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ERDGEIST
Frank Wedekind

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ERDGEIST

LULU

BY FRANK WEDEKIND

ERDGEIST (EARTH-SPIRIT) \$1.00

PANDORA'S BOX (IN PREPARATION)

ERDGEIST

(Earth-Spirit)

A Tragedy in Four Acts

BY

FRANK WEDEKIND

Translated by Samuel A. Eliot, Jr.



NEW YORK

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1914

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“I was created out of ranker stuff
By Nature, and to the earth by Lust am drawn.
Unto the spirit of evil, not of good,
The earth belongs. What deities send to us
From heaven are only universal goods;
Their light gives gladness, but makes no man rich;
And in their state possession not obtains.
Therefore, the stone of price, all-treasured gold,
Must from the powers of falsehood be enticed,
The evil race that dwells beneath the day.
Not without sacrifice their favor is gained,
And no man liveth who from serving them
Hath extricated undefiled his soul.”

CHARACTERS

DR. SCHÖN, newspaper owner and editor.

ALVA, his son, a writer.

DR. GOLL, M.D.

SCHWARZ, an artist.

PRINCE ESCERNY, an African explorer.

ESCHERICH, a reporter.

SCHIGOLCH, a beggar.

RODRIGO, an acrobat.

HUGENBERG, a schoolboy (*played by a girl.*)

FERDINAND, a coachman.

LULU.

COUNTESS GESCHWITZ.

HENRIETTE, a servant.

PROLOGUE

(At rise, is seen the entrance to a tent, out of which steps an animal-tamer, with long, black curls, dressed in a white cravat, a vermilion dress-coat, white trowsers and white top-boots. He carries in his left hand a dog-whip and in his right a loaded revolver, and enters to the sound of cymbals and kettle-drums.)

Walk in! Walk in to the menagery,
Proud gentlemen and ladies lively and merry!
With avid lust or cold disgust, the very
Beast without Soul bound and made secondary
To human genius, to stay and see!
Walk in, the show'll begin!—As customary,
One child to each two persons comes in free.

Here battle man and brute in narrow cages
Where one in haught disdain his long whip lashes
And one, with growls as when the thunder rages,
Against the man's throat murderously dashes,—
Where now the crafty conquers, now the strong,
Now man, now beast, lies cowed the floor along;
The animal rears,—the human on all fours!
One ice-cold look of dominance—
The beast submissive bows before that glance,
And the proud heel upon his neck adores.

Bad are the times! Ladies and gentlemen
Who once before my cage in thronging crescents
Crowded, now honor operas, and then
Ibsen, with their so highly valued presence.

My boarders here are so in want of fodder
 That they reciprocally devour each other.
 How well off at the theater is a player,
 Sure of the meat upon his ribs, albeit
 His frightful hunger may tear him and he it
 And colleagues' inner cupboards be quite bare!—
 Greatness in art we struggle to inherit,
 Although the salary never match the merit.

What see you, whether in light or sombre plays?
 H o u s e - a n i m a l s, whose morals all must praise,
 Who wreak pale spites in vegetarian ways,
 And revel in an easy cry or fret,
 Just like those others—down in the parquet.
 This hero has a head by one dram swirled;
 That is in doubt whether his love be right;
 A third you hear despairing of the world,—
 Full five acts long you hear him wail his plight,
 And no man ends him with a merciful sleight!
 But the r e a l beast, the b e a u t i f u l, w i l d beast,
 Your eyes on t h a t, *I*, ladies, only feast!

You see the Tiger, that habitually
 Devours whatever falls before his bound;
 The Bear, so ravenous originally,
 Who at a late night-meal sinks dead to ground;
 You see the Monkey, little and amusing,
 From sheer ennui his petty powers abusing,—
 He has some talent, of all greatness scant,
 So, impudently, coquettes with his own want!
 Upon my soul, within my tent's a mammal,
 See, right behind the curtain, here,—a Camel!
 And all my creatures fawn about my feet

When my revolver cracks—

(He shoots into the audience.)

Behold!

Brutes tremble all around me. I am cold:

The m a n stays cold,—you, with respect, to greet.

Walk in!—You hardly trust yourselves in here?—

Then very well, judge for yourselves! Each sphere

Has sent its crawling creatures to your telling:

Chameleons and serpents, crocodiles,

Dragons, and salamanders chasm-dwelling,—

I know, of course, you're full of quiet smiles

And don't believe a syllable I say.—

(He lifts the entrance-flap and calls into the tent.)

Hi, Charlie!—bring our S e r p e n t just this way!

(A stage-hand with a big paunch carries out the actress of L u l u in her Pierrot costume, and sets her down before the animal-tamer.)

She was created to incite to sin,

To lure, seduce, poison—yea, murder, in

A manner no man knows.—My pretty beast,

(Tickling Lulu's chin.)

Only be u n a f f e c t e d, and not pieced

Out with distorted, artificial folly,

Even if the critics praise thee for 't less wholly.

Thou hast no right to spoil the shape most fitting,

Most t r u e, of w o m a n, with meows and spitting!

And mind, all foolery and making faces

The c h i l d i s h s i m p l e n e s s of V i c e disgraces.

Thou shouldst—to-day I speak emphatically—

Speak n a t u r a l l y and not unnaturally,

For the first principle in every art,
 Since earliest times, was T r u e and P l a i n, not S m a r t!

(To the public.)

There's nothing special now to see in her,
 But wait and watch what later will occur!
 Her strength about the Tiger she coils stricter:
 He roars and groans!—Who'll be the final victor?—
 Hop, Charlie, march! Carry her to her place,

(The stage-hand carries Lulu in his arms; the animal-tamer pats her on the hips.)

Sweet innocence—my dearest treasure-case!

(The stage-hand carries Lulu back into the tent.)

And now I'll tell the best thing in the day:
 My poll between the teeth of a beast of prey!
 Walk in! Tho to be sure the show's not new,
 Yet everyone takes pleasure in its view!
 Wrench open this wild animal's jaws I dare,
 And he to bite dares not! My pate's so fair,
 So wild, so gaily decked, it wins respect!
 I offer it him with confidence unchecked.
 One joke, and my two temples crack!—but, lo,
 The lightning of my eyes I will forego,
 Staking my life against a joke! and throw
 My whip, my weapons, down. I am in my skin!
 I yield me to this beast!—His name do ye know?
 —The honored public! that has just walked in!

(The animal-tamer steps back into the tent, accompanied by cymbals and kettledrums.)

ACT I

A roomy studio. Entrance door at the rear, left. Another door at lower left to the bed-room. At centre, a platform for the model, with a Spanish screen behind it and a Smyrna rug in front. Two easels at lower right. On the upper one is the picture of a young girl's head and shoulders. Against the other leans a reversed canvas. Below these, toward centre, an ottoman, with a tiger-skin on it. Two chairs along the left wall. In the back-ground, right, a step-ladder.

Schön sits on the foot of the ottoman, inspecting critically the picture on the further easel. Schwarz stands behind the ottoman, his palette and brushes in his hands.

SCHÖN. Do you know, I'm getting acquainted with a brand new side of the lady.

SCHWARZ. I have never painted anyone whose expression changed so continuously. I could hardly keep a single feature the same two days running.

SCHÖN. (*Pointing to the picture and observing him.*) Do you find that in it?

SCHWARZ. I have done everything imaginable to call forth some sort of quiet in her mood by my conversation during the sittings.

SCHÖN. Then I understand the difference. (*Schwarz dips his brush in the oil and draws it over the features of the face.*) Do you think that makes it look more like her?

SCHWARZ. We can only work with art as scientifically as possible.

SCHÖN. Tell me—

SCHWARZ. (*Stepping back.*) The color had sunk in pretty well, too.

SCHÖN. (*Looking at him.*) Have you ever loved a woman in your life?

SCHWARZ. (*Goes to the easel, puts a color on it, and steps back on the other side.*) The dress isn't made to stand out enough yet. We don't see the living body under it.

SCHÖN. I make no doubt that the workmanship is good.

SCHWARZ. If you'll step this way. . . .

SCHÖN. (*Rising.*) You must have told her regular ghost-stories.

SCHWARZ. As far back as you can.

SCHÖN. (*Stepping back, knocks down the canvas that was leaning against the lower easel.*) Excuse me—

SCHWARZ. (*Picking it up.*) That's all right.

SCHÖN. (*Surprised.*) What is that?

SCHWARZ. Do you know her?

SCHÖN. No. (*Schwarz sets the picture on the easel. It is of a lady dressed as Pierrot with a long shepherd's crook in her hand.*)

SCHWARZ. A costume-picture.

SCHÖN. But, really, you've succeeded with her.

SCHWARZ. You know her?

SCHÖN. No. And in that costume—?

SCHWARZ. It isn't nearly finished yet. (*Schön nods.*) What would you have? While she is posing for me I have the pleasure of entertaining her husband.

SCHÖN. What?

SCHWARZ. We talk about art, of course,—to complete my good fortune!

SCHÖN. But how did you make such a charming acquaintance?

SCHWARZ. As they're generally made. An ancient, tottering little man drops in on me here to know if I can paint his wife. Why, of course, were she as wrinkled as Mother Earth! Next day at ten prompt the doors fly open, and the fat-belly drives this little beauty in before him. I can feel even now how my knees shook. Then comes a sap-green lackey, stiff as a ramrod, with a package under his arm. Where is the dressing-room? Imagine my plight. I open the door there (*pointing left*). Just luck that everything was in order. The sweet thing vanishes into it, and the old fellow posts himself outside as a bastion. Two minutes later out she steps in this Pierrot. (*Shaking his head.*) I never saw anything like it. (*He goes left and stares in at the bedroom.*)

SCHÖN. (*Who has followed him with his eyes.*) And the fat-belly stands guard?

SCHWARZ. (*Turning round.*) The whole body in harmony with that impossible costume as if it had come into the world in it! Her way of burying her elbows in her pockets, of lifting her little feet from the rug,—the blood often shoots to my head. . . .

SCHÖN. One can see that in the picture.

SCHWARZ. (*Shaking his head.*) People like us, you know—

SCHÖN. Here the model is mistress of the conversation.

SCHWARZ. She has never yet opened her mouth.

SCHÖN. Is it possible?

SCHWARZ. Allow me to show the costume to you. (*Goes out left.*)

SCHÖN. (*Before the Pierrot.*) A devilish beauty. (*Before the other picture.*) There's more depth here.

(*Coming down stage.*) He is still rather young for his age. (*Schwarz comes back with a white satin costume.*)

SCHWARZ. What sort of material is that?

SCHÖN. (*Feeling it.*) Satin.

SCHWARZ. And all in one piece.

SCHÖN. How does one get into it then?

SCHWARZ. That I can't tell you.

SCHÖN. (*Taking the costume by the legs.*) What enormous trowser-legs!

SCHWARZ. The left one she pulls up.

SCHÖN. (*Looking at the picture.*) Above the knee!

SCHWARZ. She does that entrancingly!

SCHÖN. And transparent stockings?

SCHWARZ. Those have got to be painted, specially.

SCHÖN. Oh, you can do that.

SCHWARZ. And with it all a coquetry!

SCHÖN. What brought you to that horrible suspicion?

SCHWARZ. There are things that our school-philosophy lets itself never dream of. (*He takes the costume back into his bedroom.*)

SCHÖN. (*Alone.*) When we sleep. . . .

SCHWARZ. (*Comes back; looks at his watch.*) If you wish to make her acquaintance too—

SCHÖN. No.

SCHWARZ. They must be here in a moment.

SCHÖN. How much longer will the lady have to sit?

SCHWARZ. I shall probably have to bear the pains of Tantalus three months longer.

SCHÖN. I mean the other one.

SCHWARZ. I beg your pardon. Three times more at most. (*Going to the door with him.*) If the lady will just leave me the upper part of the dress then. . . .

SCHÖN. With pleasure. Let us see you at my house

again soon. For Heaven's sake! (*As he collides in the door-way with Dr. Goll and Lulu.*)

SCHWARZ. May I introduce . . .

DR. GOLL. (*To Schön.*) What are you doing here?

LULU. (*As Schön kisses her hand in greeting.*)
You're not going already?

DR. GOLL. But what wind blows you here?

SCHÖN. I've been looking at the picture of my bride.

LULU. (*Coming forward.*) Your bride is here?

DR. GOLL. So you're having work done here, too?

LULU. (*Before the upper picture.*) Look at it! Enchanting! Entrancing!

DR. GOLL. (*Looking round him.*) Have you got her hidden somewhere round here?

LULU. So that is the sweet young prodigy who's made a new person out of you. . . .

SCHÖN. She sits in the afternoon mostly.

DR. GOLL. And you don't tell anyone about it?

LULU. (*Turning round.*) Is she really so solemn?

SCHÖN. Probably the after-effects of the seminary still, dear lady.

DR. GOLL. (*Before the picture.*) One can see that you have been transformed profoundly.

LULU. But now you mustn't let her wait any longer.

SCHÖN. In a fortnight I think the engagement will come out.

DR. GOLL. (*To Lulu.*) Let's lose no time. Hop!

LULU. (*To Schön.*) Just think, we came at a trot over the new bridge. I was driving, myself.

DR. GOLL. (*As Schön prepares to leave.*) No, no. We two will talk some more later. Get along, Nellie. Hop!

LULU. Now you're going to talk about me!

DR. GOLL. Our Apelles is already wiping his brushes.

LULU. I had imagined it would be much more amusing.

SCHÖN. But you have always the satisfaction of preparing for us the greatest and rarest pleasure.

LULU. (*Going left.*) Oh, just wait!

SCHWARZ. (*Before the bedroom door.*) If madame will be so kind. . . . (*Shuts the door after her and stands in front of it.*)

DR. GOLL. I christened her Nellie, you know, in our marriage-contract.

SCHÖN. Did you?—Yes.

DR. GOLL. What do you think of it?

SCHÖN. Why not call her rather Mignon?

DR. GOLL. That would have been good, too. I didn't think of that.

SCHÖN. Do you consider the name so important?

DR. GOLL. Hm. . . . You know, I have no children.

SCHÖN. But you've only been married a couple of months.

DR. GOLL. Thanks, I don't want any.

SCHÖN. (*Having taken out his cigarette-case.*) Have a cigarette?

DR. GOLL. (*Helps himself.*) I've plenty to do with this one. (*To Schwarz.*) Say, what's your little danseuse doing now?

SCHÖN. (*Turning round on Schwarz.*) You and a danseuse?

SCHWARZ. The lady was sitting for me at that time only as a favor. I made her acquaintance on a flying trip of the Cecilia Society.

DR. GOLL. (*To Schön.*) Hm. . . . I think we're getting a change of weather.

SCHÖN. The toilet isn't going so quickly, is it?

DR. GOLL. It's going like lightning! Woman has got to be a virtuoso in her job. So must we all, each in his job, if life isn't to turn to beggary. (*Calls.*) Hop, Nellie!

LULU. (*Inside.*) Just a second!

