1955


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GERMAN EXPRESSIONISM 1915-1920:

THE PLAYS OF GEORG KAISER

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech

by

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August, 1955
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The kind permission extended by Frau Margarethe Kaiser and Felix Bloch Erben to use the photograph and facsimile of the handwriting as well as to translate the three plays is gratefully acknowledged. A copy of the letter granting permission to translate is included.
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Grämisch man die Männlichkeit, wie wir es heute geworden ist, rational folgen
den Wahn: unwissend unwissend, hier mit dem Beginn und dem Nächstem [Ent-
nehmen bitte] und dem Einpass [Parabelgründstift] ist und höhere Ruhm [Lied-
kömme] und] - unwissend wie ich (ni mit
der rühmlichsten Macht von Männern-
manuskripten, manuskripten, manuskripten, manuskripten)
was hier zu pflügen sei [über die nächsten
Januarmonde]: hysteric. Mithot hysteric-
weise Leichte - nicht Kummer. Mithot hysteric
hysteric.

[sign: Werner]
Examiniert man die Menschheit, wie sie bis heute geworden ist, resultiert folgende Note: unref (dreimal unref). Unref zum Umgang mit dem Nächsten (trotzdem biblisch mit den simpelsten Parabeln gepredigt ist und höchste Stadt- bauten Kirchtürme sind--unref zur Politik (die mit dem primitivsten Mittel von Menschenmassenschlachten pseudoglorios operiert)--unref zur Kunst (man kontrolliert Bühnenspielpläne).


Georg Kaiser
Sehr geehrter Herr Shaw!


Mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung

[Unterschrift]

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Department of Speech
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Ihr Zeichen: 

Der Nachweis vom: 

4.4.55

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ABSTRACT

Dramatic critics and historians have generally acclaimed Georg Kaiser to be the greatest of the German Expressionistic playwrights. It is known that he wrote the largest number of plays of all the dramatists of Expressionism, and that until 1933, his plays were second only to Hauptmann's in number of productions in Germany. In spite of the fact that some of these plays have been done in England and America, only a small number of them are actually known in these countries, because, until the present time, only eight of them have been translated into English. This is an insufficient number for the English reader to determine the true value of Kaiser and to place him properly in theatrical history. There is also a scarcity of criticism available in English, and that which does exist concerns itself largely with From Morn to Midnight and the Gas trilogy. Very few critical works in English cover all of his translated plays to say nothing of his untranslated ones which number over forty.

The purpose of the present study is to present in English three heretofore untranslated plays, which, though quite different from one another, were written during the same period of Kaiser's career. These include the greatest of the Expressionistic comedies, Europa, which is a musical comedy-like fable play; Kaiser's most fully developed romantic play, The Woman's Sacrifice; and the piece said to have been the greatest success in Expressionistic staging,
Hell, Way, Earth. The translations of these plays compose the major portion of this study.

Part one which serves as an introduction to the translations of the plays is made up of six brief chapters. Chapter I presents a definition or description of Expressionism and discusses its origin and development. Chapter II is a biography of Kaiser and includes some comments on his works by German, English, and American critics. Chapter III contains an overview of all of Kaiser's plays, and Chapter IV discusses the New Man theme that recurs in its various forms in all of them. Chapter V discusses in a more detailed way the five previously translated plays which were written between 1915 and 1920, From Morn to Midnight, The Coral, Gas I, Gas II, and The Fire in the Opera House, and the three present translations which came within the same period, Europa, The Woman's Sacrifice, and Hell, Way, Earth. Chapter VI deals with Kaiser's style in these eight plays. Finally, a complete list of Kaiser's published plays, novels, and articles is supplied in an appendix.
INTRODUCTION

Dramatic critics and historians have generally acclaimed Georg Kaiser to be the greatest of the German Expressionistic dramatists. It is known that, of all the playwrights of Expressionism, he wrote the largest number of plays, a total of fifty-nine with eight still unpublished in 1955. It is also known that he rose to popularity with the theatre goers of the principal German cities during the First World War, and that until his works were censored by the Nazi regime in 1933, his plays were second only to Hauptmann's in number of productions in Germany. Some of his works have also been widely played in other countries, including the United States, England, France, Russia, Japan and Spain.

Georg Kaiser has been both praised and blamed for exploiting the theatre to its utmost with his Expressionistic dramas. It is not the purpose of this study to show his value, for in spite of some evidence to the contrary, there can be little doubt concerning his proficiency in handling his medium or of the excellence of his plays.

In the early 1900's when Kaiser began writing plays, the movement later to be known as Expressionism had not really begun. Only the vaguest hints of the revolutionary theatrical movement could be detected in the works of the young writers. Kaiser was among these young writers, and it was his guiding hand that led the movement toward its far-reaching effectiveness. His were well written and thoughtful plays,
if not exactly profound pieces of theatrical literature. They made exciting theatre. By means of his better works, Kaiser led the movement of Expressionism through its brief but brilliant career.

Unfortunately, too few of Kaiser's plays are known in England and America. Of the more than fifty scripts published between 1911 and 1948, only seven have been translated and published in English. Six of these seven plays were written between 1915 and 1920. A total of eighteen plays were published during these six years. It is by far his most prolific period, and his most acclaimed works are among those written between these dates. Of the translations from the period one is a one-act piece; the others are full length plays. The primary purpose of the present work is to translate additional plays from this six-year period. The three plays chosen for translation are Europa, 1915, The Woman's Sacrifice, 1918, and Hell, Way, Earth, 1919. Europa is considered to be the best comedy of Expressionism. The Woman's Sacrifice has been proclaimed the best of Kaiser's romantic plays, and Hell, Way, Earth is cited as having offered the best example of Expressionistic staging. It is surprising that these plays have not heretofore been translated.

The secondary purpose of the study is of a critical nature. Only a small amount of criticism of Kaiser exists in English. An average of about ten pages is to be found in some half dozen works on twentieth century authors. Obviously, none of these is a complete study. Only one dissertation has appeared. It was written by Moses Joseph Fruchter at the University of Pennsylvania in 1933. It is an excellent treatment of Kaiser's style, but it is rather brief, containing less than
one hundred pages. Other sources for the commentary have been the very brief comments from the various standard works on theatrical literature and history.

Part I of the present study consists of a definition of Expressionism with a brief discussion of its sources, purpose and significance; a brief biography of Kaiser; a list of his plays with a statement of theme or idea for as many as could be found; a more detailed discussion of the eight plays of the selected period; and a conclusion dealing with the style and form of the writing and production of the eight plays. Part II is made up of the translations of Europa, The Woman's Sacrifice, and Hell, Way, Earth. Finally, two bibliographies are appended. The first is a complete list of Kaiser's published plays, novels and essays. The second is a selected bibliography of the books used in this study.

Counting the three plays included in this translation, there are now ten plays by Kaiser in English, nine of them full length. There is little reason to hope that any of them will be presented professionally, since only two of his plays have received professional productions in America. From Morn to Midnight was done by the Theatre Guild in 1922, and Gas I was staged at the Goodman Memorial Theatre in 1926. There have been several presentations of some of his plays by educational theatre groups, and it is to these groups that one must look for future offerings. It is to be hoped that these three additional plays may be included in the list of plays to be staged by the more ambitious college and university theatres in America. Such production may stimulate additional translations of Expressionistic dramas. American audiences ought not be denied the privilege of seeing these plays, the themes of which are still timely and the style highly effective in the theatre.
PART I

DISCUSSION
CHAPTER I
DEFINITION

One of the characteristics of German literature is that it tends to fall definitely into "schools," "movements," or "-isms." New theories of expression have usually come as a revolt against a previous one, although in many cases retaining some of its elements. These new theories have often had far reaching influence, not only in Germany but throughout the continent and in America. Among the movements one finds Sturm und Drang, Classicism, Romanticism, Young Germany, Naturalism, Impressionism and Neo-Romanticism. These movements were followed by Expressionism, which covered roughly the years between 1910 and 1924.¹

Samuel and Thomas select the date 1910 as the beginning of Expressionism because it was in that year that there appeared two significant periodicals destined to advance the Expressionistic movement: Die Aktion and Der Sturm. By 1924 the leaders of the movement were convinced that their theories of sociological and religious morality were not to be realized, and the movement died. As schools of writing go, Expressionism lived a relatively short life, but it produced a wealth of exciting literature in poetry, essays, novels and dramas with emphasis on theme rather than plot or character. Its influence has

continued and is being felt at the present time. Dramas as recent as those of Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller show definite influences from Expressionism.

Samuel and Thomas select 1910 as the date of the beginning of Expressionism, but there were signs of its approach much earlier. In the later plays of August Strindberg, such as To Damascus, A Dream Play, and The Spook Sonata one can find many elements of what came to be known as Expressionism. Strindberg might well be called the father of the movement, for he was the first to realize the inadequacies of realism and naturalism and to turn to a more theatrical form of artistic expression. His was probably the strongest influence on the young writers of Germany in the years immediately before and during the First World War.

Another writer who exerted a significant influence, although not so great a one as Strindberg's, was Hauptmann, a German himself, with his dramas of "potential insurgency,"2 The Weavers and The Assumption of Hannele. He was followed by Frank Wedekind, who was even more vehement than Hauptmann in his portrayal of sex and medical and psychological science. Walter Hasenclever came next with still others who are better known. Among this group are found the names of Ernst Toller, Franz Werfel, Reinhard Sorge and Georg Kaiser. It was these men who contributed most to the development of the drama during these years.3


Most of the writers on Expressionism have voiced the opinion that it is a difficult movement to define. They say that it was puzzling to the reviewers at the time, and that the facts are not known even at the present day. Tucker says,

Expressionism is difficult to define . . . . But certain of its general characteristics are plain enough. It starts by taking its material from real life (no matter how far afterward it may transcend this limit), but it aims to distill the very essence of reality and to present it in terms of the universal. Naturally, then, it is chiefly concerned not with phenomena but with ideas and the springs of conduct. Since it pursues its ideas or its passions from the real world into the transcendental, it may place its action on more than one plane of consciousness,—reality passing into dream, finite into infinite, consciousness into subconsciousness, as may be demanded by the varying phases of its dominant idea or the successive moods of its characters. Hence it may start with something resembling realism and finally pass into the wildest phantasmagoria, even within the limits of a single action.4

Gorelik reports that with some writers like Kenneth Macgowan Expressionism represented almost any new trend except the "attenuated Naturalism"5 of the conservatives. Both Macgowan and Selden Cheney have asserted that the aims of the movement were to leave the picture-frame stage in favor of the more presentational stage of the platform. Gorelik agrees with them, for he says, " . . . no definite line can be drawn dividing the activity of the Expressionists from that of the Theatricalists . . . the distinguishing feature of Expressionism would


seem to lie . . . in a symbolism notable for the vehemence of its symbols.\footnote{Ibid.}

Gorelik continues,

Expressionism was historically a movement of insurgent liberals, with standards of abstract justice and a message of good will, . . . In practice the Expressionist longing for a "rationally ordered society based on the Christian ideal of social justice" meant a return to the ideals of the primitive Christian community. This could not be incorporated in the platform of any German political party, since it was unworkable under conditions of mass industry.

The Expressionists felt that man is enslaved to the machine; and that the only solution to this slavery is to abolish industry and return to agriculture. This idea too was unworkable. The social-democratic German government tolerated the Expressionists and even encouraged them, considering their social doctrines harmless. The other German worker's party, the communists, was more critical, maintaining that no constructive return can be made to a primitive society, and that the proposal to abolish industry is destructive and defeatist.\footnote{Ibid., p. 251 f.}

Samuel and Thomas\footnote{Samuel and Thomas, p. 13 f.} have observed that there was a special branch of Expressionism known as Activism. It was this group which was concerned primarily with social and political reform. The outlook of the Activists inclined toward rationalism, and they were somewhat more optimistic than the true Expressionists, who in turn were more particularly concerned with a search for God.

The basis of Expressionistic drama is Activistic. It proclaims an idea, that of the New Man and of a New Humanity, which is to be no longer subjected to the
limitations of State and nation, of society and traditional laws, and which is to be transformed into a community of love, goodness and peace. The human soul is to be freed from the fetters of conventionality, and love is to be the ruling principle in personal relationships and the social order. In the Expressionistic drama, Man is depicted as caught in the meshes of the imperfections of the world. Consequently, he conceives the idea of a higher form of existence, that is to say, his "soul" awakens. He experiences this idea and suffers through it, and either leads it to victory or proclaims its ultimate victory.9

Still other writers have defined and described Expressionism in other terms. Clark and Freedley have said that Expressionism is . . . the language of the new generation which, during World War I, learned to disbelieve in the simplicity of human destiny, as naturalism saw it and as new romanticism painted it. Now the drama is to become the expression of all spiritual powers, and the dramatis personae are no longer mere characters but super-realistic, the intensified expression of human nature.10

Moses explains that Expressionism . . . is nearer a scenario suggestion than a well knit play when it is used for dramatic effectiveness. It is the score of rhythm, of motion, of color, of design. The Expressionistic play is a reality and a phantasmagoria. . . . Expressionism is, in fact, an orchestration.11

John Mason Brown says that these dramas . . . offered new examples of construction, more marked in their tendencies and aggressive in their individuality

9Ibid., p. 60.
than the first steps of their forerunners had been, definite enough in fact to warrant the tag which their common characteristics won for them. They came as dramas of disillusionment, of social unrest and tormented mortals.  

Gassner says,

Pessimism was, in truth, the dominant note of those Expressionists who revealed any maturity as artists. . . [They] looked out upon a crumbling world, and one can hardly be surprised if their writing hand shook with anxiety.  

Macgowan says that to penetrate "... the basic stratum of man's psyche ... I take it, is the purpose of Expressionism."  

Gassner again comments that Expressionism

... called for the presentation of inner states rather than outer reality, as well as for the distortion of the latter by the inner eye. This type of drama was in the first instance defiantly and flagrantly subjective, and it capitalized personal disillusionment and revolt. In more objective forms it could also be imaginative rather than completely distorted by the creator's ego. . .  

And Seldon Cheney in 1917 reported,

The trend is toward the emotional-crisis play as against the thought play, toward intensity of feeling as against likeness to outward life and truthfulness of detail, toward looseness of technique as against formulas.

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13 Gassner, p. 489.


15 Gassner, p. 485.

Later Cheney was quoted by Moses in his definition of Expressionism:

"I consider Expressionism to be that movement in art which transfers the emphasis from technical display and imitated surface aspects of nature to creative form; from descriptive and representative truth to intensified emotional expressiveness; from objective to subjective and abstract formal qualities."\(^{17}\)

From these various definitions and descriptions one would conclude that Expressionism is that movement by a group of liberals, who felt enslaved by the machine, who did not believe in the simplicity of human destiny and who tried to express their aggressive individuality and penetrate man's psyche through a scenario-like play filled with pessimism and characterized by emphasis on theme instead of outward reality, plot or character.

As one might expect in a theatre producing plays with these ideas, there was a wonderful opportunity for the designer and other technicians. "In fact," Gassner says, "many . . . scenic designers . . . were frequently more successful in justifying Expressionism than were the playwrights."\(^{18}\)

The production of Expressionistic plays generally depended heavily on properties and set pieces that were suggestive rather than specific and that were picked out of a void of blackness by shafts of light. Such productions were relatively inexpensive, but they were none the less artistic. The backgrounds were usually symbolic of the

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\(^{17}\)Moses, p. 133.

