mean?

MISS PREEN. (C.) It means, Mr. Whiteside, that I am leaving. My address is on the desk inside, you can send me a check.

WHITESIDE. You realize, Miss Preen, that this is completely unprofessional?

MISS PREEN. I do indeed. I am not only walking out on this case, Mr. Whiteside, but I am leaving the nursing profession. I became a nurse because all my life, ever since I was a little girl, I was filled with the idea of serving a suffering humanity. After one month with you, Mr. Whiteside, I am going to work in a munitions factory. From now on anything that I can do to help exterminate the human race will fill me with the greatest of pleasure. If Florence Nightingale had ever nursed you, Mr. Whiteside, she would have married



Little Theatre of Owatonna
The Man Who Came to Dinner
Spring 2024
Children's Choir Opportunity

- Who? Seeking singers in 4th – 8th grade
Seeking singers of any gender
No previous choir or theatre experience needed!
- What? Children's Choir to perform Christmas carols during the play and intermission.
- When? **Auditions:**
Sunday, February 18 & Monday, February 19 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Rehearsals:
To start, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
As we get closer to the show opening, be prepared to be at rehearsals longer and later, Monday – Thursday.
For 1 – 2 weeks before the show, rehearsals may go later than 8:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Tech rehearsal Sunday, April 7
Performances:
April 19, 20, 26, 27 – 7:30 p.m., April 21 & 28 – 2:00 p.m.
- Where? **Little Theatre of Owatonna**
560 Dunnell Dr # A, Owatonna, MN 55060
- Audition Information
Prepare to sing the song *Silent Night* (sheet music attached)
Vocal exercises to determine vocal range will be taught at audition

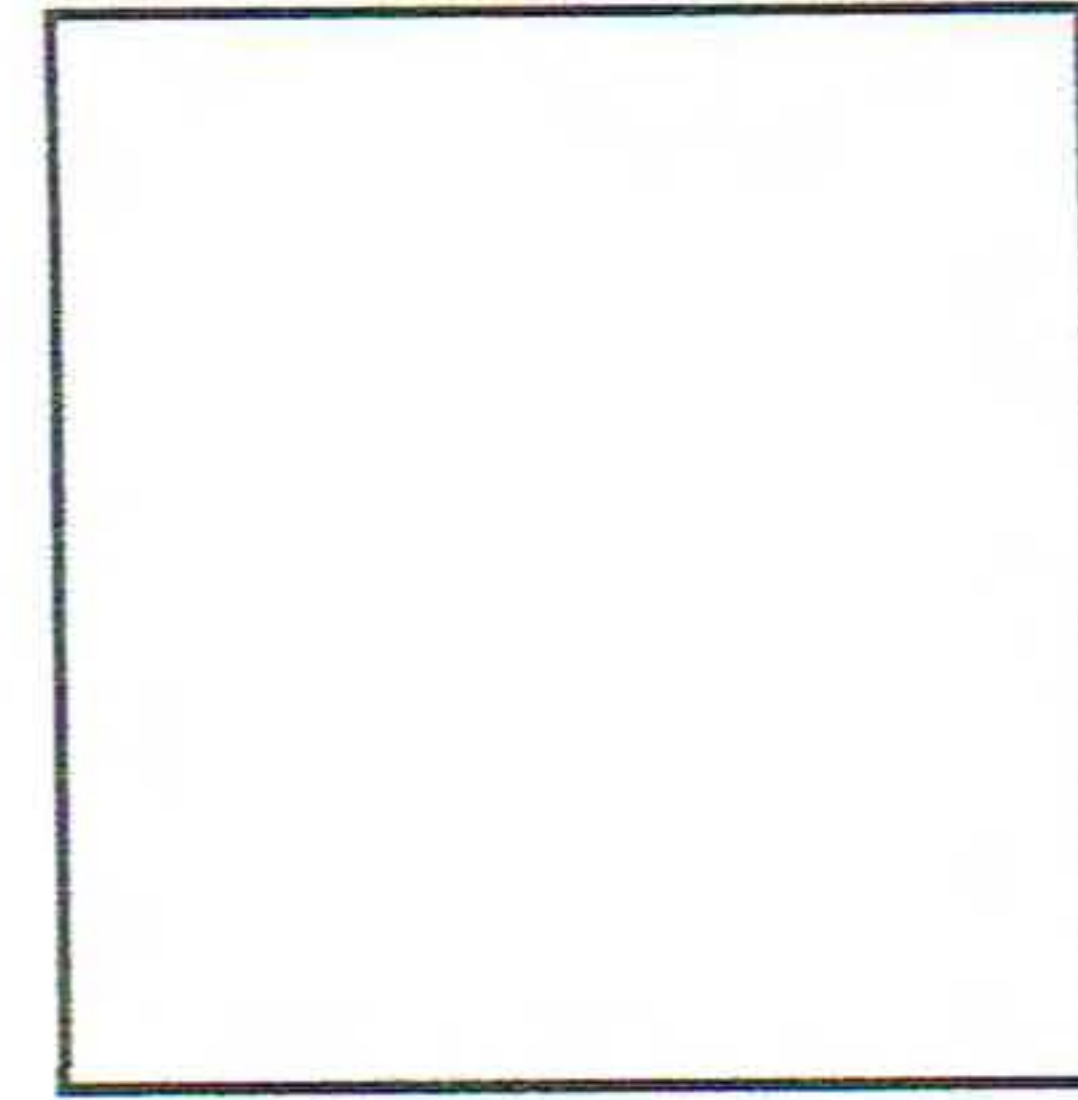
Come with a great attitude ready to have fun and sing!