DR. GOLL. (*To Schön.*) I can't get onto these block-heads. (*Referring to Schwarz.*)

SCHÖN. I can't help envying them. These block-heads know nothing holier than an altar-cloth, and feel richer than you and me with 30,000-mark incomes. Besides, you can't be judge of a man who from childhood has lived from palette to mouth. Try to get at his finances: it's an arithmetic example! I haven't the moral courage, and one can easily burn one's fingers at it, too.

LULU. (*As Pierrot, steps out of the bed-room.*) Here I am!

SCHÖN. (*Turns; after a pause.*) Superb!

LULU. (*Nearer.*) Well?

SCHÖN. You put shame on the boldest fancy.

LULU. How do you like me?

SCHÖN. A picture before which art must despair.

DR. GOLL. Don't you think so, too?

SCHÖN. (*To Lulu.*) Have you any notion what you do?

LULU. I'm perfectly possessed of myself!

SCHÖN. Then you might be a little more discreet.

LULU. But I'm only doing what's my duty.

SCHÖN. You are powdered?

LULU. What do you take me for!

DR. GOLL. I've never seen such a white skin as she's got. I've told our Raphael here, too, to do just as little

with the flesh tints as possible. For once, I can't get enthusiastic about the modern art-nonsense.

SCHWARZ. (*By the easels, preparing his paints.*) At any rate, it's thanks to impressionism that present-day art can stand up beside the old masters without blushing.

DR. GOLL. Oh, it can do quite well for a bit of butcher's work.

SCHÖN. For Heaven's sake don't get excited! (*Lulu falls on Goll's neck and kisses him.*)

DR. GOLL. They can see your undershirt. You must pull it lower.

LULU. I would soonest have left it off. It only bothers me.

DR. GOLL. He should be able to paint it out.

LULU. (*Taking the shepherd's crook that leans against the Spanish screen, and mounting the platform, to Schön.*) What would you say now, if you had to stand at attention for two hours?

SCHÖN. I'd sell my soul to the devil for the chance to exchange with you.

DR. GOLL. (*Sitting, left.*) Come over here. Here is my post of observation.

LULU. (*Plucking her left trowser-leg up to the knee, to Schwarz.*) So?

SCHWARZ. Yes. . . .

LULU. (*Plucking it a thought higher.*) So?

SCHWARZ. Yes, yes. . . .

DR. GOLL. (*To Schön who has seated himself on the chair next him, with a gesture.*) From this place I find her still more attractive.

LULU. (*Without stirring.*) I beg pardon! I am equally attractive on all sides.

SCHWARZ. (*To Lulu.*) The right knee further forward, please.

SCHÖN. (*With a gesture.*) The body does show finer lines perhaps.

SCHWARZ. The light to-day can be borne at least half way.

DR. GOLL. Oh, you must throw on lots of it! Hold your brush a bit longer.

SCHWARZ. Certainly, Dr. Goll.

DR. GOLL. Treat her as a piece of still-life.

SCHWARZ. Certainly, Doctor. (*To Lulu.*) You used to hold your head a wee mite higher, Mrs. Goll.

LULU. (*Raising her head.*) Paint my lips a little open.

SCHÖN. Paint snow on ice. If you get warm doing that, then instantly your art gets inartistic!

SCHWARZ. Certainly, Doctor.

DR. GOLL. Art, you know, must so reproduce nature that one can find at least some spiritual enjoyment in it!

LULU. (*Opening her mouth a little, to Schwarz.*) So—look. I'll hold it half opened, so.

SCHWARZ. As soon as the sun comes, the wall opposite throws warm reflections in here.

DR. GOLL. (*To Lulu.*) You must keep your position just as if our Velasquez here didn't exist at all.

LULU. Well, a painter isn't a man at all, anyway.

SCHÖN. I don't think you ought to judge the whole profession by just one famous exception.

SCHWARZ. (*Stepping back from the easel.*) I should have liked to have had to hire a different studio last fall.

SCHÖN. (*To Goll.*) What I wanted to ask you—

have you seen the little Murphy girl yet as a Peruvian pearl-fisher?

DR. GOLL. I see her to-morrow for the fourth time. Prince Polossov took me. His hair has already got dark yellow again with delight.

SCHÖN. So you find her quite fabulous too.

DR. GOLL. Who ever wants to judge of that beforehand?

LULU. I think someone knocked.

SCHWARZ. Pardon me a moment. (*Goes and opens the door.*)

DR. GOLL. (*To Lulu.*) You can safely smile at him with less bashfulness!

SCHÖN. He makes nothing of it.

DR. GOLL. And if he did!—What are we two sitting here for?

ALVA SCHÖN. (*Entering, still behind the Spanish screen.*) May one come in?

SCHÖN. My son!

LULU. Oh! It's Mr. Alva!

DR. GOLL. Don't mind. Just come along in.

ALVA. (*Stepping forward, shakes hands with Schön and Goll.*) Glad to see you. (*Turning toward Lulu.*) Do I see a-right? Oh, if only I could engage you for my title part!

LULU. I don't think I could dance nearly well enough for your show!

ALVA. But you do have a dancing-master such as cannot be found on any stage in Europe.

SCHÖN. But what brings you here?

DR. GOLL. Maybe you're having somebody or other painted here, too, in secret!

ALVA. (*To Schön.*) I wanted to take you to the dress rehearsal.

DR. GOLL. (*As Schön rises.*) Do you have 'em dance to-day in full costume?

ALVA. Of course. Come along, too. In five minutes I must be on the stage. (*To Lulu.*) Unhappy!

DR. GOLL. I've forgotten—what's the name of your ballet?

ALVA. Dalailama.

DR. GOLL. I thought he was in a madhouse.

SCHÖN. You're thinking of Nietzsche, Doctor.

DR. GOLL. You're right; I got 'em mixed up.

ALVA. I have helped Buddhism to its legs.

DR. GOLL. By his legs is the stage-poet known.

ALVA. Corticelli dances the youthful Buddha as tho she had seen the light of the world by the Ganges.

SCHÖN. So long as her mother lived, she danced with her legs.

ALVA. Then when she got free she danced with her intelligence.

DR. GOLL. Now she dances with her heart.

ALVA. If you'd like to see her—?

DR. GOLL. Thank you.

ALVA. Come along with us!

DR. GOLL. Impossible.

SCHÖN. Anyway, we have no time to lose.

ALVA. Come with us, doctor. In the third act you see Dalailama in his cloister, with his monks—

DR. GOLL. The only thing I care about is the young Buddha.

ALVA. Well, what's hindering you?

DR. GOLL. I can't. I can't do it.

ALVA. We're going to Peter's, after it. There you can express your admiration.

DR. GOLL. Don't press it on me, please.

ALVA. You'll see the tame monkey, the two Brahmans, the little girls. . . .

DR. GOLL. For heaven's sake, just keep away from me with your little girls!

LULU. Reserve one of the proscenium boxes for us on Monday, Mr. Alva.

ALVA. How could you doubt that I would, dear lady!

DR. GOLL. When I come back the whole picture will be spoilt on me.

ALVA. Well, it could be painted over.

DR. GOLL. If I don't explain to this Caravacci every stroke of his brush—

SCHÖN. Your fears are unfounded, I think. . . .

DR. GOLL. Next time, gentlemen!

ALVA. The Brahmans are getting impatient. The daughters of Nirvana are shivering in their tights.

DR. GOLL. Damned enchantment!

SCHÖN. They'll quarrel with us, if we don't bring you with us.

DR. GOLL. In five minutes I'll be back. (*Stands down right, behind Schwarz and compares the picture with Lulu.*)

ALVA. (*To Lulu.*) Duty calls me, gracious lady!

DR. GOLL. (*To Schwarz.*) You must model it a bit more here. The hair is bad. You aren't paying enough attention to your business!

ALVA. Come on.

DR. GOLL. Now, just hop it! Ten horses will not drag me to Peter's.

SCHÖN. (*Following Alva and Goll.*) We'll take my carriage. It's waiting downstairs. (*Exeunt.*)

SCHWARZ. (*Leans over to the right, and spits.*) Pack! If only that were life's end! The bread-basket!—paunch and mug! Now rears my artist's pride. (*After a look at Lulu.*) This company!— (*Gets up, goes up left, observes Lulu from all sides, and sits again at his easel.*) The choice would be a hard one to make. If I may request Mrs. Goll to raise the right hand a little higher.

LULU. (*Grasps the crook as high as she can reach; to herself.*) Who would have thought that was possible!

SCHWARZ. I am quite ridiculous, you think?

LULU. He's coming right back.

SCHWARZ. I can do nothing but paint.

LULU. There he is!

SCHWARZ. (*Rising.*) Well?

LULU. Don't you hear?

SCHWARZ. Someone is coming. . . .

LULU. I knew it.

SCHWARZ. It's the janitor. He's sweeping the stairs.

LULU. Thank heaven!

SCHWARZ. Do you perhaps accompany the doctor to his patients?

LULU. Everything b u t that.

SCHWARZ. Because, you are not accustomed to being alone.

LULU. We have a housekeeper at home.

SCHWARZ. She keeps you company?

LULU. She has a lot of taste.

SCHWARZ. What for?

LULU. She dresses me.

SCHWARZ. Do you go much to balls?

LULU. Never.

SCHWARZ. Then what do you need the dresses for?

LULU. For dancing.

SCHWARZ. You really dance?

LULU. Czardas . . . Samaqueca . . . Skirt-dance.

SCHWARZ. Doesn't—that—disgust you, then?

LULU. You find me ugly?

SCHWARZ. You don't understand me. But who gives you lessons then?

LULU. Him.

SCHWARZ. Who?

LULU. Him.

SCHWARZ. He?

LULU. He plays the violin—

SCHWARZ. Every day one learns something new of the world!

LULU. I learned in Paris. I took lessons from Eugenie Fougère. She let me copy her costumes, too.

SCHWARZ. What are they like?

LULU. A little green lace skirt to the knee, all in ruffles, low-necked, of course, very low-necked and awfully tight-laced. Bright green petticoat, then brighter and brighter. Snow-white underclothes with a hand's-breadth of lace. . . .

SCHWARZ. I can no longer—

LULU. Then paint!

SCHWARZ. (*Scraping the canvas.*) Aren't you cold at all?

LULU. God forbid! No. What made you ask? Are you so cold?

SCHWARZ. Not to-day. No.

LULU. Praise God, one can breathe!

SCHWARZ. How so? . . . (*Lulu takes a deep breath.*)

Don't do that, please! (*Springs up, throws away his palette and brushes, walks up and down.*) The boot-black only attends to her feet! His color doesn't eat into his money, either. If I go without supper to-morrow, no little society lady will ask me if I know anything about oyster-patties!

LULU. Is he going out of his head?

SCHWARZ. (*Takes up his work again.*) What ever drove the fellow to this test!

LULU. I'd like it better, too, if he had stayed here.

SCHWARZ. We are truly the martyrs of our calling!

LULU. I didn't wish to cause you pain.

SCHWARZ. (*Hesitating, to Lulu.*) If you—the left trowser-leg—a little higher—

LULU. Here?

SCHWARZ. (*Steps to the platform.*) Permit me. . . .

LULU. What do you want?

SCHWARZ. I'll show you.

LULU. You mustn't.

SCHWARZ. You are nervous . . . (*Tries to seize her hand.*)

LULU. (*Throws the crook in his face.*) Let me alone! (*Hurries to the entrance door.*) You don't get me for a long time yet.

SCHWARZ. You can't understand a joke.

LULU. Oh, yes I can. I understand everything. Just you leave me be. You'll get nothing at all from me by force. Go to your work. You have no right to molest me. (*Flees behind the ottoman.*) Sit down behind your easel!

SCHWARZ. (*Trying to get around the ottoman.*) As soon as I've punished you—you wayward, capricious—

LULU. But you must have me, first! Go away. You

can't catch me. In long clothes I'd have fallen into your clutches long ago—but in the Pierrot!

SCHWARZ. (*Throwing himself across the ottoman.*)
I've got you!

LULU. (*Hurls the tiger-skin over his head.*) Good-night! (*Jumps over the platform and climbs up the step-ladder.*) I can see away over all the cities of the earth.

SCHWARZ. (*Unrolling himself from the rug.*) This old skin!!

LULU. I reach up into heaven, and stick the stars in my hair.

SCHWARZ. (*Clambering after her.*) I'll shake it till you fall off!

LULU. If you don't stop, I'll throw the ladder down. (*Climbing higher.*) Will you let go of my legs? God save the Poles! (*Makes the ladder fall over, jumps onto the platform, and as Schwarz picks himself up from the floor, throws the Spanish screen down on his head. Hastening down-stage, by the easels.*) I told you that you weren't going to get me.

SCHWARZ. (*Coming forward.*) Let us make peace. (*Tries to embrace her.*)

LULU. Keep away from me, or— (*She throws the easel with the finished picture at him, so that both fall crashing to the floor.*)

SCHWARZ. (*Screams.*) Merciful Heaven!

LULU. (*Up-stage, right.*) You knocked the hole in it yourself!

SCHWARZ. I am ruined! Ten weeks' work, my journey, my exhibition! Now there is nothing more to lose! (*Plunges after her.*)

LULU. (*Springs over the ottoman, over the fallen step-ladder, and over the platform, down-stage.*) A grave!

Don't fall into it! (*She stamps thru the picture on the floor.*) She made a new man out of him! (*Falls forward.*)

SCHWARZ. (*Stumbling over the Spanish screen.*) I am merciless now!

LULU. (*Up-stage.*) Leave me in peace now. I'm getting dizzy. O Gott! O Gott! . . . (*Comes forward and sinks down on the ottoman. Schwarz locks the door; then seats himself next her, grasps her hand, and covers it with kisses—then pauses, struggling with himself. Lulu opens her eyes wide.*)

LULU. He may come back.

SCHWARZ. How d'you feel?

LULU. As if I had fallen into the water. . . .

SCHWARZ. I love you.

LULU. One time, I loved a student.

SCHWARZ. Nellie—

LULU. With four-and-twenty scars—

SCHWARZ. I love you, Nellie.

LULU. My name isn't Nellie. (*Schwarz kisses her.*)
It's Lulu.

SCHWARZ. I would call you Eve.

LULU. Do you know what time it is?

SCHWARZ. (*Looking at his watch.*) Half past ten. (*Lulu takes the watch and opens the case.*) You don't love me.

LULU. Yes I do. . . . It's five minutes after half past ten.

SCHWARZ. Give me a kiss, Eve!

LULU. (*Takes him by the chin and kisses him. Throws the watch in the air and catches it.*) You smell of tobacco.

SCHWARZ. Why so distant?

LULU. It would be uncomfortable to—

SCHWARZ. You're just making believe!

LULU. You're making believe yourself, it seems to me. *I* make believe? What makes you think that? I never needed to do that.

SCHWARZ. (*Rises, disconcerted, passing his hand over his forehead.*) God in Heaven! The world is strange to me—!

LULU. (*Screams.*) Only don't kill me!

SCHWARZ. (*Instantly whirling round.*) Thou hast never yet loved!