\(^{18}\)Gassner, p. 486.
state of mind of the principal characters. The symbol then changed with each brief scene. With such important, "emphatic" production, authors like Kaiser, Werfel and Toller in Germany and the Capek brothers in Czechoslovakia made theatrical history. Elements of the design from Expressionistic plays have come down to the present. Among these are distorted perspective and violent unreality in color, line and mass used for the emotional effect.
CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHY

Among the modern German playwrights of Expressionism Georg Kaiser was a significant and original force. Chandler\(^1\) characterizes him as an idealist of fecund imagination, a socialist who exposed flaws in the present social order, an innovator in techniques, and a creator of a new, free drama designed to make people think. When he is at his best his plots are apologues and his characters types. He is more concerned with general problems of social and moral significance than with concrete psychology. To Kaiser the mind and the spirit are of prime importance and are being threatened by the machines of industry, lust for money, and welfare. He works on his themes through symbols used schematically and makes no effort to portray life realistically. In thought he was influenced by Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, but he was "... more of an Expressionist than the former and more of an optimist than the latter."\(^2\)

There is probably not another modern writer of similar talent and productivity concerning whose life so little is known as that of Georg Kaiser. M. J. Fruchter in his dissertation on Kaiser's work explains this fact in these words:


\(^2\)Ibid.
This is due primarily to the man's reluctance to speak of himself, to his strong disinclination to give of his intimate life to the public, to his complete and consistent avoidance of the floodlights in the warmth of which many lesser literary personalities delight in baski

The only autobiographical note that has appeared is one in Das Literarische Echo, which is Fruchter's chief source. In it Kaiser states that he was born on November 25, 1878, in Magdeburg, was the next to the youngest of six brothers in the family of Friederich Kaiser, a merchant. He attended school in a convent but had only unpleasant memories of it. Upon graduation he tried business, presumably with his father, for three years. He spent an additional three years in Buenos Aires. The South American climate, however, brought on an illness, and he returned to Germany by way of Spain and Italy. In 1903 at Magdeburg, at the age of twenty-five, he wrote his first play, Rektor Kleist. He called it "a tragi-comedy of sickness and longing." It was not published until 1918.

He was married in the year 1908 and lived in Seehelm an der Bergstrasse. In 1911 he moved to the winter-house in Weimar. Subsequently he lived in Tutzing and in Munich. In mentioning this latter residence, Fruchter probably refers to the year Kaiser spent in the Munich jail, about which more will be said later. From the early twenties to the time of Hitler's coming to power, Kaiser, his wife and three children lived near Erkner and in Berlin.

He spent most of his time on the education of his children, and rarely troubled to attend even the premiers of his own plays. Since

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his plays were not popular with the Nazis, Kaiser left Germany to spend
the rest of his life in Switzerland, where he died as a destitute
refugee, July 5, 1945.

Fruchter remarks that "Kaiser [was] a man of many paradoxes."\(^4\)
He states that Kaiser was known to have been literally starving at the
same time he was living in a luxurious villa in Tutzing, to have sub-
scribed 20,000 marks for a Landauer memorial when he was almost desti-
tute, and to have used up his enormous income to pay extravagant debts.

The greatest of the paradoxes in the life of Kaiser, however,
was his trial and the events leading up to it in February, 1921. Most
of the details concerning the whole matter have been covered in mystery.
It is known that on principle he misappropriated the rugs and furniture
of a villa, likely the one at Tutzing so that he and his family could
continue to live in the way they had formerly been accustomed, that he
was arrested and tried. At the trial he defended himself in an admir-
able and extraordinary manner, but nevertheless he was found guilty and
sentenced to serve a term in jail.

Contrary to expectation, one finds little in his plays that
can be traced to this experience. There are possibly some indications
of the situation in Noli me tangere, but there is nothing that appears
to be a retelling of the actual experience. However, he seems to have
come nearer in this play using events from his own life than in any
other one.

The production of Europa, in the Reinhardt Theatre, which was
running at the time of his imprisonment, seems to have benefited greatly

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 15.
from the circumstances. Felix Emmel in his Das Ekstatische Theater reports that the trial and imprisonment of the playwright, which was being covered in the press, was making of Europa in its initial performances a real, fashionable sensation. Everyone wanted to be seen at the play. He says there was "A real concert of front door keys" among the population. They seem to have come to the theatre to cause or see the riot. There were whispers growing to howls, screams, shouts, stamping of feet by those who were in opposition to Kaiser, and raving applause from his supporters.

It was never clear whether the boos and the applause were for the play or the playwright, but the production was a financial success. Kaiser's plays were almost always successful, and during his peak years his annual income from royalties was well over a half-million marks. However, there was always a division of opinion concerning him, and it has continued in the criticism about him since. Drake says, "Georg Kaiser is exclusively a dramatist of ideas, and a strenuous crusader for those ideas." Gorelik counters by saying, "Vehemence more than logical thesis is the key to the plays of Georg Kaiser, Expressionism's best-known playwright." Then Clark and Freedley say, "An abundant talent of extraordinary scope is that of Georg Kaiser . . . who has

5Felix Emmel, Das Ekstatische Theater (Prien: Kampmann und Schnabel Verlag, 1924), pp. 280-284.
6Ibid., p. 280.
written about forty Expressionistic plays of the most precise intellectual type."9

Fruchter has summed up the negative critics, who have accused Kaiser of being

... deficient in what is doubtless the most essential element of all significant literature, namely true human warmth, sincere interest in human life, consequently lacking in poetry, in lyricism; above all, the harshest of indictments, as lacking in a central philosophy of life, a definite attitude to the problems of existence.10

But Gorelik speaks of his "... tender, romantic love for humanity,"11 and Drake says that Kaiser is

... a man who has felt life bitterly without having lost his faith in life, but who has arrived at certain disturbing convictions with regard to the present course of human society. Perhaps the strongest impression which one has after reading the whole medley of Kaiser's plays, is that their author is a man who knows almost more than is decent of the meanness of his fellow-creatures, but loves them all with an impetuous commiseration that transcends finite judgment.12

Kaiser has been variously described as a dramatist of uneven abilities, a trickster attracting attention and advancing himself, a man of scattered interests, a literary Janus, a dramatic juggler, a skillful craftsman in exploiting the possibilities of the stage, a dealer in problems, an eccentric stylist, a dramatic mechanic, and a

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10Fruchter, p. 3.
11Gorelik, p. 250.
12Drake, p. 89.
cinematographic author, and of having a talent half-reliable, half-opportunist. Almost every critic, however, before he has concluded, has been forced to give an affirmative criticism as in the following:

... Kaiser wrote memorable, if by no means great drama. His inability to create full-blooded characters and his chronic sensationalism would have relegated him to a speedy oblivion but for the fact that he put his shortcomings to effective use when he conveyed the hollowness and mechanization of the post-war era.13

By more favorable critics he has been described as most effective, most popular, a gifted dramatist steeped in the routine of the theatre, a daring pioneer, skillful in the symmetrical handling of symbol, and the leader of the school of German experimentors. Even his failures are described as interesting.

The argument which began with his first plays continues, and one may ask with Felix Emmel, "Who is right?" 14


14Emmel, p. 281.
CHAPTER III
OVERVIEW OF KAISER'S WORK

The literary output of Georg Kaiser has been held as little short of remarkable by numerous writers. During the forty years from the date of his first writing until his death he published fifty-one plays, two novels and ten articles. The principal interest here is in the plays. These have wide variety in style and content. One type Kaiser employed in his early writings was the burlesque of history and legend. Die Jüdische Witwe, 1911, is a parody of the Biblical story of Judith and Holofernes. To Kaiser Judith is an adventuress who thinks the youthful Nebuchadnezzar is more desirable than the uncouth Holofernes. But when she is promoted to priestess for beheading the latter, she discovers in the high priest a lover even more to her liking.

Kaiser turned from burlesque to a more serious handling of a legendary story in König Hahnrei, 1913. This play deals in a melodramatic way with the Tristan and Isolde legend.

From English legend Kaiser turned to Greek mythology for his next play, Europa, 1915. In this play he parodied the dance fever then at its height and used the legend of Europa and the bull to satirize an effeminate civilization. In the end his characters come to believe that "Real life is the strong life, and the strongest is the best."

A second Greek play, relying more on history than legend however, is Der gerette Alkibiades, 1920. It contrasts the handsome warrior of
the title with the old and ugly philosopher, Socrates. The latter
unwittingly rescues the former from his pursuers and is awarded a
victory wreath, which he scorns. This action intrigues Alkibiades,
for he sees in Socrates a man who has contempt for those things which
the world holds of great importance. Alkibiades follows Socrates'
leadership and shatters an image of Hermes as a gesture of contempt
for those things which he once held to be of value. When the people
see his sacrilegious action they blame Socrates for corrupting him and
condemn Socrates to drink the hemlock.

A further treatment of historical materials is in Gilles und
Jeanne, 1923, a tragedy concerning Joan of Arc; the comedy concerning
George Sand and her literary lovers, Die Flucht nach Venedig, 1923,
and Kaiser's most successful play based on history, the romantic Die
Bürger von Calais, 1914. The last play tells the story of the sacri-
ifice of his life by Eustace de Saint Pierre for the city of Calais.
Kaiser has in this play taken a firm step in the direction of Expres-
sionism, for here he has made the harbor works that the citizens are
striving to protect serve as a symbol of the civilization which must
be preserved at any cost.

Kaiser condemned war in another play of historic background,
Die Lederköpfe, 1928. It is a bitter denunciation. The distorted
features of the Field Commander become a symbol of the bestiality of
war and its degradation of humanity. In scene after scene as Die
Lederköpfe progresses, the brutality of war, its senseless outrages,
its evil powers, its lies and its treachery are clearly shown. Die
Lederköpfe and Die Bürger von Calais present the negative and the
positive aspects of war. The former undertakes to show the great crime against humanity, while the latter assumes it necessary in order that Eustace de Saint Pierre and his followers may form their wise and humane conclusion.

Romantic plays in the mood of Die Bürger von Calais are three one act pieces, Claudius, 1911, Friedrich und Anna, 1911, and Juana, 1911; and the full length The Woman's Sacrifice (Das Frauenopfer), 1918. These four plays all have to do with infidelity. In Claudius a knight returning to his castle finds that his wife has been disloyal. He kills her and the person who should have guarded her and burns the castle down. By contrast Friedrich und Anna shows a forgiving bridegroom who refuses to kill his rival who boasts of having once possessed the bride. Rather he entertains the rival because he has taught the lady so well the meaning of passion. Juana, which is the best play of the three, portrays a wife who, believing her husband dead, marries his friend. The first husband returns. She then learns that the two men have agreed that whichever of them she shall ask to drink with her shall accept from her hand a cup of secretly poisoned wine. She takes it herself in order not to destroy the friendship of the two men.

Feminine self-denial is more fully developed in The Woman's Sacrifice. In this play a wife aids her husband's escape from prison by exchanging clothing with him and taking his place. She endures every outrage imaginable from the Gendarmes only to have her husband accuse her of encouraging them when she is at last released from prison. In order to rescue him a second time, she again puts on his clothes so that the Gendarmes who have followed her to arrest him shoot her rather than him. He at last realizes the sacrificial love she has for him as she
says to him with her last breath, "You ought—to live—loved—beyond death—loved—.”

In a play written much later, Rosamunde Floris, 1940, Kaiser returned to the romantic play and a variation of the infidelity theme. It is most extravagant in its horror, for Rosamunde, while separated from her lover William, discovers she is pregnant. She entices a young man from the garret and attempts to seduce him. He leaps from a window and dies. She goes to his parents with the story of his affair with her. To preserve the good name of the family, a brother breaks his engagement and marries her. She becomes ill and is nursed by the brother’s former sweetheart, who discovers the truth. Rosamunde kills her, and when her husband learns of her crimes she poisons him. At last when the baby arrives, she drowns it, is apprehended and confesses her murders to the police. She is sent to the guillotine without telling of the lover, William, or why she drowned the child.

In the plays thus far discussed one can find little if anything that one would not expect from the conventional writer of the early Twentieth century. The plays are all either realistically or romantically written farces, comedies and dramas. It must be kept in mind that even though these plays represent one phase of Kaiser’s work, they do not all come in the same period of his life. They are significant and many of them have made effective theatre, but Kaiser made his most distinctive contribution to the theatre with his Expressionistic plays. In the later plays the ideas are more important than the surface reality, and very often proper psychological motivation is ignored in favor of the advancement of the central idea or thesis. Such plays are symbolic,
abstract, and theatrical. Scenes follow one another episodically rather than after the pattern of the well-made play. Action is supplied by characters who are types rather than well rounded individuals. Action, dialogue, direction, design—in fact the total production—takes on a stylized form. In some of the plays, of course, some semblance of reality is still present, as in The Fire in the Opera House, (Der Brand im Opernhaus), 1919, Kolportage, 1924, and Nebeneinander, 1923, but it almost entirely disappears in such pieces as From Morn to Midnight (Von morgens bis mitternachts), 1916, the Gas trilogy (Die Koralle, 1917, Ges erster Teil, 1918, and Gas zweiter Teil), 1920 and Hell, Way, Barth (Hölle Weg Erde), 1919.

The Fire in the Opera House is another erotic play like The Woman's Sacrifice. It deals with infidelity, but it is much less realistic in its techniques. In this play a nobleman, after leading a life of worldly pleasure, has married a young innocent girl, and has retired with her to his suburban house. He discovers that she has been unfaithful, and in order to redeem herself in his eyes she goes back to the fire to be burned alive. She and the King's Mistress exchange identities by her wearing the ring of the Mistress, who had already died in the fire.

The exchange of personality through the possession of a trinket occurs in another play The Coral (Die Koralle), the first play in the famous Gas trilogy. Here a man who has been deprived by poverty of a happy childhood takes on the personality of his secretary, who is his physical double. He kills the Secretary and wears a piece of coral that the Secretary always carried to distinguish him from his master the Billionaire. The entire play is a representation of life as an attempt
to get away from starvation. In his childhood the Billionaire had suffered physical hunger; then he fought against the world to keep his family from ever being hungry. In the end, when his Son and Daughter have deserted him for the masses whom their father mistreats and despises, he turns again to himself and hungers for the remembered happiness of youth that he never knew. Poverty and wealth are contrasted most effectively in the second act, which takes place aboard ship. The wealthy family and friends of the Billionaire sit in the tropical sun on the deck of the luxurious yacht while the crew suffocates from the intense heat of the boiler room only a few inches beneath their feet.

In the second play of the trilogy, *Gas I (Gas erster Teil)*, the Billionaire's son continues the action. Here Kaiser shows a capitalistic system in which men are reduced to only hands or feet to operate a machine, or eyes to look at a dial. The Billionaire's son tries to get the workers to see the dilemma they are in. He tries to persuade them to leave the factory that has been destroyed in an inevitable explosion, because it is a symbol of industry and of the machine, which has become more powerful than humanity. The people refuse to listen to him and take as their leader the Engineer, though they had previously demanded that he be fired. The government finally steps in in order to put the workers back on the job, for the all important gas is needed in the defense plants. The Billionaire's son pleads for mankind, but the workers and the representative of the government will not listen. When in desperation he asks where is the humanity in man, his widowed daughter answers, "I will give him birth."

The spark of hope that remained at the end of the *Gas I* is extinguished in *Gas II (Gas zweiter Teil)*. The great-grandson of the
Billioaire, called the Billionaire Worker, carries the story on. The factory has been rebuilt and the Workers are turning out an improved product for the carrying on of warfare. The factory is filled with the very old, the very young and the weaklings, who are producing a fresh form of energy. Word comes of the enemy attack, and there are many who would join the attackers in order to stop the horror of war. The Billionaire Worker leads the pacifists and the Engineer leads the militarists. The former pleads for the people not to resist evil with evil, but the latter had discovered a new and more deadly form of gas, and they plan to establish a new empire through the threat of violence. To avoid that alternative, the Billionaire Worker takes the red ball that contains the deadly gas and breaks it in the midst of the workers, so that through destroying their bodies their souls may live.

Of the three plays, the last is the most skeleton-like in its scarcity of language and its barrenness of plot. What it lacks in these elements of drama it makes up in its use of symbol and exclamatory cries.

Not so significant a play as those in the Gas trilogy, but interesting nevertheless, for both its theme and style, is the strange play Gats, 1925. Here a fantastic fable is used to present Kaiser's philosophy. Because of the overcrowding of certain areas of the world, a man leads an expedition into less populated regions and discovers an ideal community where overcrowding is eliminated by the adults taking a powder called Gats, which renders them sterile. He is rebuked when he returns to his home with it, for men and women desire children, even if they cannot afford them or provide for them. The poor, who are deprived of so many of the pleasures of the world, will at least hold fast to the one pleasure of having children. The techniques of this
play are similar to those of the Expressionistic plays. Here is an impossible story, with abstractions, rhythmic dialogue, colored lights, and the rattle of machine guns. A more simple story would probably have made a better play.