Contact Maggie Jones [651-334-2021 – maggiemjones310@gmail.com] before auditions with any questions regarding the children's choir. See you there!



Little Theatre of Owatonna

AUDITION FORM



The Man Who Came to Dinner *Children's Choir*

Date: Sunday, February 18 & Monday, February 19, 2024

Full Name: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

Recent Choir/Theatre Performing Experience:

_____	Location _____	Year _____
_____	Location _____	Year _____
_____	Location _____	Year _____
_____	Location _____	Year _____
_____	Location _____	Year _____

Anything else you'd like us to know?

Your preferred contact info:

Full Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Parent/Guardian Phone: _____ Text: YES NO

Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

Turn page over

Potential medical or other conditions to note:

Please note any possible scheduling conflicts below.

Are there any other potential scheduling conflicts you are currently aware of? Please list below.

How did you hear about our auditions?

NEWSPAPER FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM LTO WEBSITE FRIEND OTHER

EMERGENCY CONTACT:

Name: _____

Parent or Guardian info (If Under 18): _____

Phone: _____

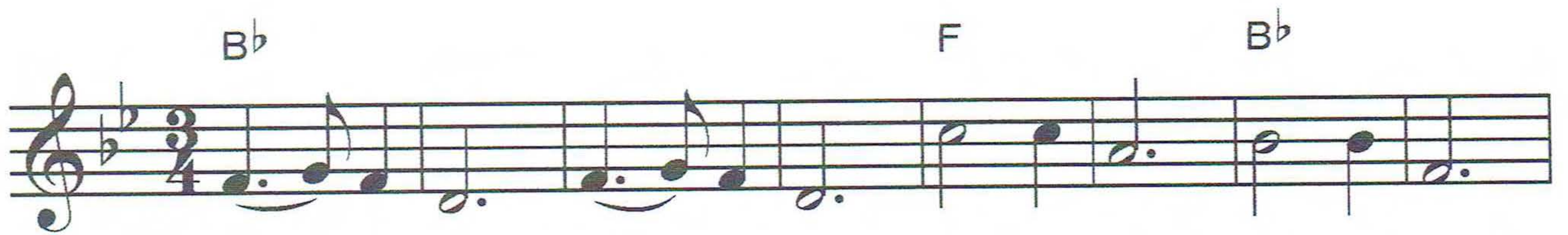
Relationship: _____

Thank you for auditioning!

Silent Night

Joseph Mohr

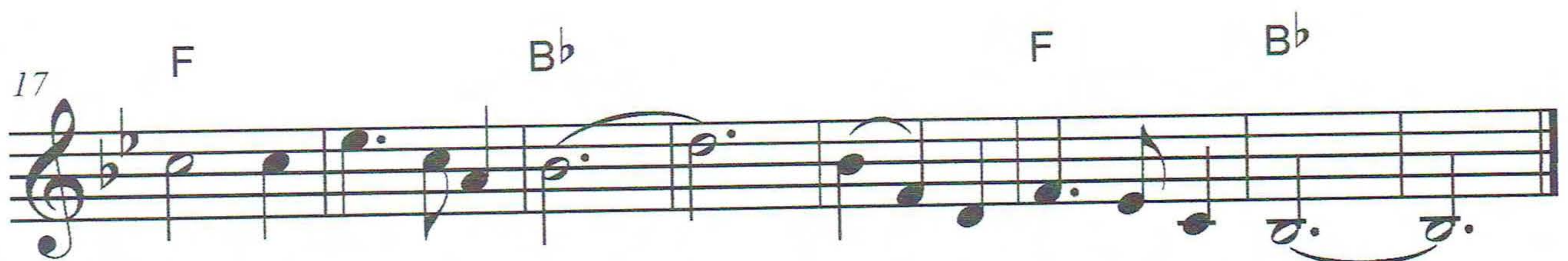
Franz Gruber



Sil - ent night, Ho - ly night, All is calm, all is bright,



Round yon vir - gin, moth-er and child, Ho - ly in-fant, so ten-der and mild.



Sleep in heav-en-ly peace, Sleep in heav-en-ly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight; Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia! Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light; Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.