LULU. (*Half raising herself.*) You have never yet loved . . . !

DR. GOLL. (*Outside.*) Open the door!

LULU. (*Already sprung to her feet.*) Hide me! O God, hide me!

DR. GOLL. (*Pounding on the door.*) Open the door!

LULU. (*Holding back Schwarz as he goes toward the door.*) He will strike me dead!

DR. GOLL. (*Hammering.*) Open the door!

LULU. (*Sunk down before Schwarz, gripping his knees.*) He'll beat me to death! He'll beat me to death!

SCHWARZ. Stand up. . . . (*The door falls crashing into the studio. Dr. Goll with blood-shot eyes rushes upon Schwarz and Lulu, brandishing his stick.*)

DR. GOLL. You dogs! You . . . ! (*Pants, struggles for breath a few seconds, and falls headlong to the ground. Schwarz's knees tremble. Lulu has fled to the door. Pause.*)

SCHWARZ. Mister—Doctor—Doc—Doctor Goll—

LULU. (*In the door.*) Please, though, first put the studio in order.

SCHWARZ. Dr. Goll! (*Leans over.*) Doc— (*Steps*

back.) He's cut his forehead. Help me to lay him on the ottoman.

LULU. (*Shudders backward in terror.*) No. No. . .

SCHWARZ. (*Trying to turn him over.*) Dr. Goll.

LULU. He doesn't hear.

SCHWARZ. But you, help me, please.

LULU. The two of us together couldn't lift him.

SCHWARZ. (*Straightening up.*) We must send for a doctor.

LULU. He is fearfully heavy.

SCHWARZ. (*Getting his hat.*) Please, though, be so good as to put the place a little to rights while I'm away. (*He goes out.*)

LULU. He'll spring up all at once. (*Intensely.*) Bussi! He just won't notice anything. (*Comes down-stage in a wide circle.*) He sees my feet, and watches every step I take. He has his eye on me everywhere. (*Touches him with her toe.*) Bussi! (*Flinching, backward.*) It's serious with him. The dance is over. He'll send me to prison. What shall I do? (*Leans over, to the floor.*) A strange, wild face! (*Getting up.*) And no one to do him the last services—isn't that sad! (*Schwarz returns.*)

SCHWARZ. Still not come to himself?

LULU. (*Down right.*) What shall I do?

SCHWARZ. (*Bending over Goll.*) Doctor Goll.

LULU. I almost think it's serious.

SCHWARZ. Talk decently!

LULU. He wouldn't say that to me. He makes me dance for him when he doesn't feel well.

SCHWARZ. The doctor will be here in a moment.

LULU. Doctoring won't help him.

SCHWARZ. But people do what they can, in such cases!

LULU. He doesn't think so.

SCHWARZ. Then won't you at least—get dressed?

LULU. Yes,—right off.

SCHWARZ. What are you waiting for?

LULU. Please . . .

SCHWARZ. What is it?

LULU. Shut his eyes.

SCHWARZ. You make me shiver.

LULU. Not nearly so much as you make me!

SCHWARZ. I?

LULU. You're a born criminal.

SCHWARZ. Doesn't this moment touch you at all, then?

LULU. It hits me, too, some.

SCHWARZ. Please, just you keep still now!

LULU. It hits you some, too.

SCHWARZ. You really didn't need to say that to a man, in such a moment.

LULU. Please . . .!

SCHWARZ. Do what you think necessary. I don't know how.

LULU. (*Left of Goll.*) He's looking at me.

SCHWARZ. (*Right of Goll.*) And at me, too.

LULU. You're a coward!

SCHWARZ. (*Shuts Goll's eyes with his handkerchief.*) It's the first time in my life that anyone has called me that.

LULU. Didn't you do it to your mother?

SCHWARZ. (*Nervously.*) No.

LULU. You were away, perhaps.

SCHWARZ. No!

LULU. Or else you were afraid?

SCHWARZ. (*Violently.*) No!

LULU. (*Shivering, backward.*) I didn't mean to insult you.

SCHWARZ. She's still alive.

LULU. Then you still have somebody.

SCHWARZ. She's as poor as a beggar.

LULU. I know what that is.

SCHWARZ. Don't laugh at me!

LULU. Now I am rich—

SCHWARZ. It gives me cold shudders— (*Goes right.*)
She can't help it!

LULU. (*To herself.*) What'll I do?

SCHWARZ. (*To himself.*) Absolutely depraved!
(*They look at each other mistrustfully. Schwarz goes over to her and grips her hand.*) Look me in the eyes!

LULU. (*Apprehensively.*) What do you want?

SCHWARZ. (*Takes her to the ottoman and makes her sit next to him.*) Look me in the eyes.

LULU. I see myself in them as Pierrot.

SCHWARZ. (*Shoves her from him.*) Confounded dancer-ing!

LULU. I must change my clothes—

SCHWARZ. (*Holds her back.*) One question—

LULU. I can't answer it.

SCHWARZ. Can you speak the truth?

LULU. I don't know.

SCHWARZ. Do you believe in a Creator?

LULU. I don't know.

SCHWARZ. Can you swear on anything?

LULU. I don't know. Leave me alone. You're mad.

SCHWARZ. What do you believe in, then?

LULU. I don't know.

SCHWARZ. Have you no soul, then?

LULU. I don't know.

SCHWARZ. Have you ever once loved—?

LULU. I don't know.

SCHWARZ. (*Gets up, goes right, to himself.*) She doesn't know!

LULU. (*Without moving.*) I don't know.

SCHWARZ. (*Glancing at Goll.*) He knows.

LULU. (*Nearer him.*) What do you want to know?

SCHWARZ. (*Angrily.*) Go, get dressed! (*Lulu goes into the bed-room. To Goll.*) Would I could change with you, you dead man! I give her back to you. I give my youth to you, too. I lack the courage and the faith. I've had to wait patiently too long. It's too late for me. I haven't grown up big enough for happiness. I have a hellish fear of it. Wake up! I didn't touch her. He opens his mouth. Mouth open and eyes shut, like the children. With me it's the other way round. Wake up, wake up! (*Kneels down and binds his handkerchief round the dead man's head.*) Here I beseech Heaven to make me able to be happy—to give me the strength and the freedom of soul to be just a weeny mite happy! For her sake, only for her sake. (*Lulu comes out of the bed-room, completely dressed, her hat on, and her right hand under her left arm.*)

LULU. (*Raising her left arm, to Schwarz.*) Would you hook me up here? My hand trembles.

CURTAIN

ACT II

A very ornamental parlor. Entrance-door rear, left. Curtained entrances right and left, steps leading up to the right one. On the back wall over the fire-place, Lulu's picture as Pierrot in a magnificent frame. Right, a tall mirror; a couch in front of it. Left, an ebony writing-table. Centre, a few chairs around a little Chinese table.

Lulu stands motionless before the mirror, in a green silk morning-dress. She frowns, passes a hand over her forehead, feels her cheeks, and draws back from the mirror with a discouraged, almost angry, look. Frequently turning round, she goes left, opens a casket on the writing-table, lights herself a cigarette, looks for a book among those that are lying on the table, takes one, and lies down on the couch opposite the mirror. After reading a moment, she lets the book sink, and nods seriously to herself in the glass; then resumes reading. Schwarz enters, left, palette and brushes in hand, and bends over Lulu, kisses her on the forehead, and goes up the steps, right.

SCHWARZ. (*Turning in the door-way.*) Eve!

LULU. (*Smiling.*) At your orders?

SCHWARZ. Seems to me you look extra charming to-day.

LULU. (*With a glance at the mirror.*) Depends on what you expect.

SCHWARZ. Your hair breathes out a morning freshness. . . .

LULU. I've just come out of the water.

SCHWARZ. (*Approaching her.*) I've an awful lot to do to-day.

LULU. That's what you say to yourself.

SCHWARZ. (*Lays his palette and brushes down on the carpet, and sits on the edge of the couch.*) What are you reading?

LULU. (*Reads.*) "Suddenly she heard an anchor of refuge come nodding up the stairs."

SCHWARZ. Who under the sun writes so absorbingly?

LULU. (*Reading.*) "It was the postman with a money-order." (*Henriette, the servant, comes in, upper left, with a hat-box on her arm and a little tray of letters which she puts on the table.*)

HENRIETTE. The mail. I'm going to take your hat to the milliner, madam. Anything else?

LULU. No. (*Schwarz signs to her to go out, which she does, slyly smiling.*)

SCHWARZ. What was it you dreamt all last night?

LULU. You've asked me that twice already, to-day.

SCHWARZ. (*Rises, takes up the letters.*) I tremble for news. Every day I fear the world may go to pieces. (*Giving Lulu a letter.*) For you.

LULU. (*Sniffs at the paper.*) Madame Corticelli. (*Hides it in her bosom.*)

SCHWARZ. (*Skimming a letter.*) My Samaqueca-dancer sold—for fifty thousand marks!

LULU. Who says that?

SCHWARZ. Sedelmeier in Paris. That's the third picture since our marriage. I hardly know how to save myself from my luck!

LULU. (*Pointing to the letters.*) There are more there.

SCHWARZ. (*Opening an engagement announcement.*) See. (*Gives it to Lulu.*)

LULU. (*Reads.*) Sir Henry von Zarnikow has the

honor to announce the engagement of his daughter, Charlotte Marie Adelaide, to Doctor Ludwig Schön.

SCHWARZ. (*As he opens another letter.*) At last! He's been an eternal while evading a public engagement. I can't understand it—a man of his standing and influence. What can be in the way of his marriage?

LULU. What is that that you're reading?

SCHWARZ. An invitation to take part in the international exhibition at St. Petersburg. I have no idea what to paint for it.

LULU. Some entrancing girl or other, of course.

SCHWARZ. Will you be willing to pose for it?

LULU. God knows there are other pretty girls enough in existence!

SCHWARZ. But with any other model—tho she be as racy as hell—I can't get such a full display of my powers.

LULU. Then I must, I suppose. Wouldn't it go as well lying down?

SCHWARZ. Really, I'd liefest have your taste arrange it for me. (*Folding up the letters.*) Don't let's forget to congratulate Schön to-day, anyway. (*Goes left and shuts the letters in the writing-table.*)

LULU. But we did that a long time ago.

SCHWARZ. For his bride's sake.

LULU. You can write to him again if you want.

SCHWARZ. And now to work! (*Takes up his brushes and palette, kisses Lulu, goes up the steps, right, and turns around in the door-way.*) Eve!

LULU. (*Lets her book sink, smiling.*) Your pleasure?

SCHWARZ. (*Approaching her.*) I feel every day as if I were seeing you for the very first time.

LULU. You're a terror.

SCHWARZ. The fault is yours. (*He sinks on his knees by the couch and caresses her hand.*)

LULU. (*Stroking his hair.*) You're wasting me.

SCHWARZ. You are mine. But you are never more ensnaring than when you ought for God's sake to be, just once, real ugly for a couple of hours! Since I've had you, I have had nothing more. I'm entirely lost to myself.

LULU. Not so excited! (*Bell rings in the corridor.*)

SCHWARZ. (*Pulling himself together.*) Confound it!

LULU. No one at home!

SCHWARZ. Perhaps it's the art-dealer—

LULU. And if it's the Chinese Emperor!

SCHWARZ. One moment. (*Exit.*)

LULU. (*Visionary.*) Thou? Thou? (*Closes her eyes.*)

SCHWARZ. (*Coming back.*) A beggar, who says he was in the war. I have no small change on me. (*Taking up his palette and brushes.*) It's high time, too, that I should finally go to work. (*Goes out, right.*) (*Lulu touches herself up before the glass, strokes back her hair, and goes out, returning leading in Schigolch.*)

SCHIGOLCH. I'd thought he was more of a swell—a little more glory to him. He's sort of embarrassed. He quaked a little in the knees when he saw me in front of him.

LULU. (*Shoving a chair round for him.*) How can you beg from him, too?

SCHIGOLCH. That's why I've dragged my seventy-seven summers just here. You told me he kept at his painting in the mornings.

LULU. He hadn't got quite awake yet. How much do you need?

SCHIGOLCH. Two hundred, if you have that much handy. Personally, I'd like three hundred. Some of my clients have evaporated.

LULU. (*Goes to the writing-table and rummages in the drawer.*) Whew, I'm tired!

SCHIGOLCH. (*Looking round him.*) That's just what brought me, too. I've been wanting a long time to see how things were looking now with you.

LULU. Well?

SCHIGOLCH. It just sweeps over you. (*Looking up.*) Like with me fifty years ago. Instead of the loafing chairs we still had rusty old sabres then. Devil, but you've brought it pretty far! (*Scuffing.*) Carpets. . . .

LULU. (*Giving him two bills.*) I like best to walk on them bare-footed.

SCHIGOLCH. (*Scanning Lulu's portrait.*) Is that you?

LULU. (*Winking.*) Pretty fine?

SCHIGOLCH. If all that's genuine.

LULU. Have something sweet?

SCHIGOLCH. What?

LULU. (*Getting up.*) Elixir de Spaa.

SCHIGOLCH. That doesn't help me— Does he drink?

LULU. (*Taking a decanter and glasses from a cupboard near the fireplace.*) Not yet. (*Coming down stage.*) The cordial has such various effects!

SCHIGOLCH. He comes to blows?

LULU. He goes to sleep. (*She fills the two glasses.*)

SCHIGOLCH. When he's drunk, you can see right into his insides.

LULU. I'd rather not. (*Sits opposite Schigolch.*) Tell me about it.

SCHIGOLCH. The streets keep on getting longer, and my legs shorter.

LULU. And your harmonica?

SCHIGOLCH. Has bad air, like me with my asthma. I just keep a-thinking it isn't worth the trouble to make it better. (*They clink glasses.*)

LULU. (*Emptying her glass.*) I thought you'd come to an end a long time ago—

SCHIGOLCH. To an end—already up and away? I thought so, too. But no matter how early the sun goes down, still we aren't let lie quiet. I'm hoping for winter. Perhaps then my (*coughing*)—my—my asthma will invent some opportunity to carry me off.

LULU. (*Filling the glasses.*) Do you think they could have forgotten you on the other side?

SCHIGOLCH. Would be possible, for it certainly isn't going like it usually does. (*Stroking her knee.*) Now you tell—not seen you a long time—my little Lulu.

LULU. (*Jerking back, smiling.*) Life is beyond me!

SCHIGOLCH. What do you know about it? You're still so young!

LULU. That you call me Lulu.

SCHIGOLCH. Lulu, isn't it? Have I ever called you anything else?

LULU. In the memory of man my name has no longer been Lulu.

SCHIGOLCH. Another way of naming?

LULU. Lulu sounds to me quite ante-diluvian.

SCHIGOLCH. Children! Children!

LULU. My name now is—

SCHIGOLCH. As if the principle wasn't always the same!

LULU. You mean—?

SCHIGOLCH. What is it now?

LULU. E v e.

SCHIGOLCH. Lept, hopped, skipped, jumped. . . .

LULU. I'm listening.