Kaiser's sympathy with the poor and his belief in the evil of money appear in his Hell, Way, Earth (Hölle Weg Erde). Here an artist is shocked because a lady of fortune will not help his friend, who is in need, rather than buy some trinkets in the jewelry store. After he has tried all means at his disposal only to be rebuked, he commits a crime to stop her purchase and is thrown in prison. In the prison he learns to love humanity, and at the end of his imprisonment he comes back as a messiah with a message of salvation for the world. Crowds follow him, including those who had refused to listen to him before, and at last he sets up a kingdom of heaven on earth, where each person loves his fellow man, and where each feels his responsibility for his brother's good.

In From Morn to Midnight (Von morgens bis mitternachts) Kaiser strikes again at the evils of society and finds them as productive of tragedy and death as in the Gas trilogy. In this play he exploits the idea that man is an automaton. He presents a bank clerk who has been turned into a calculating machine by the routine around him. When a temptation arises and the clerk takes 60,000 marks from the bank, he runs through the entire day in the search for happiness and in the end discovers that nothing money can buy is worth having. In despair he commits suicide.

The uncertainty of a man who has broken his routine is considered in another play, Kanzlist Krehler, 1922. After celebrating
the marriage of his daughter, Krehler is given a holiday by his em-
ployer. Since it is the first time such a thing has happened, he does
not know what to do. He is uncertain of the way home. When he reaches
it, things there are out of place because of the wedding, and his
daughter, who has always welcomed him home, is not there. In despair
he resigns his position, kills his son-in-law and then kills himself.
Unlike the clerk of *From Morn to Midnight*, Krehler was unable to live
for even one day.

After the early 1920's Kaiser discontinued the use of the
Expressionistic techniques that had characterized the best of his plays
and returned to a more realistic style. His basic philosophy did not
change, however, and even some of his characteristic touches, like the
use of a person's double, continued to appear in his plays. It is to
be remembered that some of these plays now to be considered were written
during and even before the time of the Expressionistic and romantic ones.

Among the earliest plays that Kaiser wrote can be seen elements
of his later Expressionistic dramas. In *David und Goliath*, 1920, a
story of the outwitting of a wealthy and greedy town brewer by an in-
ocent bank-clerk, the easily distinguishable form of the bank-cashier
of *From Morn to Midnight* can be seen. Both clerks are ready to give up
their secure positions for a mere chance. Neither of them has anything
but contempt for money, and both of them are longing for a better life.
In *David und Goliath* the criticism of society comes through the satiri-
cal approach to the characters, and in order to show certain evils of
society, Kaiser has to invent a villain who presents these weaknesses.
In two more of the plays that are of the more realistic type, Kaiser has used the Doppelgänger theme of *The Fire in the Opera House* and *The Coral*. These two plays are *Zwei Krawatten*, 1930, and *Zweimal Oliver*, 1926. The titles themselves are clues to the themes. *Zwei Krawatten* shows the rebellion of one person against the sham and empty show of the world. In a society where distinctions are simply a matter of external objects, it seems that the exchanges of a black bow tie for a white one will change the hero from a servant into a gentleman. In the end he returns to the knowledge that true happiness is possible without riches.

*Zweimal Oliver* is the story of a vaudeville actor whose act consists of a rapid change of costume and character. He is employed by a lady to impersonate her lover who had disappeared. He does so and falls in love with her. When the lover returns, Oliver shoots him. The police believe they have a simple case of murder because of jealousy. But Oliver, since the death of the lover, has considered himself dead. Believing that he has come to judgment day, he confesses his suicide to a doctor as to God. The situation is improbable, the characters are not well developed, and the ten scenes of the play are lacking in unity, but the play is effective and interesting in that it shows how Kaiser held on to the Expressionistic ideas and techniques after others had abandoned them.

Two of Kaiser's early plays were realistic ones which dealt with the problems of the schools. *Der Fall des Schülers Vehgesack*, 1914, is a comedy in which a student, Vehgesack, becomes through no planning of his own an immature Don Juan. He is contrasted with the men at the head of the school, who are a bloodless, foolish, undignified group.
The wife of one of the professors becomes pregnant by Vehgesack, but in the delay caused by the effort of the men to keep the name of the school clean and remove Vehgesack from the school on some other charge, events take a change for the better and it is the professor who is dismissed.

In Rektor Kleist, 1918, the hypocrisy that is apparent in Der Fall des Schülers Vehgesack is even more strongly shown, for this is a more serious play. Kleist and Kornmuller, two instructors, are contrasted, Kleist representing the cowardly and false side of human nature and Kornmuller the strong and fine, although blunt, side. A student, torn between loyalties to the Master, Kleist, and the truth concerning an act of Kleist done in haste, commits suicide rather than make a choice in the matter.

Others of Kaiser's plays are perhaps less significant as theatrical literature, but are interesting nevertheless in showing his experiments with realistic drama. The characters are drawn in the round for the most part and the plots resemble those of the old theatre. There are comedies of character such as Der Zentauro, 1916, which laughs at a timid man's infatuation with a servant girl; comedies of situation like Die Sorina, 1917, which is an attack on provincialism, its tyranny, its stupidity, its lewdness, its lack of principle--in fact its lack of civilization. Provincial hypocrisy and ambition are seen in the realm of public office in Der Präsident, 1927. A lawyer tries to win prestige and later public office through the exploitation of an idea he discovered in the papers of a deceased client. The idea has to do with the organization of an international society for the suppression of white slavery. His daughter approves of the idea but not the motive of her
father. With two thieves, whom she takes for friends, she is ready to run away to carry on the idea herself. At the same time she hopes to punish her father, that through his suffering and privation he may be able to see the true light. Again there is Der Geist der Antik, 1923, whose hero is an archeologist concentrating on the building of a better mouse trap; and the playful comedy, Der mutige Seefahrer, 1926, turning on the idea that life is an illusion. In a more serious vein the poet asks a question of ethics in Die Versuchung, 1917: Does a woman have the right to have a child by a man for whom she cares nothing if her husband is unable to give her one?

Turning to a more exotic play which has a fine blend of reality and imagination, Kaiser draws in Der Protagonist a somber picture. Entranced by his profession as a pantomimist, the Protagonist has impressions of life that become reality to him. During one of his pantomimes he at first approves of his sister's lover only to turn as the scene changes and stab his sister. Here is shown a situation in which ideas become the dynamic forces in life.

Three plays of a more realistic nature are Kolportage, 1924, Nebeneinander, 1923, and Noli me tangere, 1922. In the first Kaiser shows a child of noble birth exchanged for a child of the people brought up in a democracy, then returned to face the one reared as an aristocrat. Kaiser shows that humanity and true nobility are not the birthright of the privileged few. He says that the New Humanity will act with true human impulses, that man's good works are in a large degree results of his social condition, and that human nature is not evil from birth, but that it is ruined by poverty and other externalities.
In *Nebeneinander* he portrays a satire on the lack of concern of most people for the welfare of others. A conscientious pawnbroker discovers in a dress coat a letter indicating that a jilted lover will commit suicide. In an effort to stop the suicide he puts the coat on so that he may be admitted to a fashionable casino. He is arrested for appropriating the property of another, has his license revoked and finally is driven to suicide himself. In the meantime the separated pair have each found new lovers. How absurd then, Kaiser says, is one's concern for the welfare of others!

The only play that shows scenes which one might take as autobiographical appear in the third of the realistic plays *Noli me tangere*. It takes place in the common room of a prison. The characters with the exception of the guards are known only by numbers. Number 16 is imprisoned for riding a train without a ticket, which he claims to have misplaced. When the ticket is found he offers to change clothing with Number 15, a poet, who does not know the reason for his imprisonment (the viewpoint taken by Kaiser when he was in jail). Number 5, however, betrays them and then, recognizing in the face of Number 16 the countenance of Christ, hangs himself as a second Judas. Kaiser here is showing sympathy for the victim of social injustice and making clear that each person is responsible in a world made up of individuals. In this sense Kaiser believes the Savior is able to take the sins of the world on himself.

In another passive hero similar to Number 16 of *Noli me tangere* Kaiser in *Der Silbersee*, 1933, shows Olim attempting to feed the hungry mouths of the world and in that way to make a better world. He believes in man's obligation to live.
The theme of the condemnation of modern civilization that appears in *From Morn to Midnight* and the *Gaa* trilogy is seen in an American setting in the play *Mississippi*, 1930. It takes place in the Mississippi valley above New Orleans, where a community has developed a cult of fantastic and moral religion. It has as its aim the reform of the whole world and the redemption of all mankind. It is at the same time anti-social and destructive. The hero's death in the end does not mean the destruction of the cult, however, for his disciples have been sent out to spread the gospel.

The relation of Kaiser with Pirandello is seen in several of Kaiser's realistic plays. In these plays Kaiser discusses the reality of the world of ideas. In *The Phantom Lover* (*Oktoberstag*), 1928, the heroine is a native, romantic girl who falls in love with a soldier who is quite unconscious of her. She follows him to the opera and to church, and at night, after dreaming of him, permits the butcher boy's advances. Afterward when she says the soldier is the father of the child, he protests his innocence in the matter but is flattered to think that such a lady has dreamed of him as her lover and offers to marry her. The butcher boy, who has resorted to blackmail, is then killed by the girl's uncle. The improbabilities of the situation are of little importance since the attention is focused on the theme, that belief determines reality.

A continuation of the reality-of-idea theme is seen in *Die Papiermühle*, 1927, a triangle play that unlike several others of Kaiser's plays ends pleasantly. Here he shows the relationship between a selfish man and his wife, who has a real and sensitive appreciation of human values. The husband cannot see them but the poet recognizes
them quickly. The latter persuades the husband to get a divorce so that the pair matched spiritually and mentally as well as physically may marry. In another, but less valuable comedy, Hellseherei, 1929, the love triangle is solved by the reconciliation of the wife and husband.

The well known plays of Kaiser, From Morn to Midnight, The Coral, Gas I, Gas II, do not provide the English reader with a very broad knowledge of Kaiser's scope in writing both as far as style and theme are concerned. Only a slightly broader view may be had by reading all the plays of Kaiser heretofore available in English: The Fire in the Opera House, The Phantom Lover and Juana. The three additional ones translated here, Europa, The Woman's Sacrifice, and Hall,Way,Earth, give a play based on legend, one of the romantic plays to go with the one-act Juana, and one more Expressionistic piece. With these ten plays, a somewhat broader although far from complete view of Kaiser and his works is possible.
CHAPTER IV

THE THEME OF THE NEW MAN

The Expressionistic movement, which grew up so quickly in the years just before the First World War, came as a revolt against Neo-Romanticism, its blind optimism, and its cult of nature worship. With the feeling of crisis and impending doom developing in Europe during the first years of the Twentieth century, some writers and other artists began to think more about the individual and his role in society, his obligations and responsibilities, as well as his privileges. Among the half dozen most important writers of Expressionism the name of Georg Kaiser appears as the chief exponent of the movement, not only in number of plays written, but also in their quality as effective theatre pieces.

In an overview of Kaiser's work as well as a look at the brief notes he has made concerning his beliefs, one finds that he was influenced by certain works and authors. He found in various works of the past a spiritual kinship which comes to light in his own works. To this group of influences belong the Bible, Greek literature, Dante, Sturm und Drang movement, Strindberg, Wedekind, Hauptmann, and those writers whom Kaiser himself claims as his chief inspirers: Schopenhauer, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Plato and Hölderlin.

From these sources Kaiser took his own philosophy. Gorelik says that Kaiser liked to think of himself as an apostle of energy and quotes him as follows:
Energy is the driving force of the world. Without energy there is nothing. Sentiment, pity, romance are only the refuge of the weak, who must inevitably go down. The unfortunate are hindrances. Go out into the world and see what men really are. They are brutal, self-seeking, egotistical, heartless, energetic. It is only through will power that injustice and stupidity can be done away with.¹

From this quotation one can sense the seriousness of his ideas and can imagine that there will be more serious plays from his pen than comic ones. That pessimism should pervade his work is not to be dismissed, but he was also able to write exceedingly effective comedies. It is in these comedies, along with some of the more optimistic of his Expressionistic plays, that one finds his tender, almost romantic love for humanity, mixed with his Nietzsche-like attempts to be rough and hard-boiled.

There have been divergent opinions about whether he had a philosophy underlying his work. Among the critics who were his contemporaries, Riemann, von der Leyen, Mahrholz, Bab, and others have found him lacking in such a philosophy. On the other hand, in fine appreciative criticisms, Max Freyhan and Hugo F. Koenigsgarten have found the opposite to be true. Fruchter paraphrases their criticisms as follows:

... within the apparent diversity Kaiser shows clearly singleness of purpose, and ... with rare exceptions, his works point to a definite philosophy of life underlying the treatment of each theme, no matter how widely separated some of them appear.²


When Kaiser's prolific output of literature is considered from the outward appearance only and without looking carefully within the plays themselves, one would be likely to think that his works did not come from a profound philosophy of life. One would rather believe that he must be a man of many themes all related, perhaps feebly, to a common idea or style. After a careful reading of the plays available in English of the period from 1915 to 1920, and of available criticism of them together with criticism of the other plays still untranslated, it seems evident that the common thread that runs throughout his works has to do with the individual's moral responsibility in society, both in his public and private relations with his fellow man. It should be noted that other of the contemporaries of Kaiser held similar views, Toller being the best known. This group of writers, bound by this common idea, were called the Activists, since their philosophy not only posed a question but offered what to them at least seemed a possible and profitable answer.

It was the Expressionists that drove through the individual to the social conscience, and so it is logical that the most typical and necessary idea in their work would be concerned with man's conscience or the ethical theme. Fruchter states that in Kaiser's article "Dichtung und Energie" are found certain passages that make it appear that Kaiser was preeminently a prophet of Platonic perfection posing the proposition that happiness consists in a development of all human characteristics and that the root of all social evil is society's unwillingness to further this effort. Fruchter quotes Kaiser as follows:
'Man,' he says, 'is perfect from the beginning. He is, so to speak, a finished product from the very moment of his birth. The limitations to which he finally succumbs are not part of his inner nature,' but 'imposed upon him from without, as a result of the distorted forms to which his destiny is subjected.'

Fruchter continues that this theory, then cleanses the individual of guilt in his own destiny and puts the responsibility on the imperfect social organization that forces him from his perfection. He asserts that nature endowed him with choice, which causes him to make faulty decisions. The tragedy of the man designed by nature to live a harmonious life lies in the fact that he is thrown off his course. Since he is unable to find himself again, he is condemned to slow and relentless disintegration of his soul, and to living without hope for personal happiness.

From this it is not difficult to understand that the Billionaire of The Coral and the Cashier of From Morn to Midnight are doomed inevitably from the beginning. This is one of the principal, if not the most important, theme of most of Kaiser's plays to be discussed. The unequal struggle of the world's social system, which is without feelings for humanity and the individual with his feeble cries can result only in destruction. There can be no hope for release from the grip of this mechanical system except in death. The only conceivable situation in which the hero of a piece could triumph would be in a society which was ready for a change, and which was waiting for the Messiah to come to give it the message of salvation. That situation

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3Ibid., p. 8.
occurs in only two of the eight plays to be discussed here. They are *Europa* and *Hell, Way, Earth*. In both these plays the situation has become so desperate that the social order is doomed until the hero rises to take over the reins of leadership. As a result these two plays are comedies in the sense that they have happy or at least optimistic endings. The other six plays without exception end with no more than a half hope, if even that. Most find their resolution in the death of the person who dared to place himself in the dangerous position of the reformer of society.