SCHIGOLCH. (*Gazing round.*) This is the way I dreamt of it for you. You've aimed straight for it. (*Seeing Lulu sprinkling herself with perfume.*) What's that?

LULU. Heliotrope.

SCHIGOLCH. Does that smell better than you?

LULU. (*Sprinkling him.*) That needn't bother you any more.

SCHIGOLCH. Who would have dreamt of this royal luxury before!

LULU. When I think back—Ugh!

SCHIGOLCH. (*Stroking her knee.*) How's it going with you, then? You still keep at the French?

LULU. I lie and sleep.

SCHIGOLCH. That's genteel. That always looks like something. And afterwards?

LULU. I stretch—till it cracks.

SCHIGOLCH. And when it has cracked?

LULU. What do you mind about that?

SCHIGOLCH. What do I mind about that? What do I mind? I'd rather live till the last trump and renounce all heavenly joys than leave my Lulu deprived of anything down here behind me. What do I mind about that? It's my sympathy. To be sure, my better self is already transfigured—but I still have some sense for this world.

LULU. I haven't.

SCHIGOLCH. You're too well off.

LULU. (*Shuddering.*) Idiot. . . .

SCHIGOLCH. Better than with the old dancing-bear?

LULU. (*Sadly.*) I don't dance any more.

SCHIGOLCH. For him it was time, too.

LULU. Now I am— (*Stops.*)

SCHIGOLCH. Speak how it is with you, child! I believed in you when there was no more to be seen in you than your two big eyes. What are you now?

LULU. A beast. . . .

SCHIGOLCH. That you—! And what kind of a beast? A fine beast! An elegant beast! A glorified beast! Then I'll let them bury me. We're through with prejudices—even with the one against the corpse-washer.

LULU. You needn't be afraid that you will be washed once more.

SCHIGOLCH. Doesn't matter, either. One gets dirty again.

LULU. (*Sprinkling him.*) It would call you back to life again!

SCHIGOLCH. We are mud.

LULU. I beg your pardon! I rub grease into myself every day and then powder on top of it.

SCHIGOLCH. Probably worth while, too, on the dressed-up mucker's account.

LULU. It makes the skin like satin.

SCHIGOLCH. As if it weren't just dirt all the same!

LULU. Thank you. I wish to be worth biting at!

SCHIGOLCH. We are. Give a big dinner down below there pretty soon. Keep open house.

LULU. Your guests will hardly over-eat themselves at it.

SCHIGOLCH. Patience, girl! Your worshippers won't put you in alcohol, either. It's "schöne Melusine" as long as it keeps buoyant. Afterwards? They don't take it at the zoölogical garden. (*Rising.*) The gentle beasties might get stomach-cramps.

LULU. (*Getting up.*) Have you enough?

SCHIGOLCH. There's still enough left over to plant a juniper on my grave. I'll find my own way out. (*Exit. Lulu follows him, and presently returns with Dr. Schön.*)

SCHÖN. What's your father doing here?

LULU. What's the matter?

SCHÖN. If I were your husband that man would never come over my threshold.

LULU. You can speak intimately. He's not here. (*Referring to Schwarz.*)

SCHÖN. Thank you, I'd rather not.

LULU. I don't understand.

SCHÖN. I know that. (*Offering her a seat.*) I should like to speak with you just on that subject.

LULU. (*Sitting down uncertainly.*) Why didn't you tell me so yesterday, then?

SCHÖN. Please, nothing now about yesterday. I did tell you two years ago.

LULU. (*Nervously.*) Oh, yes,—Hm!

SCHÖN. Please be kind enough to cease your visits to my house.

LULU. May I offer you an elixir—

SCHÖN. Thanks. No elixir. Have you understood me? (*Lulu shakes her head.*) Good. You have the choice. You force me to the most extreme measures:—either act in accordance with your station—

LULU. Or?

SCHÖN. Or—you compel me—I should have to turn to that person who is responsible for your behavior.

LULU. What makes you imagine that?

SCHÖN. I shall request your husband, himself to watch over your ways. (*Lulu rises, goes up the steps, right.*) Where are you going?

LULU. (*Calls thru the curtains.*) Walter!

SCHÖN. (*Springing up.*) Are you mad?

LULU. (*Turning round.*) Aha!

SCHÖN. I have made the most superhuman efforts to raise you in society. You can be ten times as proud of your name as of your intimacy with me.

LULU. (*Comes down the steps and puts her arm around Schön's neck.*) Why are you still afraid, now that you're at the zenith of your hopes?

SCHÖN. No comedy! The zenith of my hopes? I am at last engaged: I have now the hope of bringing my bride into a clean house.

LULU. (*Sitting.*) She has developed delightfully in the two years!

SCHÖN. She no longer looks thru one so earnestly.

LULU. She is now, for the first time, a woman. We can meet each other wherever it seems suitable to you.

SCHÖN. We shall meet each other nowhere but in the presence of your husband!

LULU. You don't believe yourself what you say.

SCHÖN. Then he must believe it. Go on and call him! Thru his marriage to you, thru all that I've done for him, he has become my friend.

LULU. (*Rising.*) Mine, too.

SCHÖN. Then I'll cut down the sword over my head.

LULU. You have, indeed, chained me up. But I owe my happiness to you. You will get friends by the crowd as soon as you have a pretty young wife again.

SCHÖN. You judge women by yourself! He's got the sense of a child or he would have tracked out your doublings and windings long ago.

LULU. I only wish he would! Then, at last he'd get out of his swaddling-clothes. He puts his trust in the marriage contract he has in his pocket. Trouble is past

and gone. One can now give oneself and let oneself go as if one were at home. That isn't the sense of a child! It's banal! He has no education; he sees nothing; he sees neither me nor himself; he is blind, blind, blind. . . .

SCHÖN. (*Half to himself.*) When his eyes open!!

LULU. Open his eyes for him! I'm going to ruin. I'm neglecting myself. He doesn't know me at all. What am I to him? He calls me darling and little devil. He would say the same to any piano-teacher. He makes no pretensions. Everything is alright, to him. That comes from his never in his life having felt the need of intercourse with women.

SCHÖN. If that's true!

LULU. He admits it perfectly openly.

SCHÖN. A man who has painted them, rags and tags and velvet gowns, since he was fourteen.

LULU. Women make him anxious. He trembles for his health and comfort. But he isn't afraid of me!

SCHÖN. How many girls would deem themselves God knows how blessed in your situation.

LULU. (*Softly pleading.*) Seduce him. Corrupt him. You know how. Take him into bad company—you know the people. I am nothing to him but a woman, just woman. He makes me feel so ridiculous. He will be prouder of me. He doesn't know any differences. I'm thinking my head off, day and night, how to shake him up. In my despair I dance the can-can. He yawns; and drivels something about obscenity.

SCHÖN. Nonsense. He is an artist, though.

LULU. At least he believes he is.

SCHÖN. That's the chief thing!

LULU. When *I* pose for him. . . . He believes, too, that he's a famous man.

SCHÖN. We have made him one.

LULU. He believes everything. He's as mistrustful as a thief, and lets himself be lied to, till one loses all respect! When we first knew each other I informed him I had never yet loved— (*Schön falls into an easy-chair.*) Otherwise he would really have taken me for a fallen woman!

SCHÖN. You make God knows what exorbitant demands on legitimate relations!

LULU. I make no exorbitant demands. Often I even dream still of Goll.

SCHÖN. He was, at any rate, not banal!

LULU. He is there, as if he had never been away. Only he walks as tho in his socks. He isn't angry with me; he's awfully sad. And then he is fearful, as tho he were there without the permission of the police. Otherwise, he feels at ease with us. Only he can't quite get over my having thrown away so much money since—

SCHÖN. You yearn for the whip once more?

LULU. Maybe. I don't dance any more.

SCHÖN. Teach him to do it.

LULU. A waste of trouble.

SCHÖN. Out of a hundred women, ninety educate their husbands to suit themselves.

LULU. He loves me.

SCHÖN. That's fatal, of course.

LULU. He loves me—

SCHÖN. That is an unbridgeable abyss.

LULU. He doesn't know me, but he loves me! If he

had anything like a correct idea of me, he'd tie a stone around my neck and sink me in the sea where it's deepest.

SCHÖN. Let's finish this? (*He gets up.*)

LULU. As you say.

SCHÖN. I've married you off. Twice I have married you off. You live in luxury. I've created a position for your husband. If that doesn't satisfy you, and he laughs in his sleeve at it, I don't pretend to meet ideal claims; but—leave me out of the game, out of it!

LULU. (*Resolutely.*) If I belong to any person on this earth, I belong to you. Without you I'd be—I won't say where. You took me by the hand, gave me food to eat, had me dressed,—when I was going to steal your watch. Do you think that can be forgotten? Anybody else would have called the police. You sent me to school, and had me learn manners. Who but you in the whole world has ever thought anything of me? I've danced and posed, and was glad to be able to earn my living that way. But love at command, I can't!

SCHÖN. (*Raising his voice.*) Leave me out! Do what you will. I'm not coming to make scandal; I'm coming to shake the scandal from my neck. My engagement is costing me sacrifices enough! I had imagined that with a healthy young man, than whom a woman of your years can wish herself no better, you would, at last, have been contented. If you are under obligations to me, don't throw yourself a third time in my way! Am I to wait yet longer before putting my pile in security? Am I to risk the whole success of my patents falling into the water again after two years? What good is it to me to be your married-man, when you can be seen going in and out of my house at every hour of the day? Why the devil didn't Dr. Goll stay alive just one year more!

With him you were in safe keeping. Then I'd have had my wife long since under my roof!

LULU. And what would you have had then? The kid gets on your nerves. The child is too uncorrupted for you. She's been much too carefully brought up. What should I have against your marriage? But you are deceived about yourself if you think that on account of your impending marriage you may express your contempt to me.

SCHÖN. Contempt? I shall soon give the child the right idea. If anything is contemptible, it's your intrigues!

LULU. (*Laughing.*) Am I jealous of the child? That never once entered my head.

SCHÖN. Then why talk about the child? The child is not even a whole year younger than you are. Leave me my freedom to live what life I still have. No matter how the child's been brought up, she's got her five senses just like you. . . . (*Schwarz appears, right, brush in hand.*)

SCHWARZ. What's the matter here?

LULU. (*To Schön.*) Well? Go on. Talk.

SCHWARZ. What's the matter with you two?

LULU. Nothing that touches you—

SCHÖN. (*Sharply.*) Quiet!

LULU. He's had enough of me. (*Schwarz leads her off, to the right.*)

SCHÖN. (*Turning over the leaves in one of the books on the table.*) It had to come out—I must have my hands free at last!

SCHWARZ. (*Coming back.*) Is that a way to jest?

SCHÖN. (*Pointing to a chair.*) Please.

SCHWARZ. What is it?

SCHÖN. Please.

SCHWARZ. (*Seating himself.*) Well?

SCHÖN. (*Seating himself.*) You have married half a million. . . .

SCHWARZ. Is it gone?

SCHÖN. Not a penny.

SCHWARZ. Explain to me the peculiar scene. . . .

SCHÖN. You have married half a million—

SCHWARZ. No one can make a crime of that.

SCHÖN. You have created a name for yourself. You can work unmolested. You need to deny yourself no wish—

SCHWARZ. What have you two got against me?

SCHÖN. For six months you've been revelling in all the heavens. You have a wife whom the world envies you, and she deserves a man whom she can respect—

SCHWARZ. Doesn't she respect me?

SCHÖN. No.

SCHWARZ. (*Depressed.*) I come from the dark depths of society. She is above me. I cherish no more ardent wish than to become her equal. (*Offers Schön his hand.*) Thank you.

SCHÖN. (*Pressing it, half embarrassed.*) Don't mention it.

SCHWARZ. (*With determination.*) Speak!

SCHÖN. Keep a little more watch on her.

SCHWARZ. I—on her?

SCHÖN. We are not children! We don't trifle! She demands that she be taken seriously. Her value gives her a perfect right to be.

SCHWARZ. What does she do, then?

SCHÖN. You have married half a million!

SCHWARZ. (*Rises; beside himself.*) She—?

SCHÖN. (*Takes him by the shoulder.*) No, that's not

the way! (*Forces him to sit.*) We must speak with each other very seriously here.

SCHWARZ. What does she do?

SCHÖN. First count on your fingers what you have to thank her for, and then—

SCHWARZ. What does she do—man!!

SCHÖN. And then make yourself responsible for your faults, and no one else.

SCHWARZ. With whom? With whom?

SCHÖN. If we should shoot each other—

SCHWARZ. Since when, then?

SCHÖN. (*Evasive.*) —I don't come here to make scandal, I come to save you from the scandal.

SCHWARZ. You have misunderstood her.

SCHÖN. (*Embarrassed.*) That will not do for me. I can't see you go on living in blindness. The girl deserves to be a respectable woman. Since I have known her she has improved as she developed.

SCHWARZ. Since you have known her? Since when have you known her then?

SCHÖN. Since about her twelfth year.

SCHWARZ. (*Bewildered.*) She told me nothing about that.

SCHÖN. She sold flowers in front of the Alhambra Café. Every evening between twelve and two she pressed in among the guests, bare-footed.

SCHWARZ. She told me nothing of that.

SCHÖN. She did right there. I'm telling you, so you may see that you have not to do with moral degeneracy. The girl is, on the contrary, of extraordinarily good disposition.

SCHWARZ. She said she had grown up with an aunt.

SCHÖN. That was the woman I gave her to. She

was her best pupil. The mothers used to make her an example to their children. She has the feeling for duty. It is simply and solely your mistake if you have till now neglected to take her on her best sides.

SCHWARZ. (*Sobbing.*) O God!—

SCHÖN. (*With emphasis.*) No O God!! Nothing of the happiness you have cost can be changed. Done is done. You over-rate yourself against your better knowledge if you persuade yourself you will lose. You stand to gain. But with "O God" nothing is gained. A greater friendliness I have not yet shown you: I speak plainly and offer you my help. Don't show yourself unworthy of it!

SCHWARZ. (*From now on more and more broken up.*) When I first knew her, she told me she had never loved.

SCHÖN. When a widow says that—! It does her credit that she chose you for a husband. Make the same claims on yourself and your happiness is without a blot.

SCHWARZ. She says he made her wear short dresses.

SCHÖN. But he married her! That was her master-stroke. How she brought the man to it is beyond me. You really must know it now: you are enjoying the fruits of her diplomacy.

SCHWARZ. How did she get to know Dr. Goll then?

SCHÖN. Through me! It was after my wife's death, when I was making the first advances to my present fiancée. She stuck herself in between. She had fixed her mind on becoming my wife.

SCHWARZ. (*As if seized with a horrible suspicion.*) And then when her husband died?

SCHÖN. You married half a million!!

SCHWARZ. (*Wailing.*) O, to have stayed where I was! To have died of hunger!

SCHÖN. (*Superior.*) Do you think, then, that *I* make no compromises? Who is there that does not compromise? You have married half a million. You are to-day one of the foremost artists. That can't be done without money. You are not the man to sit in judgment on her. You can't possibly treat an origin like Mignon's according to the notions of bourgeois society.

SCHWARZ. (*Quite distraught.*) Who are you speaking of?

SCHÖN. Of her father! You're an artist, I say: your ideals are on a different plane from those of a wage-worker.

SCHWARZ. I don't understand a word of all that.

SCHÖN. I am speaking of the inhuman conditions out of which, thanks to her good management, the girl has developed into what she is!

SCHWARZ. Who?

SCHÖN. Who? Your wife.

SCHWARZ. Eve?

SCHÖN. I called her Mignon.

SCHWARZ. I thought her name was Nellie?

SCHÖN. Dr. Goll called her so.

SCHWARZ. I called her Eve—

SCHÖN. What her real name is I don't know.

SCHWARZ. (*Absently.*) Perhaps she knows.

SCHÖN. With a father like hers, she is, with all her faults, a miracle. I don't understand you—

SCHWARZ. He died in a madhouse—?

SCHÖN. He was here just now!

SCHWARZ. Who was here?

SCHÖN. Her father.

SCHWARZ. Here—in my house?

SCHÖN. He squeezed by me as I came in. And there are the two glasses still.

SCHWARZ. She says he died in the madhouse.

SCHÖN. Let her feel she's in authority—! She craves nothing but the compulsion to unconditional obedience. With Dr. Goll she was in heaven, and with him there was no joking.

SCHWARZ. (*Shaking his head.*) She said she had never loved—

SCHÖN. But you, make a beginning with yourself. Pull yourself together!

SCHWARZ. She has sworn—!

SCHÖN. You can't demand a sense of duty in her before you know your own task.

SCHWARZ. By her mother's grave!

SCHÖN. She never knew her mother, let alone the grave. Her mother hasn't got a grave.

SCHWARZ. I don't fit in society. (*He is in desperation.*)

SCHÖN. What's the matter?

SCHWARZ. Pain—horrible pain!

SCHÖN. (*Gets up, steps back; after a pause.*) Guard her for yourself: she's yours. The moment is decisive. To-morrow she may be lost to you.

SCHWARZ. (*Pointing to his breast.*) Here, here.

SCHÖN. You have married half— (*Reflecting.*) She is lost to you if you let this moment slip!

SCHWARZ. If I could weep! Oh, if I could cry out!

SCHÖN. (*With a hand on his shoulder.*) You're suffering—

SCHWARZ. (*Getting up, apparently quiet.*) You are right, quite right.

SCHÖN. (*Gripping his hand.*) Where are you going?

SCHWARZ. To speak with her.

SCHÖN. Right! (*Accompanies him to the door, left. Coming back.*) That was tough work. (*After a pause, looking right.*) He had taken her into the studio before though? (*A fearful groan, left. He hurries to the door and finds it locked.*) Open! Open the door!

LULU. (*Stepping thru the hangings, right.*) What's—

SCHÖN. Open it!

LULU. (*Comes down the steps.*) That is horrible.

SCHÖN. Have you an ax in the kitchen?

LULU. He'll open it right off—

SCHÖN. I can't kick it down.

LULU. When he's had his cry out.

SCHÖN. (*Kicking the door.*) Open! (*To Lulu.*) Bring me an ax.

LULU. Send for the doctor—

SCHÖN. You are not yourself.

LULU. It serves you right. (*Bell rings in the corridor. Schön and Lulu stare at each other. Then Schön slips up-stage and stands in the doorway.*)

SCHÖN. I mustn't let myself be seen here.

LULU. Perhaps it's the art-dealer. (*The bell rings again.*)

SCHÖN. But if we don't answer it—

LULU. (*Steals toward the door; but Schön holds her.*)—

SCHÖN. Stop. It sometimes happens that one is not just at hand— (*He goes out on tip-toes. Lulu turns back to the locked door and listens. Schön returns with Alva.*) Please be quiet.

ALVA. (*Very excited.*) A revolution has broken out in Paris!

SCHÖN. Be quiet.

ALVA. (*To Lulu.*) You're as pale as death.

SCHÖN. (*Rattling at the door.*) Walter! Walter!
(*A death-rattle heard behind the door.*)

LULU. God pity you.

SCHÖN. Haven't you brought an ax?

LULU. If there's one there— (*Goes slowly out, upper left.*)

ALVA. He's just keeping us in suspense.

SCHÖN. A revolution has broken out in Paris?

ALVA. In the editors' room they're beating their heads against the wall. No one knows what he ought to write.
(*The bell rings in the corridor.*)

SCHÖN. (*Kicking against the door.*) Walter!

ALVA. Shall I force it in?

SCHÖN. I can do that. Who is it coming now?
(*Standing up.*) To enjoy life and let others be responsible for it—

LULU. (*Coming back with a kitchen ax.*) Henriette has come home.

SCHÖN. Shut the door behind you.

ALVA. Give it here. (*Takes the ax and pounds with it between the jamb and the lock.*)

SCHÖN. You must hold it nearer the end.

ALVA. It's cracking— (*The lock gives; Alva lets the ax fall and staggers back.*) (*Pause.*)

LULU. (*To Schön, pointing to the door.*) After you. (*Schön flinches, drops back.*) Are you getting— dizzy? (*Schön wipes the sweat from his forehead and goes in.*)

ALVA. (*From the couch.*) Ghastly!

LULU. (*Stopping in the door-way, finger on lips, cries out sharply.*) Oh! Oh! (*Hurries to Alva.*) I can't stay here.

ALVA. Horrible!

LULU. (*Taking his hand.*) Come.

ALVA. Where to?

LULU. I can't be alone. (*Goes out with Alva, right.*)

(*Schön comes back, a bunch of keys in his hand, which shows blood. He pulls the door to, behind him, goes to the writing-table, opens it, and writes two notes.*)

ALVA. (*Coming back, right.*) She's changing her clothes.

SCHÖN. She has gone?

ALVA. To her room. She's changing her clothes. (*Schön rings. Henriette comes in.*)

SCHÖN. You know where Dr. Bernstein lives?

HENRIETTE. Of course, Doctor. Right next door.

SCHÖN. (*Giving her one note.*) Take that over to him, please.

HENRIETTE. In case the doctor is not at home?

SCHÖN. He is at home. (*Giving her the other note.*) And take this to police headquarters. Take a cab. (*Henriette goes out.*) I am judged!

ALVA. My blood is cold.

SCHÖN. (*Toward the left.*) The fool!

ALVA. He waked up to something, perhaps?

SCHÖN. He has been too absorbed with himself. (*Lulu appears on the steps, right, in dust-coat and hat.*)

ALVA. Where are you going now?

LULU. Out. I see it on all the walls.

SCHÖN. Where are his papers?

LULU. In the desk.

SCHÖN. (*At the desk.*) Where?

LULU. Lower right-hand drawer. (*She kneels and opens the drawer, emptying the papers on the floor.*) Here. There is nothing to fear. He had no secrets.

SCHÖN. Now I can just withdraw from the world.

LULU. (*Still kneeling.*) Write a pamphlet about him. Call him Michelangelo.

SCHÖN. What good'll that do? (*Pointing left.*) There lies my engagement.

ALVA. That's the curse of your game!

SCHÖN. Shout it thru the streets!!

ALVA. (*Pointing to Lulu.*) If you had treated that girl fairly and justly when my mother died—

SCHÖN. My engagement is bleeding to death there!

LULU. (*Getting up.*) I sha'n't stay here any longer.

SCHÖN. In an hour they'll be selling extras. I dare not go across the street!

LULU. Why, what can you do to help it?

SCHÖN. That's just it! They'll stone me for it!

ALVA. You must get away—travel.

SCHÖN. To leave the scandal a free field!

LULU. (*By the couch.*) Ten minutes ago he was lying here.

SCHÖN. This is the reward for all I've done for him! In one second he wrecks my whole life for me!

ALVA. Control yourself, please!

LULU. (*On the couch.*) There's no one but ourselves here.

ALVA. But o u r position?

SCHÖN. (*To Lulu.*) What will you say to the police?

LULU. Nothing.

ALVA. He didn't want to remain a debtor to his destiny.

LULU. He always thought of death immediately.

SCHÖN. He thought what a human being can only dream of.

LULU. He has paid dearly for it.

ALVA. He had what we don't have!

SCHÖN. (*Suddenly violent.*) I know your reasons! I have no cause to consider you! If you try every means to prevent having any brothers and sisters, that's all the more reason why I should get more children.

ALVA. You've a poor knowledge of men.

LULU. You get out an extra yourself!

SCHÖN. (*With passionate indignation.*) He had no moral sense! (*Suddenly controlling himself again.*) Paris in revolution—?

ALVA. Our editors act as though they'd been struck. Everything has stopped dead.

SCHÖN. That's got to help me over this! Now if only the police would come. The minutes are worth more than gold. (*The bell rings in the corridor.*)

ALVA. There they are— (*Schön starts to the door. Lulu jumps up.*)

LULU. Wait, you've got blood—

SCHÖN. Where?

LULU. Wait, I'll wipe it. (*Sprinkles her handkerchief with heliotrope and wipes the blood from Schön's hand.*)

SCHÖN. It's your husband's blood.

LULU. It leaves no trace.

SCHÖN. Monster!

LULU. You will marry me, though. (*The bell rings in the corridor.*) Only have patience, children. (*Schön goes out and returns with Escherich, a reporter.*)

ESCHERICH. (*Breathless.*) Allow me to—to introduce myself—

SCHÖN. You've run?

ESCHERICH. (*Giving him his card.*) From police headquarters. A suicide, I understand.

SCHÖN. (*Reads.*) Fritz Escherich, correspondent of the "News and Novelties." Come along.

ESCHERICH. One moment. (*Takes out his note-book and pencil, looks around the parlor, writes a few words, bows to Lulu, writes, turns to the broken door, writes.*) A kitchen-ax. (*Starts to lift it.*)

SCHÖN. (*Holding him back.*) Excuse me.

ESCHERICH. (*Writing.*) Door broken open with a kitchen-ax. (*Examines the lock.*)

SCHÖN. (*His hand on the door.*) Look before you, my dear sir.

ESCHERICH. Now if you will have the kindness to open the door— (*Schön opens it. Escherich lets book and pencil fall, clutches at his hair.*) Merciful Heaven! God!!

SCHÖN. Look it all over carefully.

ESCHERICH. I can't look at it!

SCHÖN. (*Snorting scornfully.*) Then what did you come here for?

ESCHERICH. To—to cut up—to cut up his throat with a razor!

SCHÖN. Have you seen it all?

ESCHERICH. That must feel—

SCHÖN. (*Draws the door to, steps to the writing-table.*) Sit down. Here is paper and pen. Write.

ESCHERICH. (*Mechanically taking his seat.*) I can't write—

SCHÖN. (*Behind his chair.*) Write! Persecution—mania. . . .

ESCHERICH. (*Writes.*) Per-secu-tion—mania. (*The bell rings in the corridor.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

A theatrical dressing-room, hung with red. Door upper right. Across upper left corner, a Spanish screen. Centre, a table set endwise, on which dance costumes lie. Chair on each side of this table. Lower right, a smaller table with a chair. Lower left, a high, very wide, old-fashioned arm-chair. Above it, a tall mirror, with a make-up stand before it holding puff, rouge, etc., etc.

Alva is at lower right, filling two glasses with red wine and champagne.

ALVA. Never since I began to work for the stage have I seen a public so uncontrolled in enthusiasm.

LULU. (*Voice from behind the screen.*) Don't give me too much red wine. Will he see me to-day?

ALVA. Father?

LULU. Yes.

ALVA. I don't know if he's in the theater.

LULU. Doesn't he want to see me at all?

ALVA. He has so little time.

LULU. His b r i d e occupies him.

ALVA. Speculations. He gives himself no rest. (*Schön enters.*) You? We're just speaking of you.

LULU. Is he there?

SCHÖN. You're changing?

LULU. (*Peeping over the Spanish screen, to Schön.*) You write in all the papers that I'm the most gifted danseuse who ever trod the stage, a second Taglioni and I don't know what else—and you haven't once found me gifted enough to convince yourself of the fact.

SCHÖN. I have so much to write. You see, I was

right: there were hardly any seats left. You must keep rather more in the proscenium.

LULU. I must first accustom myself to the light.

ALVA. She has kept herself strictly to her part.

SCHÖN. (*To Alva.*) You must get more out of your performers! You don't know enough yet about the technique. (*To Lulu.*) What do you come as now?

LULU. As a flower-girl.

SCHÖN. (*To Alva.*) In tights?

ALVA. No. In a skirt to the ankles.

SCHÖN. It would have been better if you hadn't ventured on symbolism.

ALVA. I look at a dancer's feet.

SCHÖN. The point is, what the public looks at. An apparition like *h e r* has no need, thank heaven, of your symbolic mummery.

ALVA. The public doesn't look as if it was bored!

SCHÖN. Of course not; because I have been working for her success in the press for six months. Has the prince been here?

ALVA. Nobody's been here.

SCHÖN. Who lets a dancer come on thru two acts in raincoats?

ALVA. Who is the prince?

SCHÖN. Shall we see each other afterwards?

ALVA. Are you alone?

SCHÖN. With acquaintances. At Peter's?

ALVA. At twelve?

SCHÖN. At twelve. (*Exit.*)

LULU. I'd given up hoping he'd ever come.

ALVA. Don't let yourself be misled by his grumpy growls. If you'll only be careful not to spend your strength before the last number begins— (*Lulu steps*

out in a classical, sleeveless dress, white with a red border, a bright wreath in her hair and a basket of flowers in her hands.)

LULU. He doesn't seem to have noticed at all how cleverly you have used your performers.

ALVA. I won't blow in sun, moon and stars in the first act!

LULU. (*Sipping.*) You disclose me by degrees.

ALVA. I knew, though, that you knew all about changing costumes.

LULU. If I'd wanted to sell my flowers this way before the Alhambra café, they'd have had me behind lock and key right off the very first night.

ALVA. Why? You were a child!

LULU. Do you remember me when I entered your room the first time?

ALVA. You wore a dark blue dress with black velvet.

LULU. They had to stick me somewhere and didn't know where.

ALVA. My mother had been lying sick two years then.

LULU. You were playing theater, and asked me if I wanted to play too.

ALVA. To be sure! We played theater!

LULU. I see you still—the way you shoved the figures back and forth.

ALVA. For a long time my most terrible memory was when all at once I saw clearly into your relations—

LULU. You got icy curt towards me then.

ALVA. Oh, God—I saw in you something so infinitely far above me. I had perhaps a higher devotion to you than to my mother. Think—when my mother died—I was seventeen—I went and stood before my father and

demanded that he make you his wife on the spot or we'd have to fight a duel.

LULU. He told me that at the time.

ALVA. Since I've grown older, I can only pity him. He will never comprehend me. There he is making up a story for himself about a little diplomatic game that puts me in the rôle of laboring against his marriage with the Countess.

LULU. Does she still look as innocently as ever at the world?