If one is to understand Kaiser's condemnation of his society, one must first comprehend the system of ethics by which he judged that society. Fruchter has explained the basis of the system in a few sentences. First, the principle of the moral obligation of the individual lies at the foundation of the system. This idea begins in the very early plays and continues to grow in importance and clarity through all of Kaiser's writings. It reaches its height with the children of the Billionaire in the plays of the *Gas* trilogy and in the character of the Stroller in *Hell, Way, Earth*. If one carries the sense of moral responsibility one step further, it becomes his second principle, the sense of the guilt of the individual. Since he belongs to the common group, he must accept the guilt of all. There is no exemption from it. These ideas represent aspects of Kaiser's

... dynamic conception of social Ethics. If society is a collective body composed of individuals, the whole cannot transcend its units of composition. This is one of the strongest tenets of Kaiser's moral philosophy. As in Greek tragedy, man bears upon his shoulders the guilt in the commission of which he may have had no definitely direct part. But what in Greek tragedy was
the sin of the fathers, a fatalistic curse, becomes in Kaiser the sin of society, consequently an outgrowth of human factors and thus controllable by force of reason. The transcendent divine force of Greek tragedy is in Kaiser devoid of any theological or metaphysical connotation; it is the recognition of the universality of man and of the interdependence of individuals on the one hand, and of the individual and society on the other.4

The opposite of Kaiser's principle of positive ethics is the principle of negative morality that is present in society. Kaiser feels that the suffering of mankind is due to the lack of a sense of responsibility of the individuals making up that society. It may be due to ignorance, indifference, or even meanness, but it remains the chief sin of the day. It is not recognized as a sin by society; in fact the practice of it is approved, for society refuses to accept the sin of omission. It will punish a man for an outward crime, but there is no reprimand for him if he stands by while some other person commits it. If he does not enter into it actively he will be found not guilty by society. Kaiser believed that the onlooker was just as guilty of crime as the person who had planned and executed the deed. Society's laws and ethics are based on the Hebraic law, but Kaiser's dynamic morality has its foundation in the Christian law of love for one's neighbor, even for his enemy. The struggle between the two ideas reaches its ultimate in Hell, Way, Earth with the Stroller's series of scenes with various members of society. Here is one man whose love for his fellow man is able to transcend the machine-like indifference and the hard-heartedness of society, and in the end to win those same representatives to his way of thinking and acting. He has become the New Man in society.

4Ibid., p. 9 f.
The next question that presents itself then is, how will a man who has been motivated by this desire and frustrated by society attempt to work out a solution to his problems?

Fruchter says there are three possibilities: the primitive solution which follows the urge of instinct, the romantic solution in escape, and the ethical solution of reform. Europa uses the primitive solution of revolt. Her actions are motivated by her sexual impulses. The Stroller of Hell, Way, Earth follows the ethical solution of reform, but Kaiser's other heroes take the romantic way of escape. Sylvette of The Fire in the Opera House, the Countess of The Woman's Sacrifice, the Cashier of From Morn to Midnight, the Billionaire of The Coral, and the Billionaire Worker of Gas II escape through death, and the Billionaire's son of Gas I escapes into a dream. There are other solutions attempted by almost all of these people. The Stroller tries revolution, the Billionaire tries a dream, Sylvette and the Countess try reform as do the Billionaire Worker and his father, the Billionaire's Son, and the Cashier tries escape into a dream which resolves itself into a reality of adventure and crime.

From a close look at the protagonists of his plays and their conflicts it becomes evident immediately that Kaiser pictures the world as a battle ground for two eternally fighting, although unevenly matched forces, society and the individual. It is a battle that will continue to be fought as long as there are individuals who try to live according to the perfection with which nature endowed them, in a society with a negative moral code. That group, whether a real one or one represented by an individual, as in the case of Monsieur in The Fire in the
Opera House and Lavalette in *The Woman's Sacrifice*, will be most unlikely to be ready for a change and will therefore be the eternal foe of the dynamic individual. Whether it is the struggle of women misunderstood by their husbands or fathers, or whether it is a person in conflict with the machine age of the present day civilization, it is the same struggle between the representatives of society and the individual. The individual is powerless when faced by an angry social order fighting for its very existence.

Kaiser's plays teem with examples of characters representing the New Humanity. Europa and the Cashier of *From Morn to Midnight* represent a personal problem; the protagonist may be carried along in a dream as is finally the case in *Europa* and is seen from the beginning of *The Coral, Gas I, Gas II*, and *Hell, Way, Earth*; or the theme may be presented in the form of love for an individual, as in *The Woman's Sacrifice* and *The Fire in the Opera House*.

Kaiser himself said of the New Man,

"Man represents the most intensive form of energy . . . [Humanity must] regard itself as a state of transition between the mankind that is and the mankind that is to come . . . Man is perfect from the beginning. He is, so to speak, a finished product from the very moment of his birth. The limitations to which he ultimately succumbs are not a part of his inner nature. These limitations and inhibitions are imposed on him from without, as a result of the distorted forms to which his destiny is subjected. . . . Energy is the eternal miracle in man, and this miracle has been converted into the blood out of which he creates, creating even himself. He draws eternity into the present, and lets the present open upon eternity."\(^5\)

Kaiser begins by saying that man is perfect, that he becomes imperfect through external forces, but that because of the energy within him he will strive toward the perfection that is in him inherently. Kaiser believes that perfection can and will be realized through the love of the man for humanity.

It is love for humanity that becomes the strongest drive in the existence of the New Man. It is this love that sends the Stroller in Hell, Way, Earth on his frustrating mission to save the life of a person hardly known to him. In Europa, The Woman's Sacrifice and The Fire in the Opera House the love is more personal and perhaps selfish; in the plays of the Gas trilogy and Hell, Way, Earth it has a broader meaning, but it comes to nothing except in the last play, where the Stroller leads the way into a new world that in the light of the complications of society seems rather too simple for belief.

After man has love for humanity, the next step that he will take is to realize the needs of his fellow man. That realization can come when society forces the issue with an interruption in the routine of things. Man then realizes for the first time that there is a contrary feeling between himself and society. His next step in following his love for humanity will be his consciousness of the problem of the welfare of the individual against whom the crime has been committed, and, of course, his task of reform will then begin. The hero then is the vessel of the social reform as is seen most clearly in Hell, Way, Earth.
CHAPTER V
THE EIGHT PLAYS IN ENGLISH

In order to understand the development of the theory of the New Man in Kaiser's mind and to look at it from Kaiser's own several viewpoints it is necessary to consider each play separately. In this way, the relation of each play to the whole eight may be seen. It again is necessary to state that the plays will not be taken in strict chronological order, but as they are internally related. Also it should be kept in mind that there are other plays within the period 1915 to 1920 that are not here under discussion. A total of eighteen plays by Kaiser were published during these six years, but only eight will be included in this analysis of the New Man in society and of his love for humanity.

The earliest of this series is Europa, 1915. In this comedy, which Samuel and Thomas state "... is the most ingenious and witty comedy of Expressionism ..."¹ the New Man is represented by Europa, who instinctively revolts against the society represented by her father and the Men of the country. Europa and the Maidens who follow her refuse to have anything to do with the effeminate Men who have, in an attempt to please the women, made the mistake of trying to be like them by discarding their manly qualities. King Agenor believes that

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it is the man quality in men that women dislike, and in his attempt to make light lovers of the Men, he has succeeded in making no lovers of them at all. The Men, in an effort to please the King, spend all their time trying to rid themselves of their manness. Their last project is to remove all clumsiness from their walk. Everywhere they go they dance, since the women like to dance. A contest is arranged and the lightest dancer will have the daughter of the King for his bride.

The entry of Zeus into the contest causes the Men to bow out. They do not know who he is, but he is so graceful no one feels worthy to compete with him. He seems to have won the contest by forfeit, but he must dance to win. His dance is so light and cloud-like that Europa is unable to restrain her laughter. The Maidens with Europa ruin the festivities with their peals of laughter, and Zeus flies away on a cloud, leaving the women holding their sides and the Men with open mouths. Europa, as a representative of the New Humanity, wants nothing so cultured and refined as that which would be in opposition to nature, for the natural way is the perfect way, and men are not by nature graceful in all their actions and manners. Because of the barrenness of life Europa rebels and fortunately is able to take the Maidens with her. She has won half the population already.

Zeus, in an attempt to revenge himself on Europa, assumes the form of a great, shaggy, long-horned bull and prepares to frighten her and the Maidens in return for their laughter. Europa, however, is taken by the masculinity of the Bull, and although the other Maidens run away, she stays with him, telling him of the dance and of his own foolishness. She loses herself in her story to him, and is taken away while lying on his back. She recovers herself quickly enough to demand that he put her
down, but it is doubtful that she would have been happy to be released rather than kidnapped. Europa has allowed herself to be abducted by the natural creature. She tells him, "You are so real!"

Once having known a man, Europa can never be satisfied with less, and so it is a fortunate thing for all concerned that Strange Warriors come from King Cadmus to her father's kingdom. Europa smells them before she sees them. She recognizes the strong animal smell, and when the Warriors say they have come for wives, Europa asks whether the Warriors or the Maidens choose. Her willingness to follow the virile Warriors convinces the Maidens that they should try that which Europa has found so pleasant. In another movement the Maidens and Warriors are paired. This clears the way for the birth of more New Men, but the Men are stirred into action by the King. They assert themselves with the working Maids of the palace, and in the first aggressive action of their lives they find reward. The Maids at first seem to struggle, but their protests grow weaker and Agenor prophesies that two new races will be born, that they will fill their respective countries and will meet again in contest.

Obviously Kaiser is not just retelling the story of Europa and the Bull. The play is a burlesque on the society that is so refined that there is nothing natural in it. He ridicules the cult of the modern dance, and glorifies, in a manner at least, the Nietzschean concept of the superman. The spirit of the entire play is one of light-heartedness, as Hermes mocks Zeus with his wit, as Europa shame him to his face, and as King Agenor is thwarted by Europa in his attempt to keep her from the eyes of the Warriors. With the dancing, the poetic language, and the romantic settings, the play takes on a musical comedy
quality, and in production would certainly be an entertaining and amusing play.

Europa's problem is a personal one, but her decisions become the decisions of the group, and the result is the reform of the total society. Her motive might be taken as selfish, but she did not hesitate to urge her fellow Maidens to follow her in a search for husbands to give them the children who would be the New Humanity. Europa's personal problem became the basis of the revolt that in its conclusion affected the entire society. Here is an example of a society ready to be reformed and only waiting for the way to be shown by someone brave enough to make the effort. Europa in her culture-resisting actions, was able to deliver herself and her people from deterioration. The spirit of the entire play is expressed in the final scene of the last act by King Agenor when the truth finally dawns upon him and he says, "... echtes Leben ist starkes Leben--und das stärkste ist das beste." ("... real life is strong life--and the strongest is the best.")

Several years later Kaiser wrote another play about a woman with a personal problem, but this play is a tragedy. The Woman's Sacrifice, 1918, concerns the Countess Lavalette, the love she had for her husband and the sacrifice she made for him because of her love. The play takes place on the day of Napoleon's arrival in Paris after his escape from Elba. In order to help her husband escape from a royalist prison, the Countess had exchanged clothing with him, sent him from the prison and remained in his cell in his stead. The guards had discovered immediately that there had been an exchange in the prisoners and had taken advantage of the Countess. In order to keep her husband from being
recaptured, the Countess submitted to the insults. At last the Gendarmeres grew tired of her and allowed her to escape. They followed her so that her husband might be recaptured. The first act shows him waiting for her arrival and graciously accepting her. In the second act she tells him of her experiences with the guards. At first he is shocked, then he finds her revolting to him, and he repulses her. In the last act the Gendarmes enter to recapture him, but the Countess is able to deceive them a second time by putting on her husband's clothing, and the Gendarmes shoot her instead of him as they retreat. Word comes that the Emperor has returned, but the Count realizes the love the Countess had for him and can find no consolation in Napoleon's return from Elba.

The Countess represents the New Humanity, and the Count represents society. Through her all-encompassing love she is able to make the complete sacrifice for him. When she tells him of the guards coming to her cell, the Count asks her whether they came every night. She answers that it was an eternal night in the prison. He mistakes her motives and accuses her of enjoying the visits of the men, of even encouraging them.

The audience would undoubtedly be in sympathy with the Countess, but it would be a rare society indeed that would be willing to forgive the Countess and accept her as if nothing had happened. Both men and women in the audience would favor the Countess, but in reality few women would be willing to associate with her, and almost no man would take a woman who had experienced what the Countess had and be willing to make her his wife again and want her for the mother of his children. The Count, as well as the Countess, is in a very difficult position.
The Countess, a true representative of the New Humanity, is able to forgive the Count his thoughtlessness, his rudeness, his vulgarity, his contempt, in fact all his sins against her, and again sacrifice herself for him. This the second time, she gives her life. The Count returns to the room just as the Gendarmes make their exit and finds the Countess dying. At last he recognizes her love and sacrifice for him, but it is too late, for it is only through her death that he can really feel that she has been cleansed of her infidelity. To the Countess his forgiveness of her is more important than her life and she can say, "You must live—loved—beyond death—loved!"

The reality of the situation finally dawns upon the Count, so that the fortunate political developments in the release of Napoleon and his return from Elba mean nothing to him. In the presence of the death of the Countess, everything else is of no importance. He is able only to reply to the good news, "Der Kaiser?" Not even the Emperor can matter any more to Count Lavalette.

A year later Kaiser wrote The Fire in the Opera House, 1919, another play dealing with the theme of a wife's infidelity. This time it is the man who is the representative of the New Humanity. The gentleman is a middle-aged man who has been a play-boy but has sought a new life with an innocent young woman, only to have society spoil her loveliness for him. Her realization of the fact leads her to suicide. Chandler has compared this play with The Woman's Sacrifice, with the more favorable comment going to the latter. The Woman's Sacrifice may

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well be a fuller-bodied play than The Fire in the Opera House, from the standpoint of characterization, motivation, plot development, et cetera; but it is not nearly so theatrical and exciting a play in the theatre, nor is its theme superior. As Drake says of The Fire in the Opera House, this "... somber and melodramatic tale of a weary man of the world who seeks a new life in the bosom of innocence ..." is filled with theatrical effectiveness from beginning to end.

The gentleman has, after a life of worldly pleasure, married a young innocent girl from an orphan's home. She enters into his home a creature of purity and light. To her husband she represents all that he has not been, and as a result of her purity he changes his decadent life, but he learns in the course of the first act that she has fallen as he has risen. An usher enters his home to report that in the fire in the Paris opera house only his wife has escaped. He had presumed her to be asleep upstairs, but with the news of her safety he discovers her affair with the star of the opera. The husband refuses to recognize her when she too returns to tell him of her safety; instead he goes to the still raging fire and returns with a body which he says is that of his wife. In reality it is the body of the King's Mistress, identifiable by a ring which she wears. He prepares for her funeral, calling in grave diggers and the priest, and prepares to bury the body in his garden. All the while his wife and the lover, who has come in, are trying to reason with him. At last, in desperation, the wife removes the ring from the hand of the King's Mistress, places it on her

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own hand and goes back into the fire to die and be found by an old man who then claims the reward for the discovery of the King's Mistress.

Just as Sylvette had become a symbol of purity, truth, faith, even perfection to her husband, with the discovery of her infidelity she became dead to him. Her complete identity ceased to be for her husband, and he was able to find purity only in the body of a woman cleansed of her sins by the fire. In order to become that woman, Sylvette was willing to go back in the conflagration and die there as the Mistress of the King. In this way the transfer of individuality is completed. The body of the Mistress is now Sylvette and Sylvette's body has become that of the Mistress. With the change of bodies identified by the ring there has also come into the mind of the husband a complete transfer of the sins of Sylvette to the Mistress. His love for the pure, lovely girl continues to be as ideal as it had been on the day when he brought her from the orphanage to his home. He has found refuge from the disappointment of accepting the truth and has been able to escape into an illusion which has become reality. With his escape into a dream, his continuation of life and love for his now dead wife is possible.

Through the exchange of the ring with the peculiarly cut stone one personality is, as it were, exchanged with another. This idea that the exchange of a trinket is able to change a personality occurs in others of Kaiser's plays. Among these the most famous is The Coral, which will be considered later. Another interesting bit of symbolism in The Fire in the Opera House is Sylvette's becoming a symbol. To her husband she symbolizes the purity he had never known, but which he was unwilling to part with once he had experienced it. He was able to let
her kill herself for the protection of his ideal love for her purity. An important symbol in the technical effects of a production of the piece would be the fire which rages from the middle of the first act throughout the play. It is visible through the windows in the rear of the setting. With the discovery of the fire comes the news of Sylvette's infidelity, and during the gentleman's struggle for the possession of his ideal love the fire continues. It only diminishes in the final act when word comes of the discovery of the body which is supposed to be that of the King's Mistress since the identifying token is found on her hand.