ALVA. She loves him. I'm convinced of that. Her family has tried everything to make her turn back. I don't think any sacrifice in the world would be too great for her for his sake.

LULU. (*Holds out her glass to him.*) A little more, please.

ALVA. (*Giving it to her.*) You're drinking too much.

LULU. He shall learn to believe in my success! He doesn't believe in any art. He believes only in papers.

ALVA. He believes in nothing.

LULU. He brought me into the theater in order that someone might eventually be found rich enough to marry me.

ALVA. Well, alright. Why need that trouble us?

LULU. I am to be glad if I can dance myself into a millionaire's heart.

ALVA. God defend that anyone should take you from us!

LULU. You've composed the music for it, though.

ALVA. You know that it was always my wish to write a piece for you.

LULU. I am not at all made for the stage, however.

ALVA. You came into the world a dancer!

LULU. Why don't you write your things at least as interesting as life is?

ALVA. Because if we did no man would believe us.

LULU. If I didn't know more about acting than the people on the stage do, what might not have happened to me?

ALVA. I've provided your part with all the impossibilities imaginable, though.

LULU. With hocus-pocus like that no dog is lured from the stove in the real world.

ALVA. It's enough for me that the public finds itself most tremendously stirred up.

LULU. But *I'd* like to find myself most tremendously stirred up. (*Drinks.*)

ALVA. You don't seem to be in need of much more for that.

LULU. No one of them realizes anything about the others. Each thinks that he alone is the unhappy victim.

ALVA. But how can you feel that?

LULU. There runs up one's body such an icy shudder.

ALVA. You are incredible. (*An electric bell rings over the door.*)

LULU. My cape. . . . I shall keep in the proscenium!

ALVA. (*Putting a wide shawl round her shoulders.*)
Here is your cape.

LULU. He shall have nothing more to fear for his shameless boosting.

ALVA. Keep yourself under control!

LULU. God grant that I dance the last sparks of intelligence out of their heads. (*Exit.*)

ALVA. Yes, a more interesting piece could be written about her. (*Sits, right, and takes out his note-book. Writes. Looks up.*) First act: Dr. Goll. Rotten al-

ready! I can call up Dr. Goll from purgatory or wherever else he's doing penance for his orgies, but I'll be made responsible for his sins. (*Long-continued but much deadened applause and bravos outside.*) They rage there as in a menagery when the meat appears at the cage. Second act: Walter Schwarz. Still more impossible! How our souls do strip off their last coverings in the light of such lightning-strokes! Third act? Is it really to go on this way? (*The attendant opens the door from outside and lets Escerny enter. He acts as though he were at home, and without greeting Alva takes the chair near the mirror. Alva continues, not heeding him.*) It can not go on this way in the third act!

ESCERNY. Up to the middle of the third act it didn't seem to go so well to-day as usual.

ALVA. I was not on the stage.

ESCERNY. Now she's in full career again.

ALVA. She's lengthening each number.

ESCERNY. I once had the pleasure of meeting the artiste at Schön's.

ALVA. My father has brought her before the public by some critiques in his paper.

ESCERNY. (*Bowing slightly.*) I was conferring with Dr. Schön about the publication of my discoveries at Lake Tanganika.

ALVA. (*Bowing slightly.*) His remarks leave no doubt that he takes the liveliest interest in your work.

ESCERNY. It's a very good thing in the artiste that the public does not exist for her at all.

ALVA. As a child she learned the quick changing of clothes; but I was surprised to discover such an expressive dancer in her.

ESCERNY. When she dances her solo she is intoxicated

with her own beauty, with which she herself seems to be mortally in love.

ALVA. Here she comes. (*Gets up and opens the door. Enter Lulu.*)

LULU. (*Without wreath or basket, to Alva.*) You're called for. I was three times before the curtain. (*To Escerny.*) Dr. Schön is not in your box?

ESCERNY. Not in mine.

ALVA. (*To Lulu.*) Didn't you see him?

LULU. He is probably away again.

ESCERNY. He has the last parquet-box on the left.

LULU. It seems he is ashamed of me!

ALVA. There wasn't a good seat left for him.

LULU. (*To Alva.*) Ask him, though, if he likes me better now.

ALVA. I'll send him up.

ESCERNY. He applauded.

LULU. Did he really?

ALVA. Give yourself some rest. (*Exit.*)

LULU. I've got to change again now.

ESCERNY. But your maid isn't here?

LULU. I can do it quicker alone. Where did you say Dr. Schön was sitting?

ESCERNY. I saw him in the left parquet-box farthest back.

LULU. I've still five costumes before me now; dancing-girl, ballerina, queen of the night, Ariel, and Lascaris. . . . (*She goes behind the Spanish screen.*)

ESCERNY. Would you think it possible that at our first meeting I expected nothing more than to make the acquaintance of a young lady of the literary world? . . . (*He sits at the left of the centre table, and remains there to the end of the scene.*) Have I perhaps erred in my

judgment of your nature, or did I rightly interpret the smile which the thundering storms of applause called forth on your lips? That you are secretly pained at the necessity of profaning your art before people of doubtful disinterestedness? (*Lulu makes no answer.*) That you would gladly exchange at any moment the shimmer of publicity for a quiet, sunny happiness in distinguished seclusion? (*Lulu makes no answer.*) That you feel in yourself enough dignity and high rank to fetter a man to your feet—in order to enjoy his utter helplessness? . . . (*Lulu makes no answer.*) That in a comfortable, richly furnished villa you would feel in a more fitting place than here,—with unlimited means, to live completely as your own mistress? (*Lulu steps forth in a short, bright, pleated petticoat and white satin bodice, black shoes and stockings, and spurs with bells at her heels.*)

LULU. (*Busy with the lacing of her bodice.*) If there's just one evening I don't go on, I dream the whole night that I'm dancing and feel the next day as if I'd been racked.

ESCERNY. But what difference could it make to you to see before you instead of this mob one spectator, specially elect?

LULU. That would make no difference. I don't see anybody anyway.

ESCERNY. A lighted summer-house—the splashing of the water near at hand. . . . I am forced in my exploring-trips to the practise of a quite inhuman tyranny—

LULU. (*Putting on a pearl necklace before the mirror.*) A good school!

ESCERNY. And if I now long to deliver myself unreservedly into the power of a woman, that is a natural need for relaxation. . . . Can you imagine a greater life-

happiness for a woman than to have a man entirely in her power?

LULU. (*Jingling her heels.*) Oh yes!

ESCERNY. (*Disconcerted.*) Among cultured men you will find not one who doesn't lose his head over you.

LULU. Your wishes, however, no one will fulfill without deceiving you.

ESCERNY. To be deceived by a girl like you must be ten times more enrapturing than to be uprightly loved by anybody else.

LULU. You have never in your life been uprightly loved by a girl! (*Turning her back to him and pointing.*) Would you undo this knot for me? I've laced myself too tight. I am always so excited getting dressed.

ESCERNY. (*After repeated efforts.*) I'm sorry; I can't.

LULU. Then leave it. Perhaps I can. (*Goes left.*)

ESCERNY. I confess that I am lacking in deftness. Maybe I was not docile enough with women.

LULU. And probably you don't have much opportunity to be so in Africa, either?

ESCERNY. (*Seriously.*) Let me openly admit to you that my loneliness in the world embitters many hours.

LULU. The knot is almost done. . . .

ESCERNY. What draws me to you is not your dancing. It's your physical and mental refinement, as it is revealed in every one of your movements. Anyone who is so much interested in art as I am could not be deceived in that. For ten evenings I've been studying your spiritual life in your dance, until to-day when you entered as the flower-girl I became perfectly clear. Yours is a grand nature—unselfish; you can see no one suffer; you embody the joy of life. As a wife you will make a man happy above all

things. . . . You are all open-heartedness. You would be a poor actor. (*The bell rings again.*)

LULU. (*Having somewhat loosened her laces, takes a deep breath and jingles her spurs.*) Now I can breathe again. The curtain is going up. (*She takes from the centre table a skirt-dance costume—of bright yellow silk, without a waist, closed at the neck, reaching to the ankles, with wide, loose sleeves—and throws it over her.*) I must dance.

ESCERNY. (*Rises and kisses her hand.*) Allow me to remain here a little while longer.

LULU. Please, stay.

ESCERNY. I need some solitude. (*Lulu goes out.*) What is to be aristocratic? To be eccentric, like me? Or to be perfect in body and mind, like this girl? (*Applause and bravos outside.*) He who gives me back my faith in men, gives me back my life. Should not the children of this woman be more princely, body and soul, than the children whose mother has no more vitality in her than I have felt in me until to-day? (*Sitting, right; ecstatically.*) The dance has ennobled her body. . . . (*Alva enters.*)

ALVA. One is never sure a moment that some miserable chance may not throw the whole performance out for good. (*He throws himself into the big chair, left, so that the two men are in exactly reversed positions from their former ones. Both converse somewhat boredly and apathetically.*)

ESCERNY. But the public has never yet shown itself so grateful.

ALVA. She's finished the skirt-dance.

ESCERNY. I hear her coming. . . .

ALVA. She isn't coming. She has no time. She changes her costume in the wings.

ESCERNY. She has two ballet-costumes, if I'm not mistaken?

ALVA. I find the white one more becoming to her than the rose.

ESCERNY. Do you?

ALVA. Don't you?

ESCERNY. I find she looks too body-less in the white tulle.

ALVA. I find she looks too animal in the rose-tulle.

ESCERNY. I don't find that.

ALVA. The white tulle expresses more the child-like in her nature.

ESCERNY. The rose tulle expresses more the female in her nature. (*The electric bell rings over the door. Alva jumps up.*)

ALVA. For heaven's sake, what is wrong?

ESCERNY. (*Getting up too*). What's the matter? (*The electric bell goes on ringing to the close of the dialogue.*)

ALVA. Something's gone wrong there—

ESCERNY. How can you get so suddenly frightened?

ALVA. That must be a hellish confusion! (*He runs out. Escerny follows him. The door remains open. Faint dance-music heard. Pause. Lulu enters in a long cloak, and shuts the door to behind her. She wears a rose-colored ballet costume with flower garlands. She walks across the stage and sits down in the big arm-chair near the mirror. After a pause Alva returns.*)

ALVA. You had a faint?

LULU. Please lock the door.

ALVA. At least come down to the stage.

LULU. Did you see him?

ALVA. See whom?

LULU. With his bride?

ALVA. With his— (*To Schön, who enters.*) You might have spared yourself that jest!

SCHÖN. What's the matter with her? (*To Lulu.*) How can you play the scene straight at me!

LULU. I feel as if I'd been whipped.

SCHÖN. (*After bolting the door.*) You will dance—as sure as I've taken the responsibility for you!

LULU. Before your bride?

SCHÖN. Have you a right to trouble yourself before whom? You've been engaged here. You receive your salary . . .

LULU. Is that your affair?

SCHÖN. You dance for anyone who buys a ticket. Whom I sit with in my box has nothing to do with your business!

ALVA. I wish you'd stayed sitting in your box! (*To Lulu.*) Tell me, please, what I am to do. (*A knock at the door.*) There is the manager. (*Calls.*) Yes, in a moment! (*To Lulu.*) You won't compel us to break off the performance?

SCHÖN. (*To Lulu.*) Onto the stage with you!

LULU. Let me have just a moment! I can't now. I'm utterly miserable.

ALVA. The devil take the whole theater crowd!

LULU. Put in the next number. No one will notice if I dance now or in five minutes. There's no strength in my feet.

ALVA. But you will dance then?

LULU. As well as I can.

ALVA. As badly as you like. (*A knock at the door again.*) I'm coming.

LULU. (*When Alva is gone.*) You are right to show me where my place is. You couldn't do it better than by letting me dance the skirt-dance before your fiancée. . . . You do me the greatest service when you point out where I belong.

SCHÖN. (*Sardonically.*) For you with your origin it's incomparable luck to still have the chance of entering before respectable people!

LULU. Even when my shamelessness makes them not know where to look.

SCHÖN. Nonsense!—Shamelessness?—Don't make a necessity of virtue! Your shamelessness is balanced with gold for you at every step. One cries "bravo," another "fie"—it's all the same to you! Can you wish for a more brilliant triumph than when a respectable girl can hardly be kept in the box? Has your life any other aim? As long as you still have a spark of self-respect, you are no perfect dancer. The more terribly you make people shudder, the higher you stand in your profession!

LULU. But it is absolutely indifferent to me what they think of me. I don't, in the least, want to be any better than I am. I'm content with myself.

SCHÖN. (*In moral indignation.*) That is your true nature. I call that straightforward! A corruption!!

LULU. I wouldn't have known that I had a spark of self-respect—

SCHÖN. (*Suddenly distrustful.*) No harlequinading—

LULU. O Lord—I know very well what I'd have become if you hadn't saved me from it.

SCHÖN. Are you then, perhaps, something different today?

LULU. God be thanked, no!

SCHÖN. That is right!

LULU. (*Laughs.*) And how awfully glad I am about it.

SCHÖN. (*Spits.*) Will you dance now?

LULU. In anything, before anyone!

SCHÖN. Then down to the stage!

LULU. (*Begging like a child.*) Just a minute more! Please! I can't stand up straight yet. They'll ring.

SCHÖN. You have become what you are in spite of everything I sacrificed for your education and your welfare.

LULU. Had you overrated your ennobling influence?

SCHÖN. Spare me your witticisms.

LULU. The prince was here.

SCHÖN. Well?

LULU. He takes me with him to Africa.

SCHÖN. Africa?

LULU. Why not? Didn't you make me a dancer just so that someone might come and take me away with him?

SCHÖN. But not to Africa, though!

LULU. Then why didn't you let me fall quietly in a faint, and silently thank heaven for it?

SCHÖN. Because, more's the pity, I had no reason for believing in your faint!

LULU. (*Making fun of him.*) You couldn't bear it any longer out there?

SCHÖN. Because I had to bring home to you what you are and to whom you are not to look up.

LULU. You were afraid, though, that my legs might have been seriously injured?

SCHÖN. I know too well you are indestructible.

LULU. So you know that?

SCHÖN. (*Bursting out.*) Don't look at me so impudently!

LULU. No one is keeping you here.

SCHÖN. I'm going as soon as the bell rings.

LULU. As soon as you have the energy! Where is your energy? You have been engaged three years. Why don't you marry? You recognize no obstacles. Why do you want to put the blame on me? You ordered me to marry Dr. Goll: I forced Dr. Goll to marry me. You ordered me to marry the painter: I made the best of a bad bargain. Artists are your creatures, princes your protégés. Why don't you marry?

SCHÖN. (*Raging.*) Do you imagine you stand in the way?

LULU. (*From here to the end of the act triumphant.*) If you knew how happy your rage is making me! How proud I am that you should humble me by every means in your power! You debase me as deep—as deep as a woman can be debased, for you hope you can then jump over me easier. But you have suffered unspeakably yourself from everything you just said to me. I see it in you. Already you are near the end of your self-command. Go! For your innocent fiancée's sake, leave me alone! One minute more, your mood will change around and you'll make a scene with me of another kind, that you can't answer for now.