The Fire in the Opera House and The Woman's Sacrifice are similar in their motivation of action, but whereas infidelity is not condemned by the playwright in The Woman's Sacrifice, he makes no excuses for Sylvette, who willingly and with full knowledge of the eventualities took the opera star as her lover. Another similarity between the two plays lies in the fact that most of the action is reported and relatively little is seen by the audience. However, the action related and seen in The Woman's Sacrifice is much less exciting and moving than that of The Fire in the Opera House.

In The Fire in the Opera House the struggle of the gentleman for his dream was a personal problem and involved a conflict against society as represented by the audience at the opera. In From Morn to Midnight the struggle again is a personal one involving an escape into a dream. Here however the protagonist is not fighting for his love in a decadent world, but is fighting for his own personal happiness in a world of machines.
In *From Morn to Midnight*, 1916, Kaiser exploits the idea that man is made into an automaton by the machine-like routine that encompasses him; specifically Kaiser presents the story of a bank clerk who on an impulse embezzles 60,000 marks and runs through the course of a day from mid-morning to mid-night in search of personal happiness. The Cashier is a man who has been condemned to a life of changeless routine in a small bank. His secret longings for a better life have never been stirred into action until a waft of perfume and a jeweled hand cause him to throw up his security and try to escape into a dream. He pursues the woman with the perfume and jewels to her hotel only to find that she is not the kind of woman he had thought but rather is the mother of a grown son, who is accompanying her. He suddenly realizes his crime of the theft of the money, and realizes that he will be hunted by the police and that only disgrace can come to him. He has not followed reason in his actions thus far on this the last day of his life, and he continues to go blindly from place to place in his search for happiness. He crosses a field of snow in which a tree turns into a skeleton before his eyes; he goes home, where his family is waiting for him to come to lunch. He leaves before eating, and the shock of the break in routine kills his mother.

During the afternoon he spends money at a bicycle race and in a restaurant but finds nothing worth having. Finally he goes with a Salvation Army lass to a testimonial service, and there under the emotion of the situation and with the others who are confessing their sins and giving their testimonies he succumbs to the plea of the Captain who is giving the invitation. He confesses his crime, is betrayed in Judas-like fashion by the girl for the reward, and he shoots himself. As he
does so he falls back against the cross on the platform and his gasp and sigh as he dies sounds like "Ecce homo." The lights go out, and the skeleton reappears in the wiring of the lighting equipment. Other motifs reappear in the Salvation Army scene. Each scene from the snowfield to the end is brought into the last scene by one of the sinners in his confession or testimony. It is this pointing at him by all the people present that causes the Cashier's break and confession. Since he is a highly emotional person and one who follows his impulses, it is not surprising to see him confess and believe that the others in the hall would understand his action and accept him as one of them. He tells the crowd in his confession that money is worthless, and he excepts them to believe him. He throws the money to the floor thinking they will trample on it. Of course they do not. They may have believed him as long as he was just talking about the evil of money, but when he throws it away, they are as greedy for it as if he had never spoken. They sweep it up and run, leaving him alone with the Salvation Army girl, who opens the door for the Policeman.

In his personal search for happiness the Cashier took the way of the dream which led him into crime and adventure, but the entanglements could only result in death. There could be no other alternative for him. From the moment of his decision to take the money his fate was sealed. The outcome was inevitable.

This savage satire on the money lust of the world and its lack of clear thinking in making money the common denominator of all society is probably the best in modern literature. It has been praised by all

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4Drake, p. 92.
the critics. The following are typical comments: "His From Morn to Midnight . . . is a moving drama of the futility of modern civilization." 5

From Morn to Midnight is a bizarre piece that breaks far too many dramaturgic idols for popularity here and now, yet it is unquestionably filled with a very intense sense of the deep emotional background against which life passes. Kaiser has succeeded in getting past the surface of reality. He has penetrated the basic stratum of man's psyche. 6

The play is one of the best of its kind in its simplicity and universality. It exemplifies Kaiser's distrust of money and his tendency to suggest, contrary to the wont of most expressionists, a psychological truth, namely just what may happen when the soul built up and fortified by routine is suddenly deprived of such support. We think that we would rejoice to escape the round of duties which holds us in our place. Yet to do so would be to disintegrate. 7

This play in its theme and its structure foreshadows the works that are to come later in Kaiser's career. Here one can see the roots of the dramas of Kaiser's social protest and the more serious problems that they raise. Here man is awakening to the realization of his frustration in his society and his desire to better the world in which he lives. Although the Cashier's problem was a personal one, it is not difficult to see that the dream of a better society can grow to include all of mankind. That Kaiser chose that theme is not surprising. It is the logical step in the development of his larger theme.


7Chandler, p. 417.
The idealism of the Cashier is carried over into the character of the Billionaire's Son in *The Coral*, 1917, the first play of the Gas trilogy. Again this play is an assault on wealth, but the emphasis this time seems to be on the one attacked rather than the one attacking. The most interesting person in the play is the Billionaire, the representative of the old society, rather than the Billionaire's Son, the New Man. It is the fate of the Billionaire in which the audience is interested. He is a fascinating man.

The entire trilogy is connected through its theme and its characters. The play discusses the problems of a capitalistic society and satirizes the insignificance of the civilization as well as its robot-like people, who are unable to be free and individual. The Billionaire's Son of *The Coral* is the principal character of *Gas I*, and the latter's grandson, the Billionaire Worker, is the protagonist of *Gas II*. The trilogy runs, then, through four generations.

In *The Coral* the Billionaire who grew up from the direst poverty to become the owner of a tremendous capitalistic organization has accumulated all his wealth in order to keep his Son and Daughter from ever having to experience the unhappiness that he had known. He has a horror of poverty, and to give lip service to an effort to help alleviate the conditions of those less fortunate than he, the Billionaire has instituted what he calls his "open Thursdays." On one day each week the poor are allowed to come to his office and make requests, but the Billionaire does not receive them. His fear of poverty is so great that he does not associate with the poor even in his own office. He has rather a Secretary, his double in every respect, who answers the requests of the
ones who come for favors. Only two Guards know of the Secretary and of the mark that distinguishes the two. On the watch chain of the Secretary there is a small piece of coral.

In the course of the play the Son and Daughter both desert their father and turn to the people who need them in fighting a battle against the Billionaire. In the face of the loss of his children and his despair over his own unhappy childhood, he shoots the Secretary with a gun his Son had left for him to commit suicide with, puts the coral on his own watch chain and becomes the Secretary with the happy past. He knows that his future cannot be a happy one, and therefore a happy past is the next best thing he can possess. He is arrested as the Secretary, but insists that he is the Billionaire. The Guards tell the secret of the coral and state that it was found on him as he attempted to escape after having fired the gun. The judges are unable to prove just who he is until one of them hits upon the idea of facing the Billionaire with the Secretary's past. If he recognizes it then they will know that he is the Secretary. As they tell him incidents from the childhood of the Secretary, the Billionaire smiles and accepts them as his own, so that in the end the Judges get a signed statement from him that he is the Secretary. In the final act just before his death his Son comes back to see him, and tells him that he will accept him as his father, but the Billionaire says he will do it only if the Son will do his father's wish and follow his way of life. The Son is unwilling to do that, but through the conversation knows that it is his father he is talking to and not the Secretary. The Son then leaves him to his death.
The conscience of the Billionaire is symbolized by a Man in Grey who comes into two scenes. In the first act the Man in Grey comes to the "open Thursday" to try to get the Billionaire to renounce his wealth. He refuses to do it, for he says that he uses his wealth to keep away the memory of his unhappy youth. In the last act the Man in Grey denounces him because he has sacrificed everything he has, even his life, for ease.

In considering Kaiser's ideas of the reform of society one might expect his play to show the terrible situations in which the poor exist, but as Fruchter points out,

... this drama is not a tragedy of the working classes, but rather the tragedy of that nameless and nevertheless somehow realistic character, the Millionaire [sic]. In trying to escape the haunting fear of poverty, he had developed a faculty for acquiring millions, but in step with the growth of his fortune grew the inner distortion from which there was just one escape--one form of flight--into the quietude of non-existence. The pessimism and resignation of this romantic figure is expressed in his last speech...

Winifred Katzin has translated the last speech:

What would be best? Never to come out into the storm that drives toward the shore and drags us in its wake. There turmoil roars and drags us into the frenzy of life. We are all driven on...as we are all driven out of our paradise of quiet....Bits broken off the dim coral-tree...wounded from the first day with a wound that does not heal, but burns and burns. It is the fearful pain goads us on our way....

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In spite of the fact that the play is not about the New Man, the voice of the New Man is heard strongly in the personality of the Billionaire's Son. When he awakens to the needs of the world and the contrast between the rich and the poor he says that his impressions of the need burn in his blood and

... the vivdest picture of all is the 'Freedom of the Seas' as she lay in her wharf. Flags, music, passengers in light clothes strolling up and down the decks, chattering, gay. And a few yards beneath their feet, hell. Men feeding fire-belching holes, quivering bodies burning to death. So that we may make speed, speed. 10

The Billionaire's Daughter follows her brother's example and becomes a nurse for the needy. She tells her father that the reason she is leaving him is her experience on the yacht when a Yellow Stoker was overcome by the heat of the boiler room.

When I took my hands from the seething breast of that yellow stoker they were marked. The scar sank into my blood, into my deepest heart. I have no choice. I feel the call. And submit to it willingly... Send me where the suffering is worst, to the injured in your factories. I will nurse them. 11

Here both Son and Daughter who escaped poverty as children are ironically now escaping from riches. Understanding has come to them, and with the understanding a love for their fellow man. They realize that they too must suffer with mankind, if their love is to continue, for the rich oppress the poor, and the individual is responsible for the welfare of all. Here Kaiser's philosophy for the first time is given by characters other than the protagonist; this situation does not

10Ibid., p. 586.
11Ibid., p. 588.
happen again in his later plays.

As in the play The Fire in the Opera House, there is a transfer of personality with the exchange of a trinket, this time a watch charm of coral. The dream of the happy youth the Billionaire had never known was so compelling he was able to commit murder for it, but in order to make the happiness really his own, he had to take the coral, which was the only distinguishing characteristic between himself and the Secretary. When no one could know with certainty that he was not the Secretary, the piece of coral would have to be accepted as proof; and with the acceptance of it, the world of the Secretary and his happiness in his youth would belong to the Billionaire. A happy youth seems a peculiar thing to take from another person; but with the transfer of the coral, the Billionaire was able to do it to his own satisfaction. Everyone was convinced with the exception of his conscience, and he dismissed that.

The Son and Daughter of the Billionaire as the New Humanity of the play try to reform their father, and so are defeated in their first attempt. However, they are not to be counted as permanently defeated. Their love for humanity is too great to be overcome so easily. Their efforts continue in the second play of the trilogy Gas I, 1918.

The two parts of Gas deal with the problem of factory labor and its mechanization of humanity. There is little in the way of plot development in these two plays, but rather there is a heightening in theatrical effects with the use of mass-movement and with lighting. The characters have become typed and except for the family of the Billionaire's Son and the Engineer, there is little to make characters individual. Kaiser has typed the characters purposefully, of course, to show the effect of mechanization on humanity. In a machine age there can be
no individuality and no freedom. *Gas I* is usually considered to be Kaiser's best work.

While *The Coral* presented a social problem without attempting a solution, Kaiser in his faith in man as opposed to faith in wealth or power does suggest a way out in *Gas I*. The Billionaire's Son has taken over the factory at his father's death and has succeeded in turning it into a co-operative business in which the former wage slaves are now co-owners and shareholders in the company. This would seem to be some improvement over the old scheme, but it has not proved to be so. The workers' still are not free. They have become slaves of the production of gas. Each worker has become so specialized that he has become an attachment for that part of his body which does the work. A man no longer is a whole man; he is a hand, a foot, a pair of eyes. Then the terrible thing happens over which no man has any control. The gas explodes. There is no reason. The formula is not in error. The Engineer investigates and finds nothing wrong. Nevertheless the explosion occurs, for matter has refused to follow the control of man's mind and is acting according to its own laws, which man cannot know.

The Billionaire's Son recognizes that when industrialism has reached the point of work for its own sake and not for the good of man, the explosion is inevitable. He recognizes the truth of the matter, but no one else will. The workers demand that the Engineer be discharged, because his formula did not work out, but the Billionaire's Son knows that it was not the fault of the Engineer, and refuses to let him go. A strike is called, and other strikes in nearby plants follow, until all the Gentlemen in Black, who are the symbols of big business, demand the removal of the Engineer.
With the complete stoppage of work, the Billionaire's Son sees his opportunity to abolish all factories and establish an agricultural society, where there will be peace and happiness with no fear of another explosion. The Gentlemen in Black refuse to listen to him. He goes to the workers. One at a time the women, then the men, rise to speak before the crowd. They talk about the fact that the machinery has made machines of them; but when the Billionaire's Son rises from their midst to tell them of his plan, they refuse to follow him and instead turn to the Engineer whom they had tried to have fired, and support his back-to-work program. The Billionaire's Son holds out against them until the government sends in a representative who takes over the control of the plant until the imminent war is won.

The fourth act, with its series of speeches by the women, then the men, and finally the debate between the Engineer and the Billionaire's Son, is the high point of the play. Here all of Kaiser's thought comes out and here the conflict is strongest. Then with the turning of the people from the Billionaire's Son to the Engineer, the reversal is complete and the protagonist is defeated.

As the workers go out of the hall and prepare to go back to the rebuilding of the factory and eventually the work in the factory, the Billionaire's Son pleads with them:

Do not strike your brother Man! You shall not manufacture cripples! You, Brother, are more than a hand! You, Son, are more than a pair of eyes!—You, Husband, live longer than one day!—You are eternal creatures—and perfect from the very beginning!—do not let the days mutilate you, nor dumb mechanical movements of the hand—be greater, be greedy for the higher thing— in yourselves—in yourselves!!

12Tucker, p. 623.
The hall has become empty as the workers follow the Engineer back to another inevitable explosion. The Billionaire's Son makes one last effort to keep them from work and save them from themselves, but he is stopped by the Government Commissioner. In despair he turns to his widowed Daughter and says,

Tell me, where can I find Man? When will he make his appearance—when will he announce his name—Man? When will he understand himself? . . . When will he rid himself of the primal curse?—when will he recreate the creation which he has ruined—Man?—Was I not happy in having had a glimpse of him and his coming? . . . Can Man be extinguished—must not he come again and again—now that at least one man has seen his face? . . . Can I doubt any longer?13

His Daughter answers, "I will give him birth." With these words the play ends on a note of hope. The Billionaire's Son cannot expect to see the dawn of the New Society, but the seed of the idea is alive and with it hope for future generations. His has not been a personal problem, but one unselfish and humanitarian from the beginning. From his first appearance in the second act of The Coral, one can feel his complete selflessness; but his generation is not ready for reform, and it stifles the message that he brings it.

The hope with which Gas I ends is defeated in Gas II, 1920. With the factory rebuilt, the workers are turning out an improved form of gas in the concentrated war effort. All able-bodied men are at the front, and the factory is being manned by the very young, the very old and the weaklings. The plant is under the direction of the seven symbolical Figures in Blue. The outcome of the war against the enemy

13Ibid., p. 626.
In yellow depends on the continued output of the gas. The hand, the foot, the eyes, continue to do their work, but the spirit of the individual is not in it. Production begins to fall off. With the reduction in gas production, the enemy gains territory. There is a further drop in production and the enemy makes more gains. The First Figure in Blue calls the Chief Engineer to account for the lack of production. The Chief Engineer says,

Excessive repetition of single action blunts the onspurring will to work. Gas is no longer a goal—purpose vanished in the little motion which repeated and repeated became purposeless; part without whole. Planless the man at his tool—the work withdrew ever farther out of sight as the man slipped day by day deeper into sameness and monotony.¹⁴

The cause, then, is not one of dissatisfaction with conditions, such as working hours or even pay scale. It is a psychological matter—man's unconscious revolt against the machine. The Billionaire Worker is called to give the Workers a pep talk, but he demands that the plant be released from the mandate over it. The enemy continues to make progress. In the meantime there is a complete stop in the work. There is a strike, but no one called it. There is no leadership in the strike, but it is a strike none the less.