SCHÖN. I fear you no longer.

LULU. Me? Fear yourself! I do not need you. I beg you to go! Don't give me the blame. You know I don't need to faint to destroy your future. You have unlimited confidence in my honorableness. You believe not only that I'm an ensnaring daughter of Eve; you believe, too, that I'm a very good-natured creature. I am

neither the one nor the other. Your misfortune is only that you think I am.

SCHÖN. (*Desperate.*) Leave my thoughts alone! You have two men under the sod. Take the prince, dance him into the earth! I am thru with you. I know when the angel in you stops off and the devil begins. If I take the world as it's made, the Creator must be responsible, not I! To me life is not an amusement!

LULU. And, therefore, you make claims on life greater than anyone can make. Tell me, who of us two is more full of claims and demands, you or I?

SCHÖN. Be silent! I don't know how or what I think. When I hear you, I don't think any more. In a week I'll be married. I conjure you, by the angel that is in you, during that time come no more to my sight!

LULU. I will lock my doors.

SCHÖN. Go on and boast! God knows since I've been wrestling with the world and with life I have cursed no one like you!

LULU. That comes from my lowly origin.

SCHÖN. From your depravity!

LULU. With a thousand pleasures I take the blame on myself! You must feel clean now; you must think yourself a model of austerity now, a paragon of unflinching principle! Otherwise you could never marry the child in her boundless inexperience—

SCHÖN. Do you want me to grab you and—

LULU. Yes! What must I say to make you? Not for the world would I change with the innocent kid now! Tho the girl loves you as no woman has ever loved you yet!

SCHÖN. Silence, beast! Silence!

LULU. Marry her—and then she'll dance in her childish wretchedness before my eyes, instead of I before hers!

SCHÖN. (*Raising his fists.*) God forgive me—

LULU. Strike me! Where is your riding-whip? Strike me on the legs—

SCHÖN. (*Grasping his temples.*) Away, away! (*Rushes to the door, recollects himself, turns around.*) Can I go before the girl now, this way? Home!

LULU. Be a man! Look yourself in the face once:—you have no trace of a conscience; you are frightened at no wickedness; in the most cold-blooded way you mean to make the girl that loves you unhappy; you conquer half the world; you do what you please;—and you know as well as I that—

SCHÖN. (*Sunk in the chair, right centre, utterly exhausted.*) Stop!

LULU. That you are too weak—to tear yourself away from me.

SCHÖN. (*Groaning.*) Oh! Oh! You make me weep.

LULU. This moment makes me I cannot tell you how glad.

SCHÖN. My age! My position!

LULU. He cries like a child—the terrible man of might! Now go so to your bride and tell her what kind of a girl I am at heart—not a bit jealous!

SCHÖN. (*Sobbing.*) The child! The innocent child!

LULU. How can the incarnate devil get so weak all of a sudden! But now go, please. You are nothing more now to me.

SCHÖN. I cannot go to her.

LULU. Out with you. Come back to me when you have regained your strength again.

SCHÖN. Tell me in God's name what I must do.

LULU. (*Gets up; her cloak remains on the chair. Shoving aside the costumes on the centre table.*) Here is writing-paper—

SCHÖN. I can't write. . . .

LULU. (*Upright behind him, her arm on the back of his chair.*) Write! "My dear young lady. . . ."

SCHÖN. (*Hesitating.*) I call her Adelheid . . .

LULU. (*With emphasis.*) "My dear young lady . . ."

SCHÖN. My sentence of death! (*He writes.*)

LULU. "Take back your promise. I cannot reconcile it with my conscience—" (*Schön drops the pen and glances up at her entreatingly.*) Write conscience! —"to fasten you to my unhappy lot. . . ."

SCHÖN. (*Writing.*) You are right. You are right.

LULU. "I give you my word that I am unworthy of your love—" (*Schön turns round again.*) Write love! "These lines are the proof of it. For three years I have tried to tear myself loose; I have not the strength. I am writing you by the side of the woman that commands me. Forget me. Dr. Ludwig Schön."

SCHÖN. (*Groaning.*) O God!

LULU. (*Half startled.*) No, no O God! (*With emphasis.*) "Dr. Ludwig Schön." Postscript: "Do not attempt to save me."

SCHÖN. (*Having written to the end, quite collapses.*) Now—comes the—execution.

CURTAIN

ACT IV

A splendid hall in German Renaissance style, with a thick floor of oak-blocks. The lower half of the walls of dark carved wood; the upper half on both sides hung with faded Gobelins. At rear, a curtained gallery from which a monumental stair-case leads, right, half-way down the stage. At centre, under the gallery, the entrance-door, with twisted posts and pediment. At left, a high and spacious fire-place with a Chinese folding screen before it. Further down, left, a French window onto a balcony, with heavy curtains, closed. Down right, door hung with Genoese velvet. Near it, a broad ottoman, with a chair on its left. Behind, near the foot of the stairs, Lulu's Pierrot-picture on a decorative stand and in a gold frame made to look antique. In the centre of the hall, a heavy square table, with three high-backed upholstered chairs round it and a vase of white flowers on it.

Countess Geschwitz sits on the ottoman, in a soldier-like, fur-trimmed waist, high, upright collar, enormous cuff-links, a veil over her face and her hands clasped convulsively in her muff. Schön stands down right. Lulu, in a big-flowered morning-dress, her hair in a simple knot in a golden circlet, sits in the arm-chair left of the ottoman.

GESCHWITZ. You can't think how glad I shall be to see you at our artists' ball. *(To Lulu.)*

SCHÖN. Is there no sort of possibility of a person like me smuggling in?

GESCHWITZ. It would be high treason if any of us lent herself to such an intrigue.

SCHÖN. (*Crossing to the centre table, behind the ottoman.*) The glorious flowers!

LULU. Fräulein von Geschwitz brought me those.

GESCHWITZ. Don't mention it. Oh, you'll be in man's costume, won't you?

LULU. Do you think that becomes me?

GESCHWITZ. You're a dream here. (*Signifying the picture.*)

LULU. My husband doesn't like it.

GESCHWITZ. Is it by a local man?

LULU. You will hardly have known him.

GESCHWITZ. No longer living?

SCHÖN. (*Down left, with a deep voice.*) He had enough.

LULU. You're in bad temper. (*Schön controls himself.*)

GESCHWITZ. (*Getting up.*) I must go, Mrs. Schön. I can't stay any longer. This evening we have life-class, and I have still so much to get ready for the ball. Good-bye, Dr. Schön. (*Exit, up-stage. Lulu accompanies her. Schön looks around him.*)

SCHÖN. Pure Augean stable. That, the end of my life. They ought to show me a corner that's still clean. The pest in the house. The poorest day-laborer has his tidy nest. Thirty years' work, and this my family circle, the circle of my people— (*Glancing round.*) God knows who is overhearing me again now! (*Draws a revolver from his breast pocket.*) Man is, indeed, uncertain of his life! (*The cocked revolver in his right hand, he goes left and speaks at the closed window curtains.*) That, my family circle! The fellow still has courage! Shall I not rather shoot myself in the head? Against deadly enemies one fights, but the— (*Throws up the curtains,*

but finds no one hidden behind them.) The dirt—the dirt. . . . (*Shakes his head and crosses right.*) Insanity has already conquered my reason, or else—exceptions prove the rule! (*Hearing Lulu coming he puts the revolver back in his pocket. Lulu comes down right.*)

LULU. Couldn't you get away for this afternoon?

SCHÖN. Just what did that Countess want?

LULU. I don't know. She wants to paint me.

SCHÖN. Misfortune in human guise, that waits upon one.

LULU. Couldn't you get away, then? I would so like to drive thru the grounds with you.

SCHÖN. Just the day when I must be at the exchange. You know that I'm not free to-day. All my property is drifting on the waves.

LULU. I'd sooner be dead and buried than let my life be embittered so by my property.

SCHÖN. Who takes life lightly does not take death hard.

LULU. As a child I always had the most horrible fear of death.

SCHÖN. That is just why I married you.

LULU. (*With her arms round his neck.*) You're in bad humor. You give yourself too much work. For weeks and months I've seen nothing of you.

SCHÖN. (*Stroking her hair.*) Your light-heartedness should cheer up my old days.

LULU. Indeed, you didn't marry me at all.

SCHÖN. Who else did I marry then?

LULU. I married you!

SCHÖN. How does that alter anything?

LULU. I was always afraid it would alter a great deal.

SCHÖN. It has, indeed, crushed a great deal underfoot.

LULU. But not one thing, praise God!

SCHÖN. Of that I should be covetous.

LULU. Your love for me. (*Schön's face twitches, he signs to her to go out in front of him. Both exeunt lower right. Countess Geschwitz cautiously opens the rear door, ventures forth, and listens. Hearing voices approaching in the gallery above her, she starts suddenly.*)

GESCHWITZ. Oh dear, there's somebody— (*Hides behind the fire-screen.*)

SCHIGOLCH. (*Steps out from the curtains onto the stairs, turns back.*) Has the youngster left his heart behind him in the "Nightlight" café?

RODRIGO. (*Between the curtains.*) He is still too small for the great world, and can't walk so far on foot yet. (*He disappears.*)

SCHIGOLCH. (*Coming down the stairs.*) God be thanked we're home again at last! What damned skunk has waxed the stairs again? If I have to have my joints set in plaster again before being called home, she can just present me between the palms here to her relations as the Venus de' Medici. Nothing but steep rocks and stumbling blocks!

RODRIGO. (*Comes down the stairs, carrying Hugenberg in his arms.*) This thing has a royal police-captain for a father and not as much courage in his body as the raggedest hobo!

HUGENBERG. If there was nothing more to it than life and death, then you'd soon learn to know me!

RODRIGO. Even with his lover's woe, little brother don't weigh more than sixty kilos. I'll let myself be hung on that statement any time.

SCHIGOLCH. Throw him up to the ceiling and catch

him by the feet. That'll whip his young blood into the proper rhythm right from the start.

HUGENBERG. (*Kicking his legs.*) Hooray, hooray, I shall be expelled from school!

RODRIGO. (*Setting him down at the foot of the stairs.*) You've never been to any sensible school at all yet.

SCHIGOLCH. Here many a man has already won his spurs. Only, no timidity! First, I'll set before you a drop of what can't be had anywhere for money. (*Opens a cupboard under the stairs.*)

HUGENBERG. Now if she doesn't come dancing in on the instant, I'll wallop you two so you'll still rub your tails in the hereafter.

RODRIGO. (*Seated left of the table.*) The strongest man in the world little brother will wallop! Let mamma put long trowsers on you first. (*Hugenberg sits opposite him.*)

HUGENBERG. I'd rather you lent me your mustache.

RODRIGO. Maybe you want her to throw you out of the door straight off?

HUGENBERG. If I only knew now what the devil I was going to say to her!

RODRIGO. That she knows best herself.

SCHIGOLCH. (*Putting two bottles and three glasses on the table.*) I started in on one of them yesterday. (*Fills the glasses.*)

RODRIGO. (*Guarding Hugenberg's.*) Don't give him too much, or we'll both have to pay for it.

SCHIGOLCH. (*Supporting himself with both hands on the table-top.*) Will the gentlemen smoke?

HUGENBERG. (*Opening his cigarette case.*) Havana-imported!

RODRIGO. (*Helping himself.*) From papa police-captain?

SCHIGOLCH. (*Sitting.*) Everything in the house is mine. You only need to ask.

HUGENBERG. I made a poem to her yesterday.

RODRIGO. What did you make to her?

SCHIGOLCH. What did he make to her?

HUGENBERG. A poem.

RODRIGO. (*To Schigolch.*) A poem.

SCHIGOLCH. He's promised me a dollar if I can spy out where he can meet her alone.

HUGENBERG. Just who does live here?

RODRIGO. Here we live!

SCHIGOLCH. Jour fix—every stock-market day! Our health. (*They clink.*)

HUGENBERG. Should I read it to her first, maybe?

SCHIGOLCH. (*To Rodrigo.*) What's he mean?

RODRIGO. His poem. He'd like to stretch her out and torture her a little first.

SCHIGOLCH. (*Staring at Hugenberg.*) His eyes! His eyes!

RODRIGO. His eyes, yes. They've robbed her of sleep for a week.

SCHIGOLCH. (*To Rodrigo.*) You can have yourself pickled.

RODRIGO. We can both have ourselves pickled! Our health, gossip Death!

SCHIGOLCH. (*Clinking with him.*) Health, jack-in-the-box! If it's still better later on, I'm ready for departure at any moment; but—but— (*Lulu enters right, in an elegant Parisian ball-dress, much décolleté, with flowers in breast and hair.*)

LULU. But children, children, I expect company!

SCHIGOLCH. But I can tell you what, those things must cost something over there! (*Hugenberg has risen. Lulu sits on the arm of his chair.*)

LULU. You've fallen into pretty company! I expect visitors, children!

SCHIGOLCH. I guess I've got to stick something in there, too. (*He searches among the flowers on the table.*)

LULU. Do I look well?

SCHIGOLCH. What are those you've got there?

LULU. Orchids. (*Bending over Hugenberg.*) Smell.

RODRIGO. Do you expect Prince Escerny?

LULU. (*Shaking her head.*) God forbid!

RODRIGO. So somebody else again—!

LULU. The prince has gone traveling.

RODRIGO. To put his kingdom up for auction?

LULU. He's spying out a fresh tribe in the neighborhood of Africa. (*Rises, hurries up the stairs, and steps into the gallery.*)

RODRIGO. (*To Schigolch.*) He wanted to marry her originally.

SCHIGOLCH. (*Sticking a lily in his button-hole.*) I, too, wanted to marry her originally.

RODRIGO. You wanted to marry her originally?

SCHIGOLCH. Didn't you, too, want to marry her originally?

RODRIGO. You bet I wanted to marry her originally!

SCHIGOLCH. Who has not wanted to marry her originally!!

RODRIGO. I would never have got a better!

SCHIGOLCH. She has let no one regret that he didn't marry her.

RODRIGO. Then she's not your child?

SCHIGOLCH. Never occurs to her.

HUGENBERG. What is her father's name then?

SCHIGOLCH. She has boasted of me!

HUGENBERG. What is her father's name then?

SCHIGOLCH. What's he say?

RODRIGO. What her father's name is.

SCHIGOLCH. She never had one.

LULU. (*Comes down from the gallery and sits again on Hugenberg's chair-arm.*) What have I never had?

ALL THREE. A father.

LULU. Yes, sure—I'm a wonder-child. (*To Hugenberg.*) How are you getting along with your father?

RODRIGO. He smokes a respectable cigar, anyway, the police-captain.

SCHIGOLCH. Have you locked up upstairs?

LULU. There is the key.

SCHIGOLCH. Better have left it in the lock.

LULU. Why?

SCHIGOLCH. So no one can unlock it from outside.

RODRIGO. Isn't he at the stock-exchange?

LULU. Oh, yes, but he suffers from persecution-mania.

RODRIGO. I take him by the feet, and yup!—there he stays sticking to the roof.