With quiet determination the crowd enters the communication headquarters, and quickly dismantles the apparatus and passes it out of the place. Then one by one a young man and woman, a middle-aged couple and an old couple rise to speak to the crowd concerning the rights of man to live his own life and be happy. At this the Billion-

¹⁴Ibid., p. 630.
aire Worker rises to urge them to carry out the original plan for mankind and be human beings instead of machines and slaves of industry.

He says,

Send out the rally: hands have ceased from their work—hands have quit their slaving for destruction—hands are free to take the pressure of all hands in ours which now rest. No gas!16

There is no reply to the message, however. The Yellow Enemy enters and takes over the defenseless crowd of Workers. They are forced back to work to produce gas for the enemy. Again there is a complete stop in the work, but this time it is inspired by the Chief Engineer. Revenge urges him on, and the possession of a ball of extremely poisonous gas gives him the power. He proposes to use it against the Yellow Enemy to burn their bodies to skeletons. The Billionaire Worker with his humanitarianism confronts him and tries to reason with him. He urges him not to destroy work but to build the kingdom that is to come. He does not talk of a practical solution of an agricultural nation as his grandfather had. He believes the kingdom that must be built is in the realm of the spirit.

... your kingdom is not of this world! Face the stranger—pay him his interest—leave him his wage—shovel him his gains—suffer his demands—ignore the spine bleeding in your skin—Be your Kingdom!16

In despairing of a practical solution, the Billionaire Worker has escaped into a dream of the spirit. He would choose to suffer and be a martyr rather than continue with the Chief Engineer in the fight

16Ibid., p. 635.

16Ibid., p. 638.
against the Yellow Enemy. The mass, however, is not with him, for already some of them have stepped forward to take the ball of poison gas to throw it at the Enemy. The Billionaire Worker manages to get the ball first and proclaims his right to be the one to throw it. In his final speech he says,

My blood's blood beat for our conversion. My thirst slaked itself at the thirst of mother and mother's father. Our voices might have waked the wilderness—Our voices could wake the wilderness—men's ears are deaf. I am vindicated! I can fulfill! 17

He hurled the ball into the air; it falls with a clatter of breaking glass, and chaos ensues. When it grows light again, skeletons of the bodies of the Workers are seen, and the Yellow Forces killing one another. The dream of the New Man is completely destroyed. The trilogy that had shown optimism in places ends in total defeat for the protagonist, except that he was able to take on himself the guilt of the whole group by saving them from themselves and their slavery to the machines.

The final play to be discussed here; Hell, Way, Earth, 1919, is the only one except Europa to end in victory for the New Man. A program of reform is accepted by society, and the ideal state is set up. Kaiser has not explained all of the details of the new social government, but he shows by the outcome of this play that he believed one is possible and that it must come if civilization is to survive.

Kaiser in his three-part play Hell, Way, Earth urges again the acceptance of man's responsibility to man and shows the evil effects of

17 Ibid., p. 639.
wealth on humanity. The idealistic protagonist of these ideas is an artist called the Stroller. He accepts his duty to his fellow man when he receives a telegram from a mere acquaintance requesting a thousand marks. The reason for the request is not given. It is simply stated that there is a need. That is sufficient for the Stroller. He has seen his duty and he attempts to raise the money. He has no money in the bank, and so he tries to sell some pictures at the local art exhibit. A lady shows some interest in one of the pictures and he pursues her to her hotel to try to sell her the entire folio of pictures for one thousand marks. Her friend enters and tells of a purchase she has made of some earrings which will be delivered shortly. The price of them is well over the thousand marks necessary for the salvation of the Stroller's friend. He explains his position and insists that they buy instead the pictures, so that he can help the needy person. They refuse. He accuses them of murder, since they know of a dying man and refuse to help him. They laugh at this, but he goes to the policeman to have them arrested and is turned away. He tries to get a Lawyer to take his case against them, but in vain. Finally he goes to the Jeweler's shop and commits a crime to stop the sale of the earrings; he is thrown in prison for his trouble.

The first part of the play, the Hell of the title, shows the Stroller's acceptance of his responsibility for his fellow man and his frustration in his attempt to show the way to those with whom he has contact. The ladies laugh at him; the policeman tell him there can be no murder unless someone raised his hand against another; the Lawyer says there is no law covering the situation. The Stroller insists that
there must be a law; if not, one must be invented. The Lawyer finally tells him he will take the case if the Stroller will pay him a thousand marks, which, of course, is out of the question. If he had had the amount, he would have already given it to the friend. In desperation he then stabs the Jeweler as a token of his revolt against society, and society puts him behind bars.

This indifference of society to humanity is the height of the negative moral attitude. It is a mechanical process, as rigid and impersonal as the bloodless machine. The Stroller is positive, however, and he believes in a justice which will place responsibility where it belongs. The day of true justice will come and all will recognize the guilt of all, for all are responsible. Since no one is exempt, the process of the cleansing of society can begin.

The second part of the play, Way, shows the Stroller after he has served his term in prison. After his complete frustration and act of crime, he has had time to do some thinking. He has had a miraculous transformation and now is consumed with a love for humanity in its entirety, where as before he had been concerned only with the fate of one man. He feels that once his new theory has had a chance to come in to contact with the world it will spread and engulf all of humanity. He believes that man is fundamentally good and only waiting for the leadership of a messiah. He goes from place to place with his gospel of love and of guilt. On his way from the prison gate he persuades an Escaped Prisoner and a Prostitute to return to the prison to seek a real and inner freedom. He goes to the Lawyer, the policeman, and Jeweler, the ladies. All follow his way and the Police Lieutenant sends his men out
to gather all the guilty to the square for the judgment of the Stroller.

Humanity is ready for the moral awakening.

The third part, Earth, shows the crowd following the Stroller. All meet at the prison, and because of their guilt clamor to be admitted. However since all are guilty and recognize their guilt, there is no need for a prison. The Prisoners are released and the great throng follows the Stroller to an open stony plain, where he gives them his final message.

Where the earth is!—Build the creation. You are confirmed--clever between chaos and work. Build the creation, which you are--in the rising in you, who you are!—Build the creation, which bleeds through you--your finger's order will build a steep building, because you order yourselves!—Build the creation, which wants you--as you want it! Build the creation--that builds, that creates itself in you!—You are new from evening to morning a thousand times--build yourself new creations which forget you--as you fade away. No one is one--your desire aims next to you: there is the other, who is greater, as he takes from you. He owes you--as the third owes him--and many owe the third. Out from all the debt toward all you cancel all debt: who measures--who gives--and bargains about the value?!

The new man does not look to heaven; he finds his heaven on earth. That heaven is an ideal society where love for one's fellow man is the law, and where responsibility for his welfare is never considered indifferently. The dream of the Stroller becomes a reality in the total reform of the social structure of his civilization.

In a treatment of theme from farce to tragedy over a period of six years and eight plays, one can feel the power of Kaiser's convictions concerning the social sins of his time. Society's greed for power, its lust for money, its indifference to suffering, its lack of love for mankind, he pointed at again and again. That he felt the society of
which he was a part would ever reform itself is to be doubted, but he saw his duty as a member to tell it that it must reform in order to live. As a result of his feelings of responsibility to his society, he has left for the theatre a list of excellent plays that not only accurately show the thoughts of the day in which they were written, but can continue to be effective pieces in the theatre of ideas for time to come.
CHAPTER VI

KAISER'S STYLE

The Expressionistic playwrights in their formulation of the movement felt that the style and form of their writing was most significant in the expression of their ideas. Kaiser was as concerned with style as any other of the group of playwrights. As a result his style is probably the best of all the writers in the Expressionistic movement.

A close look at the style of the plays of Kaiser will show a distinct relationship between the content and the form. The spirit of the time is reflected in both. The world of the machine and technical apparatus, of science and industry is evident in almost every play. It is seen in his plots, characters and dialogue.

Just as a well designed machine is as simple in its structure as possible, Kaiser's plots are simple to follow. They are schematic, and often have a staccato sequence of scenes. This makes for episodic, loosely connected action which on the surface would seem unmachine-like except, as one will recognize soon, there is not a necessary word omitted nor a superfluous one added. The arrangement fits the specific play and is not made according to a prescribed formula, as with the well-made-play. A review of the plot lines of the plays will show that there is not a complicated plot in the entire list. There is less plot, probably, in Gas II than in any other of the plays: here there is a mere heightening of effect with the building toward the destruction of
humanity in the final act. The disintegration of society is seen in
the first few lines of the play, and from that point the total col-
lapse becomes inevitable.

The "station dramas," those plays in which the hero moves from
one place or situation to another, are more complicated than any others,
but the complication is in the number of scenes and people involved in
showing the hero in contact with various phases of society. There is
not very much real plot complication. The protagonist moves from sta-
tion to station only to be met by the same attitude from representatives
of society, as in Hell, Way, Earth and From Morn to Midnight.

There is but little complication in the plays in which one
might expect to find the most complication. In the impossible fable
play of Europa, in the romantic plays of The Fire in the Opera House,
and The Woman's Sacrifice, the action is straight-forward and uncompli-
cated. In each the situation is evident early in the play and the
progression toward the conclusion moves without much digression, as far
as plot is concerned.

The characters as well as the plots of the plays show the in-
fluence of the machine. The nameless, unindividuated type-characters
that abound in Kaiser's plays become automatons. Only the principal
characters are seen as individuals, and many of them have no names other
than a type-designation. The type-name may be a profession, as the
Commander and the Warriors of Europa, the Gendarmes of The Woman's
Sacrifice, or the Lawyer, Lieutenant, Director and Jeweler of Hell, Way,
Earth. The character may be named by a family relationship, as Son,
Daughter, in The Coral, a position in society as Monsieur in The Fire
in the Opera House, the Countess in The Woman's Sacrifice, Prisoner in Hell, Way, Earth or some other type-name, as Stroller of Hell, Way, Earth, The Gentleman in Black or Grey, Man, Woman, Youth or even a number. The actual number of persons who have names is small. Five characters in Europa are named. Forty-one, besides the Warriors and Maids, are not named. In The Woman's Sacrifice six are named, leaving the Countess, the Officer and the Gendarmes with no such identification. In Hell, Way, Earth only two from about forty plus extras are named. In From Morn to Midnight, The Coral, Gas I, and Gas II no characters have names. The types in some cases have reached the point of being no more than abstractions of an idea, as with the characters in the Gas trilogy. There is little in the way of motivation and character development in any play. There is some in The Woman's Sacrifice in the characters of the Countess and Lavalette, and there is some, but less, in King Agenor of Europa.

Dialogue has been discussed more by critics in relation to the style than characters and plot, because Expressionistic dialogue had never been seen before. Simple plots and type characters were commonplace, but the words the Expressionistic authors put in their characters' mouth were strange in the ears of the audience.

One characteristic of the writing has been called telegraphic for its similarity to the sentences used in telegraphy to get the maximum of meaning out of a minimum of words. That was indeed the purpose of the Expressionistic writers. In order to make the dialogue as clipped and mechanical as possible, articles were omitted, along with conjunctions and often adverbs, adjectives and prepositions, whenever
it was possible to keep the meaning without them. Sentences are staccato, broken, and hurried from ecstasy and frenzy. The language is ungrammatical, for separable verbs do not separate, word order is reversed, clauses are reduced to phrases. In addition simple sentences predominate, and dependent phrases are hardly known.

An example of a series of speeches between the Billionaire's Son and the Engineer in the fourth act of Gas I will show several of these points:

**ENGINEER**
You are peasants with worthless industry!!

**BILLIONAIRE'S SON**
Men in Wholeness and Oneness!

**ENGINEER**
No necessity ridicules your demand!!

**BILLIONAIRE'S SON**
Your hope will fill you!

**ENGINEER**
Laziness kills your days!!

**BILLIONAIRE'S SON**
You are occupied timelessly!!

**ENGINEER**
No invention will take shape!!

**BILLIONAIRE'S SON**
In the single form you are discharged--to human beings!!

**ENGINEER**
Shout the destruction!!

**BILLIONAIRE'S SON**
Turn from destruction to consumption--to human beings!!

**ENGINEER**
Shout my destruction again--and storm back to work!!

Other characteristics of Kaiser's style include his change from objective realism to the subjective monologue in scenes two and three for From Morn to Midnight and the scenes in the Lawyer's office and before the Jeweler's shop in Hell, May, Earth. He uses antiphonal speeches in Gas II.

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1*Gas I*, Act IV. The translation is my own.
VOICE ABOVE
We in the dome!
ROLL THE DOME CLEAR!
Rust clogs the grooves!
Loosen the rivets!
Mightily pressing...
Break down the girders!
Plates giving way!
Widen the gap!
Now the dome moves!
Roll the dome clear!

All the voices together below

In Gas I realistic dialogue turns to telegraphic speech and then returns to realistic patterns.

FIRST GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
We are assembled here to present our demands—the dismissal of the Engineer!

BILLIONAIRE'S SON
Have you forgotten—are you still deaf—is the thunder and the crashing no longer rolling in your ears—are you no longer shaken upon your seats—are you paralyzed?

SECOND GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
The catastrophe is a dark page—

FOURTH GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
We book it to to profit and loss—

FIFTH GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
And turn over a new leaf!

BILLIONAIRE'S SON
The same formula!

FIRST GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
We hope--

SECOND GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
Naturally!

BILLIONAIRE'S SON
The same formula--?

THIRD GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
Perhaps there will be a longer interval between the—
FOURTH GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
One must gain experience!
BILLIONAIRE'S SON
Twice—thrice—?
FIFTH GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
We shall know when to expect the next—
SECOND GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
It is not likely that we shall live to see it.  
BILLIONAIRE'S SON
I am to let them in—surrender—?
FIRST GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
After all, the industry of the entire world cannot be per-
m itted to stand still.
THIRD GENTLEMAN IN BLACK
It is entirely dependent on Gas!
BILLIONAIRE'S SON
Is it that? Am I the source of energy which sets all this
in motion? Is my power as vast as that? 3

Purposeful dialogue is interspersed with meaningless repetition
of cliché in the fourth scene of From Morn to Midnight.

MOTHER
What's that you're playing?
FIRST DAUGHTER
The Overture to "Tannhäuser."
MOTHER
"O Tannenbaum" is another pretty piece.
WIFE
It's time I began to fry the chops.
FIRST DAUGHTER
Oh, not yet, Mama.
WIFE
No, it's not time yet to fry the chops.
MOTHER
What are you embroidering now?
FIRST DAUGHTER
Father's slippers.
WIFE
Today we have chops for dinner.
MOTHER
Are you frying them now?
WIFE
Plenty of time. It's not twelve o'clock yet.

3Ibid., p. 616.
FIRST DAUGHTER
Not nearly twelve, Mama.

WIFE
No, not nearly twelve.

MOTHER
When he comes, it will be twelve.

WIFE
He hasn't come yet.

FIRST DAUGHTER
When Father comes, it will be twelve o'clock.

WIFE
Yes.4

Kaiser changes from poetic language to straight prose in Hell, Way, Earth.

STROLLER
She will now be unable to go to the Jeweler's. She becomes conscious— it comes to her mind. She was not allowed to buy from the Jeweler— she had to save a somebody's life. It will come to her like lightning— the knowledge makes her glow— and giving help flows out of her hands— enthusiastiically, of her own accord!!

LIEUTENANT
(Silent)

STROLLER
Lieutenant, she knows and waits on the sharper impulse. She knows about her knowledge of the somebody's being in danger. That knowledge is passive in her no longer— from an aroused sense of responsibility she clearly sees the direction in which she must act: to be forced toward happiness by giving help to somebody, who is somebody somewhere!!

LIEUTENANT
(Unmoving.)

STROLLER
Lieutenant,—the red ticket!!

LIEUTENANT
(As before.)

STROLLER
The red ticket!!5


5Hell, Way, Earth, Part I, Scene 2.
A fourth influence of the mechanistic age shows up in Kaiser's plays in the technical effects that are present. Most of these become symbols of a kind, and as was Kaiser's habit, these symbols have intellectual and abstract meanings rather than emotional ones. There is the glow from the fire in *The Fire in the Opera House*, the floating clouds and the Bull in *Europe*, the changing of the trees into a skeleton and the reappearance of the skeleton in the wires above the cross in *From Morn to Midnight*, the explosion in *Gas I*, and the lights and wires of the communication system of *Gas II*. As one might expect, the exploitation of the theatrical effects possible in these probably kept them from being as effective as they might have been. If the effect were overemphasized it could throw the play out of focus just as quickly and surely as any other technical fault. Blame should not be placed on the playwright, however, if his designer proved himself incompetent. Critics have nevertheless blamed the writers at times for this very thing. Some writers doubtless filled their plays with so many effects that nothing else was seen, but Kaiser did not do that. Each of his plays should be heightened, in its effectiveness through the use of the technical item and should not be harmed by its use, because Kaiser had a worthy idea in each of his plays, interesting enough to hold the attention of the audience. Through a long career and many plays Kaiser made some valuable and honorable contributions to our theatre. Gorelik says this is true," . . . because he navigated in the great streams of dramatic humanism."6

Kaiser's dramatic humanism began with his first plays in the decade before the First World War and reached its height by 1920. His most exciting works were written during the war and the years immediately following. During the six years between 1915 and 1920 Kaiser's plays varied in subject matter from legend and history to abstract fiction. In these plays the themes were closely related. Without exception the theme of the New Man is present in some form in each play. Over the years his purpose did not alter with change in subject or with his style, which developed from Realism to Expressionism. The peak came with the Gas trilogy, The Coral, Gas I and Gas II. In these three plays Kaiser's treatment of subject matter was most imaginative, his style was at its best, and his themes were highly provocative. He was a pessimist when he looked at society, but his view of humanity was colored by optimism of the rarest sort. His belief in the New Man's love for humanity, told in his revolutionary style, produced a series of plays which ran from farce to tragedy and which dealt in a profound way with very real problems of the Twentieth century society.

Kaiser's plays deserve the attention of the literary scholar, the theatre historian, the producer, the director, and the actor. Through the combined interest of these people, the plays can come to the audience, for whom they were primarily written. The scholar and historian can bring the scripts to a limited number of readers, but it will depend on the producer and the director to make
them most effective. They alone can tell the stories through the actors to the audience. Only in this way can the scripts become living powerful forces in society.
PART II

TRANSLATIONS
EUROPA

Play and Dance in Five Acts

by

Georg Kaiser

1915
MEN AND FIGURES

King Agenor
Europa
The Men
The Maidens
First, Second Doorkeeper
The Commander of the Strange Warriors
The Strange Warriors
Zeus
Hermes
THE FIRST ACT

(Quiet ocean inlet. A huge willow tree arches above the flowery meadow land and the blue mirror of the water. In the rear a white cumulus cloud rises and moves quickly with a whizzing singing sound. At last it stops above the willow and the sound fades away.)

VOICE

(In the cloud.) Land.

ANOTHER VOICE

(In the cloud.) A good landing place.

THE FIRST VOICE

(In the cloud.) We are going down. (The cloud descends on to the willow.)

THE FIRST VOICE

(In the cloud.) Which form shall we assume?

THE SECOND VOICE

(In the cloud.) The countryside has a peaceful look.

THE FIRST VOICE

(In the cloud.) Let's appear as fishermen. (The cloud shrinks around a solid nucleus and is entirely absorbed: on the top of the tree Zeus and Hermes are sitting--both with round brimmed straw hats and tight aprons.)

HERMES

(Looking around.) I believe that we have descended on the most unsuitable spot of the earth.
ZEUS
I am satisfied for the start. (He stretches his limbs.)

HERMES
A lush meadow, useful as a rich pasture for a herd of cattle.

ZEUS
Let me enjoy my transformation.

HERMES
You would have done better as a strong bull tearing out the luscious blades of grass.

ZEUS
I am a man.

HERMES
In the most pitiful personification, that gropes for cold fish in shallow water.

ZEUS
You are not god enough——

HERMES
(Submissive gesture.) Hermes, the messenger of the gods.

ZEUS
I am Zeus.

HERMES
(As before.) You are Zeus.

ZEUS
I know everything, I see everything. I see through everything. For me everything has no past and no future. I travel here and there as a bright cloud in the perpetually clear skies in a steady motion—and casually stop. It is the highest boredom.
HERMES
Are you looking for a fascinating adventure from this broad tree top?

ZEUS
Here it is, as I have been transformed. Man is the sweet adventure. He feels what happens. He is caught in the whirl of the hours. No one is like the other. The next one will hurl a wealth of miracles on the beach. With groping hands I touch them. I pull forth out of the variety the most gaily colored piece. Here I hold it. I stop in astonishment—slain by human fortune.

HERMES
My hope has withered away, no men live here.

ZEUS
The expectation vibrates in my blood, which whips my skin from within with a fiery hail storm. I burn from impatience, which promises more than I can think of. Makes me giddy! We can easily get down to the ground from the low hanging boughs of this willow.

HERMES
I shall make a willow basket for the fish, which you may fish for for a long time.

ZEUS
Let's go inland quickly. (He starts to slip down.)

HERMES
(Stopping him by the shoulder.) There comes a man.

ZEUS
Where?

HERMES
He is walking through the meadow down there. There he comes again.
ZEUS

Let's lie down up here. (They throw themselves flat in the foliage of the tree top.)

(He who comes now is of a strange clothing and carriage: the haggard body is covered with loose honey gold and pale blue garments. Soft hair of very long fleece extends down; in tired grief his head falls forward. However a rhythmical dancing gracefulness animates his limbs: he stops after doing some steps in which he throws his knees up and lifts his arched arms to turn his shoulders. In such variation from rest and motion he reaches the edge of the water. Here he kneels down.

Out of murmuring grows a word of unspeakable pain: "Europa."—swells in eloquent repetitions to sharpest self torture: "Europa."—dissolves to voluptuous whisper: "Europa."—Then he raises himself slowly. He stares over the water, his look gaining lustre, as his arms are stretched out toward an embrace. With a shout of joy it breaks out of his mouth "Europa."—and shouting without pause he continues the dance by which he arrived—now lighter and more joyfully—and he descends into the water. So he departs and is carried higher and higher by the tide.)

HERMES

(Propping himself up.) Was that a man? With loose hanging hair? In a sky blue and honey gold petticoat? Didn't he move his arms and hips like a girl in love, who is expecting her fiancé tomorrow? What does he get into the water for, does he want to cool off?

ZEUS

(Stares wordless.)
HERMES

(Clapping his hands.) He is our fish. The prey, which we are seeking. We have found the gulf of the fable-like fish men. We'll sell our discovery only for the highest price. Tremble, Zeus, you stand on the threshold of your fortune. After him, so that he does not swim away under water.

ZEUS

(Not changing his position.)

HERMES

Don't you see how he enjoys the water. He splashes with his hands and feet. Now the waves rise under his chin. His mane floats like a raft behind him. When it is full of water, he will sink entirely.

ZEUS

(Striking him on the shoulder.) His name?

HERMES

We'll give him a fitting one.

ZEUS

His name--his name?

HERMES

Later. Now we've got to catch him.

ZEUS

What did he mean? What did he say? What's the meaning of the name? He cries the name--he laughs the name--he screams it--he groans it--he throws it into the grass--he pitches it up--he tosses it into the sea. Is it land--an island--which swims in the sea lonely and beautiful?
HERMES

Far and wide I see only water.

ZEUS

What is it, that bears this name, that has a magic glitter, that drives the man into a frenzy? Don't you hear it?

HERMES

It's quiet now.

ZEUS

It is ringing in my head. It is tearing at the nerves of my brain. It is already upsetting me tremendously. He must tell me, what the meaning of the name is. I feel it, everything depends on it.

HERMES

He has disappeared now. (Now the voice has become silent and the form has submerged in the sea.)

ZEUS

(Vigorously.) We must save him. We'll pull him out again before the current washes him from the inlet. He shall give me an explanation, he may not take it to the silent shell fish. We are almost naked, we can swim fast. (He already is hanging from the branches.)

HERMES

(Seizing him quickly around the body.) Up again.

ZEUS

Down quickly.

HERMES

Do you want to prove that your transformation is a lie by lowering yourself to the earth when everyone can see you?
ZEUS

Who is coming?

HERMES

Twenty instead of one.

ZEUS

(Climbing up.) Others?

HERMES

They resemble him as one fish resembles another.

ZEUS

(In the tree top.) They are bringing me the answer to my burning question. (Stretches himself out.) Hide yourself.

HERMES

And the dunce, who swallows too much water.

ZEUS

Who?

HERMES

You can quickly forget.

ZEUS

I am a man that blazes from curiosity.

HERMES

Then you'd better keep water away from the fire. (Both lie down as before.)

(Approximately twenty men appear arranged in couples in that strange dancing step. Only the last one walks without a partner. They are dressed the same way as the former arrival, their uncut hair curls down their backs also. However their ages and statures are of considerable variety. Among them there are tall ones, and square built
ones, thin ones, and bellied ones, pale ones and ruddy cheeked ones. However all of them have the same mournful air. In the center of the meadow they bring their dance to an end and finally form a circle.—The last, who had separated himself from the others at the beginning, leans against the trunk of the willow.)

FIRST
(Thin one.) How was the arrival?

A SECOND
(Thick set one.) I stepped hastily, as carried by a secret wind from underneath.

THE THIRD
(Pale one.) I walked with a fiery heart.

THE FOURTH
(Red cheeked one.) I was exhausted and am pleasantly tired now.

THE FIFTH
(Very tall one.) I proceeded without being seen.

THE SIXTH
(Crooked legged one.) I floated as on straight stilts.

THE SEVENTH
(Thin one.) I swelled myself into a round cloud.

THE EIGHTH
(Thick set one.) I was carried almost like a feather which a green bird shakes from his plumage high in the air.

THE NINTH
(Pale.) I grew as a red flame, that hisses from a tall candle.
THE TENTH
(Drenched in perspiration.) I didn't hurry and yet I speeded.

THE REST
(Nodding zealously at each statement, now aloud.) We succeeded in arriving.

THE FIRST
(With elevated voice.) We are worthy, we may admit it.

ALL
(In muffled murmur.) Europa.

ZEUS
(Springing high in the tree top.) The name!

HERMES
(Seizing him.) You'll betray us.

ZEUS
They say it too.

HERMES
So they know more.

THE NINETEENTH
(At the trunk, with a soft voice.) The worthiest isn't among you.

THE ELEVENTH
(Holding the nearest around the shoulders.) Look there where we are.

THE TWELFTH
(Leading one with his arm around him.) The tide is standing quietly like a smooth mirror.

THE THIRTEENTH
(Also with one.) The wide arch of this willow is inviting with its green shade.
THE FOURTEENTH
(Likewise.) The meadow is laughing.

THE FIFTEENTH
(Throwing himself down.) Flowers.

THE SIXTEENTH
(Likewise.) Crocus.

THE SEVENTEENTH
(Likewise.) Hyacinths.

THE EIGHTEENTH
(Likewise.) Violets.

THE REST
(With growing delight.) It is beautiful here.

THE ELEVENTH
We want to lie down.

THE FIRST
We will make wreaths.

ALL
Wreaths for our hair. (They throw themselves down in happy delight, picking flowers and making wreaths of them.)

HERMES
(In the tree top to Zeus.) Your breath is pounding audibly.

ZEUS
It must be the wind stirring in the leaves.

HERMES
No breeze is moving.

ZEUS
I am excited.
HERMES
The whole tree is billowing, it will shake us off.

ZEUS
So hold me by the apron. (Wreaths are finished and their hair is decorated.)

THE NINETEENTH
(At the trunk, without moving.) The flowers gleam only on the head of one who is not here.

THE FIRST
(To one in the circle.) We are lying on the flowering grass and are wreathed in bright colors, should we stay here quietly?

THE SECOND
Now we shall speak in turn.

THE THIRD
(Lowering his head.) Wait a while, I am still thinking of her.

ZEUS
(In the tree top with a repressed outcry.) A woman!

HERMES
Are you satisfied?

ZEUS
No, by no means, without having seen her.

HERMES
You'll see her.

ZEUS
I have to get down from here right now.
HERMES

That would be a most foolish start.

ZEUS

When will they be finished?

HERMES

Be still.

THE NINETEENTH

(At the trunk.) Be quiet, if the most eloquent doesn’t open his mouth.

THE THIRD

(Lifting his head.) Europa is no woman. Is fragrance form—breath shape? Europa is fragrance without form—Europa is breath without shape. Does she even comprehend herself? Does she even feel herself? Is she not strange to herself even in every limb? Do her fingers touch even on the same hand? Do the hairs of her head touch even when done in a knot? Finger knows not finger of the same hand, hair touches not hair in the knot. Europa is not a body. Europa is cool fragrance that flows out. Europa is thin breath, which melts away.

(Silence prevails.)

HERMES

(In the tree top nudging Zeus.) Now do you know her thoroughly?

ZEUS

(Shoves him back.)

THE NINETEENTH

(At the trunk, shaking his head indignantly.)
THE FOURTH

(Looking upward.) Europa is stern. She rules boldly and powerfully. She is extreme dignity, and strongest order. She sits in the distance on a high throne. No knee bends itself deeply enough before her in order to reach her. No arm toward which she bends reaches high enough. No voice pleads loudly enough so that the sound may fill her ears. Europa is inaccessible. (The same silence in the circle.)

HERMES

(In the tree top to Zeus.) Have you heard enough?

ZEUS

(Shakes his head reprimandingly.)

THE NINETEENTH

(Takes a step away from the tree, however he returns as if in tired resignation.)

THE FIFTH

Europa is a white lustre--filling a glassy shell. Whoever touches it with eager fingers will smash the thin wall. Perhaps she is waiting on the impulse which will pour the contents out. Then it will return to its source. It will rest on a star. And she is the star come back again and burning with a mild fire in the blue sky of the night--and even quieter in the pale sky of the day. Perhaps someone will come who will touch her with just such an offensive gesture. He will smash the tender shell. Then Europa will be liberated from her glass prison and struggle toward her star. I do not have the courage to perform this offence. Who has it? Where is he? When is he coming?
HERMES

(In the tree top.) You are breathing much too heavily.

ZEUS

It could be the cows that are grazing behind the meadow slope.

HERMES

No milk cow pants that way.

ZEUS

Then there's a bull grazing with them.

HERMES

I'll accept that.

THE SIXTH

(Starting.) Europa--

THE NINETEENTH

(Stepping quickly toward them.) Enough of empty sounds and foolish torrent of words. (They look at him in astonishment.) Down with the garlands. Stand up. (Some rise half taken aback.) Don't you have a horror of your stuttering? Doesn't bare poverty grin at you? Don't you lie here naked and freezing? You speak, and praise, and celebrate. How dull your praises and speeches and celebrations are. (Lifting his arms.) Rumelos is not here. His slender body isn't blooming in the grass--his bright voice doesn't fill the air--his high knees don't direct the dance. But be silent, stand up, stand still. Are we worthy without Rumelos? (All are silent in embarrassment.)

ONE

Where is Rumelos?
HERMES

(In the tree top turning Zeus's head toward the inlet.) Our fish is returning from the sea.

ZEUS

He is lying strangely stiff on the surface of the water.

HERMES

He has satisfied his thirst forever.

ZEUS

They should drag him onto land and roll him about.

HERMES

They are too busy with themselves.

ZEUS

I'll give them a sign.

HERMES

It's too late. (On the smooth water the corpse of the first stranger comes to land.)

THE NINETEENTH

(Running there.) Here Eumelos lies dead. (He collapses as if lifeless. The others approach.)

ONE

How did this happen?