LULU. He hunts you into a mouse-hole with the corner of his eye.

RODRIGO. What does he hunt? Who does he hunt? (*Baring his arm.*) Just look at this biceps!

LULU. Show me. (*Goes left.*)

RODRIGO. (*Hitting himself on the muscle.*) Granite. Wrought-iron!

LULU. (*Feeling by turns Rodrigo's arm and her own.*) If you only didn't have such long ears—

FERDINAND. (*Entering, rear-centre.*) Doctor Schön!

RODRIGO. The rogue! (*Jumps up, starts behind the*

fire-screen, recoils.) God preserve me! (*Hides, lower left, behind the curtains.*)

SCHIGOLCH. Give me the key! (*Takes it and drags himself up the stairs.*)

LULU. (*Hugenberg having slid under the table.*) Show him in!

HUGENBERG. (*Under the front edge of the table-cloth, listening; to himself.*) If he doesn't stay—we'll be alone.

LULU. (*Poking him with her toe.*) Sh! (*Hugenberg disappears. Alva is shown in by Ferdinand.*)

ALVA. (*In evening dress.*) Methinks the matinee will take place with burning lamps. I've— (*Notices Schigolch painfully climbing the stairs.*) What the —— is that?

LULU. An old friend of your father's.

ALVA. Wholly unknown to me.

LULU. They were in the campaign together. He's awfully badly—

ALVA. Is my father here then?

LULU. He drank a glass with him. He had to go to the stock market. We'll have lunch before we go, won't we?

ALVA. When does it begin?

LULU. After two. (*Alva still follows Schigolch with his eyes.*) How do you like me? (*Schigolch disappears thru the gallery.*)

ALVA. Had I not better be silent to you on that point?

LULU. I only mean my appearance.

ALVA. Your dressmaker manifestly knows you better than I may permit myself to know you.

LULU. When I saw myself in the glass I could have wished to be a man—my man!—

ALVA. You seem to envy your man the joy you offer

to him. (*Lulu is at the right, Alva at the left, of the centre table. He regards her with shy satisfaction. Ferdinand enters, rear, covers the table and lays two plates, etc., a bottle of Pommery, and hors d'oeuvres.*) Have you a toothache?

LULU. (*Across to Alva.*) Don't.

FERDINAND. Doctor Schön . . . ?

ALVA. He seems so puckered-up and tearful to-day.

FERDINAND. (*Thru his teeth.*) One is only a man after all. (*Exit.*)

LULU. (*When both are seated.*) What I always think most highly of in you is your firmness of character. You're so perfectly sure of yourself. Even when you must have been afraid of quarreling with your father about it, you always stood up for me like a brother just the same.

ALVA. Let's drop that. It's just my fate— (*Moves to lift up the table-cloth in front.*)

LULU. (*Quickly.*) That was me.

ALVA. Impossible! It's just my fate, with the most frivolous ideas always to seize on the best.

LULU. You deceive yourself if you make yourself out worse than you are.

ALVA. Why do you flatter me so? It is true that perhaps there is no man living, so bad as I—who has brought about so much good.

LULU. In any case you're the only man in the world who's protected me without lowering me in my own eyes!

ALVA. Do you think that so easy? (*Schön appears in the gallery cautiously parting the hangings between the middle pillars. He starts, and whispers, "My own son!"*) With gifts from God like yours, one turns those around one to criminals without ever dreaming of it. I, too, am

only flesh and blood, and if we hadn't grown up with each other like brother and sister—

LULU. That's why, too, I give myself to you alone quite without reserve. From you I have nothing to fear.

ALVA. I assure you there are moments when one expects to see one's whole inner self cave in. The more self-restraint a man loads onto himself, the easier he breaks down. Nothing will save him from that except— (*Stops to look under the table.*)

LULU. (*Quickly.*) What are you looking for?

ALVA. I conjure you, let me keep my confession of faith to myself! As an inviolable sanctity you were more to me than with all your gifts you could be to anyone else in your life!

LULU. How do you come to think on that so entirely differently from your father? (*Ferdinand enters, rear, changes the plates and serves broiled chicken with salad.*)

ALVA. (*To him.*) Are you sick?

LULU. (*To Alva.*) Let him be!

ALVA. He's trembling as if he had fever.

FERDINAND. I am not yet so used to waiting . . .

ALVA. You must have something prescribed for you.

FERDINAND. (*Thru his teeth.*) I'm a coachman usually— (*Exit.*)

SCHÖN. (*Whispering from the gallery.*) So, he too. (*Seats himself behind the rail, able to cover himself with the hangings.*)

LULU. What sort of moments are those of which you spoke, where one expects to see his whole inner self tumble in?

ALVA. I didn't want to speak of them. I should not like to lose, in joking over a glass of champagne, what has been my highest happiness for ten years.

LULU. I have hurt you. I won't begin on that again.

ALVA. Do you promise me that for always?

LULU. My hand on it. (*Gives him her hand across the table. Alva takes it hesitatingly, grips it in his, and presses it long and ardently to his lips.*) What are you doing. (*Rodrigo sticks his head out from the curtains, left. Lulu darts an angry look at him across Alva, and he draws back.*)

SCHÖN. (*Whispering from the gallery.*) And there is still another!

ALVA. (*Holding the hand.*) A soul—that in the hereafter rubs the sleep out of its eyes. . . . Oh, this hand. . . .

LULU. (*Innocently.*) What do you find in it? . . .

ALVA. An arm. . . .

LULU. What do you find in it? . . .

ALVA. A body. . . .

LULU. (*Guilelessly.*) What do you find in it? . . .

ALVA. (*Stirred up.*) Mignon!

LULU. (*Wholly ingenuously.*) What do you find in it? . . .

ALVA. (*Passionately.*) Mignon! Mignon!

LULU. (*Throws herself on the ottoman.*) Don't look at me so—for God's sake! Let us go before it is too late. You're an infamous wretch!

ALVA. I told you, didn't I, I was the basest villain.

LULU. I see that!

ALVA. I have no sense of honor, no pride. . . .

LULU. You think I am your equal!

ALVA. You?—you are as heavenly high above me as—as the sun is over the abyss! (*Kneeling.*) Destroy me! I beg you, put an end to me! Put an end to me!

LULU. Do you love me then?

ALVA. I will pay you with everything that was mine!

LULU. Do you love me?

ALVA. Do you love me—Mignon?

LULU. I? Not a soul.

ALVA. I love you. (*Hides his face in her lap.*)

LULU. (*Both hands in his hair.*) I poisoned your mother— (*Rodrigo sticks his head out from the curtains, left, sees Schön sitting in the gallery and signs to him to watch Lulu and Alva. Schön points his revolver at Rodrigo; Rodrigo signs to him to point it at Alva. Schön cocks the revolver and takes aim. Rodrigo draws back behind the curtains. Lulu sees him draw back, sees Schön sitting in the gallery, and gets up.*) His father! (*Schön rises, lets the hangings fall before him. Alva remains motionless on his knees. Pause.*)

SCHÖN. (*Holding a paper in his hand, takes Alva by the shoulder.*) Alva! (*Alva gets up as though drunk with sleep.*) A revolution has broken out in Paris.

ALVA. To Paris . . . let me go to Paris—

SCHÖN. In the editors' room they're beating their heads against the wall. No one knows what he ought to write. (*He unfolds the paper and accompanies Alva out, rear. Rodrigo rushes out from the curtains toward the stairs.*)

LULU. (*Barring his way.*) You can't get out here.

RODRIGO. Let me through!

LULU. You'll run into his arms.

RODRIGO. He'll shoot me thru the head!

LULU. He's coming.

RODRIGO. (*Stumbling back.*) Devil, death and demons! (*Lifts the table-cloth.*)

HUGENBERG. No room!

RODRIGO. Damned and done for! (*Looks around and hides in the door-way, right.*)

SCHÖN. (*Comes in, centre; locks the door; and goes, revolver in hand, to the window down left, of which he throws up the curtains.*) Where is he gone?

LULU. (*On the lowest step.*) Out.

SCHÖN. Down over the balcony?

LULU. He's an acrobat.

SCHÖN. That could not be foreseen. (*Turning against Lulu.*) You who drag me thru the muck of the streets to a tortured death!

LULU. Why did you not bring me up better?

SCHÖN. You destroying angel! You inexorable fate! To be a murderer without drowning in filth; to take me on board like a released convict, or hang me up over the morass! You joy of my old age! You hangman's noose!

LULU. (*In cold blood.*) Oh, shut up, and kill me!

SCHÖN. Everything I possess I have made over to you, and asked nothing but the respect that every servant pays to my house. Your credit is exhausted!

LULU I can answer for my reckoning still for years. (*Coming forward from the stairs.*) How do you like my new gown?

SCHÖN. Away with you, or my brains will give way to-morrow and my son swim in his own blood! You infect me like an incurable pest in which I shall groan away the rest of my life. I will cure myself! Do you understand? (*Pressing the revolver on her.*) This is your physic. Don't break down; don't kneel! You yourself shall apply it. You or I—which is the weaker? (*Lulu, her strength threatening to desert her, has sunk down on the couch. Turning the revolver this way and that.*)

LULU. It doesn't go off.

SCHÖN. Do you still remember how I tore you out of the clutches of the police?

LULU. You have much confidence—

SCHÖN. Because I'm not afraid of a street-girl? Shall I guide your hand for you? Have you no mercy towards yourself? (*Lulu points the revolver at him.*) No false alarms! (*Lulu fires a shot into the ceiling. Rodrigo springs out of the portières, up the stairs and away thru the gallery.*) What was that?

LULU. (*Innocently.*) Nothing.

SCHÖN. (*Lifting the portières.*) What flew out of here?

LULU. You're suffering from persecution-mania.

SCHÖN. Have you got still more men hidden here? (*Tearing the revolver from her.*) Is yet another man calling on you? (*Going left.*) I'll regale your men! (*Throws up the window curtains, flings the fire-screen back, grabs Countess Geschwitz by the collar and drags her forward.*) Did you come down the chimney?

GESCHWITZ. (*In deadly terror, to Lulu.*) Save me from him!

SCHÖN. (*Shaking her.*) Or are you, too, an acrobat?

GESCHWITZ. (*Whimpering.*) You hurt me.

SCHÖN. (*Shaking her.*) Now you will have to stay to dinner. (*Drags her right, shoves her into the next room and locks the door after her.*) We want no town-criers. (*Sits next Lulu and makes her take the revolver again.*) There's still enough for you in it. Look at me! I cannot assist the coachman in my house to decorate my forehead for me. Look at me! I pay my coachman. Look at me! Am I doing the coachman a favor when I can't stand the stable-stench?

LULU. Have the carriage got ready! Please! We're going to the opera.

SCHÖN. We're going to the devil! Now I am coachman. (*Turning the revolver in her hand from himself to Lulu's breast.*) Think you we let ourselves be mistreated as you mistreat me, and hesitate between a galley-slave's shame at the end of life and the merit of freeing the world of you? (*Holds her down by the arm.*) Come, get through. It will be the gladdest remembrance of my life. Pull the trigger!

LULU. You can get a divorce.

SCHÖN. Only that was left! In order that to-morrow the next man may find his pastime where I have shuddered from cleft to chasm, suicide upon me and t h o u before me! You dare suggest that? That part of my life I have poured into you I am to see thrown before wild beasts? Do you see your bed with the sacrifice—the victim—on it? The boy is homesick for you. Did you let yourself be divorced? You trod him under your feet, knocked out his brains, caught up his blood in gold-pieces. I let myself be divorced? C a n one be divorced when two people have grown into each other and half the man must go, too? (*Reaching for the revolver.*) Give it here!

LULU. Don't!

SCHÖN. I'll spare you the trouble.

LULU. (*Tears herself loose, holding the revolver down; in a determined, self-possessed tone.*) If men have killed themselves for my sake, that doesn't lower my value. You know as well why you made me your wife as I knew why I took you for husband. You had deceived your best friends with me; you could not well go on deceiving yourself with me. If you bring me the close of your life as a sacrifice, still you have had my whole youth for it. You

understand ten times better than I do which is the more valuable. I have never in the world wished to seem to be anything different from what I am taken for, and I have never in the world been taken for anything different from what I am. You want to force me to fire a bullet into my heart. I'm not sixteen any more, but to fire a bullet in my heart I am still much too young!

SCHÖN. (*Pursuing her.*) Down, murderess! Down with you! To your knees, murderess! (*Crowding her to the foot of the stairs.*) Down, and never dare to stand again! (*Raising his hand. Lulu has sunk to her knees.*) Pray to God, murderess, that he give you strength. Sue to heaven that strength for it may be lent you! (*Hugenberg jumps up from under the table, knocking a chair aside, and screams "Help!" Schön whirls toward him, turning his back to Lulu who instantly fires five shots into him and continues to pull the trigger. Schön, tottering over, is caught by Hugenberg and let down in the chair.*)

SCHÖN. And—there—is—one—more—

LULU. (*Rushing to Schön.*) All merciful—!

SCHÖN. Out of my sight! Alva!

LULU. (*Kneeling.*) The one man I loved!

SCHÖN. Harlot! Murderess! Alva! Alva! Water!

LULU. Water; he's thirsty. (*Fills a glass with champagne and sets it to Schön's lips. Alva comes thru the gallery, down the stairs.*)

ALVA. Father! O God, my father!

LULU. I shot him.

HUGENBERG. She is innocent!

SCHÖN. (*To Alva.*) You! It miscarried.

ALVA. (*Tries to lift him.*) You must go to bed; come.

SCHÖN. Don't take me so! I'm drying up. (*Lulu*

comes with the champagne-cup; to her.) You are still like yourself. *(After drinking.)* Don't let her escape. *(To Alva.)* You are the next.

ALVA. *(To Hugenberg.)* Help me carry him to bed.

SCHÖN. No, no, please, no. Wine, murderess—

ALVA. *(To Hugenberg.)* Take him up that side. *(Pointing right.)* Into the bed-room. *(They lift Schön upright and lead him right. Lulu stays near the table, the glass in her hand.)*

SCHÖN. *(Groaning.)* O God! O God! O God! *(Alva finds the door locked, turns the key and opens it. Countess Geschwitz steps out. Schön at the sight of her straighten up, stiffly.)* The Devil. *(He falls backward onto the carpet. Lulu throws herself down, takes his head in her lap, and kisses him.)*

LULU. He has got over it. *(Gets up and starts toward the stairs.)*

ALVA. Don't stir!

GESCHWITZ. I thought it was you.

LULU. *(Throwing herself before Alva.)* You can't give me up to the law! It is my head that is struck off. I shot him because he was about to shoot me. I have loved nobody in the world but him! Alva, demand what you will, only don't let me fall into the hands of justice. Take pity on me. I am still young. I will be true to you as long as I live. I will belong only to you. Look at me, Alva. Man, look at me! Look at me!! *(Knocking on the door outside.)*

ALVA. The police. *(Goes to open it.)*

HUGENBERG. I shall be expelled from school.

CURTAIN

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