ANOTHER

Has he had an accident in bathing?

THE THIRD

No, he is wearing his clothes.

OTHERS

(Agreeing.) He is wearing all his clothes.
A FOURTH
(With a halting question.) Why has he--?

OTHERS

(Murmuring.) Why?

A FIFTH

Lift him out. (They pull him out of the water and lay him down in the middle of the meadow.)

HERMES

(In the tree top.) It seems that the sight of the dead man has struck the other one dead.

ZEUS

He's getting up on his feet again.

THE NINETEENTH

(Lifting himself slowly and going to the group in the center. Gazing at the dead one.) Eumelos dead. These knees stiff--these hips lame--this mouth quiet. Grieve--mourn. This loss is more bitter than any other. Eumelos stiff, quiet. (Turning to the others.) Grieve deeply--fill yourselves with tears. Do you know who died today? Europa died.

ZEUS

(Leaps high up in the tree top.) That's impossible!

HERMES

Just wait.

THE NINETEENTH

(With growing lamentation.) Europa lived through the one who lies here. She strode by the dance of his legs--she breathed by the ardent
stream of his words. He lifted her up to her throne—he praised her, up to the stars—his breath pushed her to drifting clouds across the skies. He placed her near the silvery moon in the pale night—inaccessible to us. (After a pause.) Eumelos dead. We are deserted. Who will show Europa to us now? Through his eyes we saw Europa. Who will lead us now before her seat with worthy dancing steps? Who will throw us down and teach us reverence? Who will tell us Europa's fable with magnificent revelation? (After another pause.) We remain like orphans. He took our treasure with him. We are jingling with copper coins. The sound is poor—we are all beggars. (Looking up.) Your silent question is seeking for an answer? Why has he gone away from us? Why did he make this resolution? Why did he go from Europa's sight so soon? Why did he make himself dumb and shabby, as the dead are? (Almost exultant.) He is not shabby—Eumelos is the most wealthy. He is laughing now in his happiness. He is entirely happy. Don't ask here—don't seek here. I want to tell you where I'm going to say it. Carry this bursting shrine of happiness on your shoulders and stride in the boldest dancing step. Your wreaths on top of him—and flowers—more flowers—flowers all over him. (They place him on their shoulders, lay the wreaths on him and pull bunches of flowers up which they toss on him, until he is entirely covered.)

THE NINETEENTH

I will lead you, where I'll lead you—and dance more quickly, dance more freely. (With lively dance steps the procession withdraws. Zeus and Hermes swing down out of the tree top.)
ZEUS

What kind of a woman is that, that makes women out of men?

HERMES

This Europa will hardly live up to your taste.

ZEUS

Why not?

HERMES

Because you go in for the more real ones in your human existence.

ZEUS

Isn't it painted for me in the most alluring colors?

HERMES

After all, from what we've heard, she seems rather colorless.

ZEUS

She blooms strongly in my blood.

HERMES

(Shrugging his shoulders.) Pure light--fragrance--breath--I don't know, it only promises a feeble pleasure for you.

ZEUS

My passion is able to inflame a stone.

HERMES

Provided you advance far enough, to be effective.

ZEUS

Even to the limit.

HERMES

I'm afraid you will come back weak from her inaccessibility.
ZEUS

(Seizing Hermes.) Become weak? Because she is inaccessible?

HERMES

You heard it from twenty witnesses. That is the reason why one of them took his life in the sea.

ZEUS

Yes, that's it. The wonderful resistance of this woman promises a dazzling extreme of beauty. What good are charms, offered for sale—the woman, whom I seek, must be inaccessible for all—for all, until I come. She must be guarded by ten fold ramparts, then it will tempt me, then it will spur on my skill. I let her play, I destroy opposition after opposition, she sees me approaching—step by step—irresistibly—there is no stopping—I execute the last leap—we stand eye to eye, and shouting aloud for joy, she sinks into my arms. That is the pleasure, which I need—the game in which I become most alive. And then I triumph, as I wish.

HERMES

You possess an overpowering energy of speech.

ZEUS

Do I make even your obstinate goat skin tender?

HERMES

Agreed. Europa is yours, or—

ZEUS

No or. Come we mustn't lose their track.
HERMES

You stay behind me. You know in your excitement, you may lack the necessary precaution.

ZEUS

You explore the situation.

HERMES

And you will be master of the situation. (They steal off in the direction of the procession.)
THE SECOND ACT

(A circular courtyard surrounded by a marble wall. In the center a short column stump—of the type of grave marker with the top broken off in a slant. Doors to the left and behind.)

AGHNOR

(In heavy baggy garments of black and gold—embraces the column.)

Cadmus—I stand in your court, as I do every day at this hour, in order to call you. Cadmus—don't you hear me today either? Does my cry glide along to the silence of the motionless heavens and sink unheard into the sea? Cadmus—Cadmus—are you still among the living, who all live with graying hair and hopeless infirmity? Must only your fresh youth die? Abundant in old age, with all the strength of my resignation, I can not make up my mind to believe it. Nor do I have the will to resign myself. As you have left this house of your happy childhood—whoever had a childhood like yours in this house?—so you come back: one morning you stand in the door, and my glance falls on you from my bed, and I turn on my side and sleep the heaviest dream. I do not bother you with a reproach—I do not ask you where you have been and where you are going, as fathers tend to torment their growing sons—your presence again has answered the riddle, and all is forgiven and forgotten. (Bursting out in lamentation.) Why have you left this house? Have I made you angry? Have I failed in this or that? I certainly do not know it. You lived with me protected
and cared for. Wasn't it enough? I will strive for improvement with all my abilities. I promise it to you—I swear it. It is not the vow of a father, which changes quickly—it is the oath of a king. (After a silence.) I have built this burial courtyard in order to have a place for my tears. I have erected this grave marker—should I make up my mind to have your name chiseled in the stone? Then I would give up my one hope and bereave myself of the last confidence. Then everything would grow dull and grey and silent. (Strongly.) A father grieves for his son. Shouldn't the winds rage and roam over the earth and never rest until they bring me a message from Cadmus? (Out of both doors two long armed humpbacked Doorkeepers enter.)

AGENOR

(Full of wrath.) Do you dare to break in here?

SECOND DOORKEEPER

(Encouraged by a sign from the first.) We have been looking for—

(He indicates for the other to speak.)

FIRST DOORKEEPER

All over the palace—

AGENOR

Can't you two wait? Isn't the day empty and long enough?

SECOND DOORKEEPER

We would be patient—

FIRST DOORKEEPER

We want to be patient—

AGENOR

Who doesn't restrain his haste at this threshold?
BOTH DOORKEEPERS

The strange messenger, who asks for you.

AGENOR

(Astonished.) A messenger--and strange--and asks for me? Don't you know him? You say--strange. He must be strange--otherwise he would already have come without being announced. Strange messenger--not a word, that trembles with such a familiar sound. He comes to fill the house with life again. Strange messenger--nearest friend. (To them both.) Lead him here, I know him. Greet him for me and esteem him highly. I'll welcome him here standing up. I am no king for him--I am only a father. Run and return. (They both exit.)

AGENOR

(Lifting his arms upward.) Wind--have thanks. Currents of air--be thanked. Glory to your service. You don't blow idly, you bind the living to the living--and where it lives, it fills the earth with sound from one end to the other. For the last time I have looked at this court of pain--this marker of fatherly grief, now the stone sprouts with the roots of my joy and spreads flowering boughs of happiness over the entire house. Cadmus lives and send his messenger.

THE TWO DOORKEEPERS

(Enter at the left with Hermes.) That is King Agenor. (Both exit.)

AGENOR

(Approaching Hermes, quickly.) I am walking toward you. Put all shyness away. Before you I am discarding all my dignity, which I have among men. All that is left is your voice, which sinks into my soul.
HERMES

(Stops in astonishment.)

AGENOR

Don't look around. Don't be surprised at anything. This is a court built by an eccentric mood. But anyway my explanation would be obso­le­te after your message. Tell me now.

HERMES

(Composing himself.) My lord has landed in the meadow of your estate.

AGENOR

(In the greatest joy.) Is he already here?

HERMES

He is detaining himself however.

AGENOR

Why doesn't he come?

HERMES

He isn't sure of his reception.

AGENOR

I accept him with open arms.

HERMES

His wish is delicate and daring.

AGENOR

Fulfilled, as I am able to fulfill it.

HERMES

He gave me a message--

AGENOR

To me his command.
HERMES

He asks for the hand of your daughter Europa.

AGENOR

(Recoiling, shaking his head.) The brother doesn't want his sister.
(Again to the column.) Beautiful hope stifled in the bud. Hope that warms with a lively fire—in order to make this stone feel twice as cold. Cadmus—Cadmus, must I really engrave your name in the cold column?

HERMES

(Whistles through his teeth in his slight embarrassment.)

AGENOR

(Rising quickly.) Who is your master?

HERMES

(In an effort to make good his obvious blunder.) We won't talk about him any more. A whim of his, as you say. My lord is merry and in good spirits. But you bear a sorrow. Share it with us, that we may share it with you.

AGENOR

(Being pleasantly touched, refuses.) Let us not talk about it. It is still mine. Let us share pleasures, which will quickly bind our friendship. Where have you arrived from on my green meadow?

HERMES

No, every thought would be offensive. I am entirely under the spell of this—(He glances around questioningly.)

AGENOR

Well—I had preferred to be silent, however your curiosity pleases me.
HERMES

It springs from an honest mind.

AGENOR

I could begin with the phrase, which is generally used for relief in argument: know then--(He stops.) But if you are less presumptuous and respect my grief, which hinders the more artistic and more personal phrases--(He looks at him.)

HERMES

(Encouraging.) Know then--

AGENOR

(Relieved, nods in assent.) A son of mine grew up. A very wonderful inheritance from my wife, so that still today I go to her tomb with joy and jubilation. Excellently formed of body and spirit—a human being of supreme harmony. I protected him as a game keeper protects a young deer that he finds in his woods. Seventeen years I cared for him with such wonderful success, that I had no misgivings concerning the future. However, time ridicules our foresight. On the day, on which he was eighteen years old; I prepared a celebration of the greatest extent, for with this year the royal son would become heir apparent. On the morning of that day, we could not find Cadmus—and didn’t find him before evening—and not at all. He sent no message—although I waited every hour for a message from him. Forgive my emotion, with which I greeted you for another—and let you feel my disappointment. (After a declining gesture from Hermes.) I fell into my old understandable error; I see in every greatly welcomed guest a messenger. (Brightly continuing.) In the night before his
birthday, Cadmus had left—without greeting and farewell, without explanation and reason. We have guessed at this riddle in confusion and haven't come nearer to the solution by one inch. He confronts us with the fact, and the fact is as cold as ice. What you see here, is an expression of my feelings. I mourn for my son as a dead person. But one thing is left for me to do—-(He passes his hand over the front of the column.) It would be the last service of love, and I shrink from it.

HERMES

(Stepping nearer.) Now I am ashamed, to want to deprive you of your daughter.

AGENOR

(Looking up surprised.) Why?

HERMES

She is your only remaining comfort.

AGENOR

(As before.) Europa?

HERMES

She is now your only child.

AGENOR

(With a sweeping gesture.) She is not my child.

HERMES

King Agenor's daughter is not Europa?

AGENOR

(Passionately.) Europa is no human child, Europa is, what is she?—I don't know? Our guesses wander in darkness. Strike your forehead
against this wall, and you will rather shake the wall than her stub-
bornness. Stubbornness, I call it. I as her father use this word.
What others think, I do not care. Since I am her father, haven't I
the right ten times over?

HERMES

Only a father knows his child.

AGENOR

And therefore I am not her father, I— (He breaks off, looking around.)

HERMES

(Approaching him, subdued.) Is your daughter as beautiful as pale
moonlight?

AGENOR

(Looks at him surprised, tilts his head, nods.) She is.

HERMES

Is her presence like pure breath?

AGENOR

(More and more astonished.) Yes.

HERMES

Her head domineering.

AGENOR

Yes, yes.

HERMES

And she is proud even to inaccessibility.

AGENOR

(Moving back one step.) You know it?
HERMES

I hear it.

AGENOR

And nevertheless your lord asks the question?

HERMES

Perhaps his request is better founded than that of others.

AGENOR

With youthfulness—wit—joy—fire? He will be mistaken. There will be only one answer from her mouth— if she thinks he is worth an answer: NO--NO--NO--. I want to spare him the insult and tell him this: if he has entered the meadow with this intention, then he should hasten to depart. Otherwise he will definitely receive her refusal, as— (With quick gesture.) Detain him on his way here, it is a vain effort.

HERMES

If he will only believe me.

AGENOR

He will have to believe it.

HERMES

Why must he?

AGENOR

The twenty fold example of the best sons of my land will help him.

HERMES

Why do they trouble themselves over Europa, if there is no use?

AGENOR

(Silent for a moment.)--That's what it is. I do not understand my own child.
HERMES
I'll have to bring my lord a clear unequivocal answer.

AGENOR
I feel it even in this darkness, where nothing is solid to the touch.
(He puts his hand to his forehead.)

HERMES
Also my master is young and rich--

AGENOR
(Signaling him not to say what he was about to say.) From a grand-
father.

HERMES
(Blowing out his cheeks.) Grandfather--

AGENOR
I must go back in order to give you a clear picture. My father re-
ceived the empire, exactly as I rule over it today: a realm of free
men. For many decades no war has come to the country. Wars became
legendary, in which the neighbors were put down and exterminated. We
knew no enemy in the North and East and South and West. The weapons
grew rusty in the cellars--I don't know what a sword is, or a spear,
or a shield. Names, which no one is able any more to fit to the cor-
responding object. Whom do we wish to fight against? You don't
fight against the air. And flowers are not enemies. Thus we could
engage in the prosperous works of peace. To the prosperous works of
peace--I have advanced them, I can frankly admit it. I've favored
them royally. I have also had success, you will encounter it where
ever you go. I do not refer to buildings and their furnishings--all
that is trivial. I would rather emphasize the change of the soul of my realm into gardens. The meadow, that you mentioned, is adorned with flowers so artificial that every tree in the woods has been planted according to a planned design. The large dense willow stands there so proudly that I have recently with a great deal of trouble ordered some transplanting done. Take this as an example of the extent of our physical work. (Strongly emphasizing.) And it is left behind by the work done with our minds, on ourselves. Every noisy sound is banished. Each awkward gesture paralyzed. Haste has been appeased and bustle is suppressed. We are the fruit that ripened in two generations. Here the sight will be an experience for you. This experience has become the most valuable of my spiritual possessions. All—none can forsake—(He stops.)

HERMES

We too have not missed this impression.

AGENOR

(Eagerly.) Have you encountered our men?

HERMES

We had the pleasure of seeing them for a moment in the meadow.

AGENOR

Aren't they built to make the heart of a girl rejoice?

HERMES

They seemed to us to be very much like gentle girls themselves.

AGENOR

Haven't they discarded everything, that is rude—that is course?

HERMES

They didn't even walk anymore— they danced.
AGENOR

The dance is the last stage. In the dance our roughness is lost even to the core. The dance is the expression of the complete moderation of motion. We have gone so far, it should be the climax—

HERMES

That is what it is.

AGENOR

(Shaking his head.) Europa is still cool, it isn't enough for her.

HERMES

What does she want then?

AGENOR

What does she desire? I ask myself, I torture myself, to try to understand her. The nimblest dancer, who leaps like a breath of air over the ground—almost ethereal—finds no favor from her. The man is still a man, and a residue of heaviness must cling to him, otherwise he isn't alive. She can not marry air, however.

HERMES

No.

AGENOR

(Confidentially.) And that has become my greatest sorrow. She is a child and demands the impossible. Where should further improvement lead then, if the gentle motion of the dance is still too strong. An unending calm means the end. And as my family dies away, so the last man will soon vanish from the fields of my country. My daughter sets the pattern, and naturally everyone stands behind the king's daughter. I had my entire hope set on Europa, who should present me with an heir.
to the throne. I lost my son—now I must learn how to give up hope for a grandchild. (He pauses.) Cadmus—Europa, it is so: my children give me a difficult problem.

    HERMES

(With resolution.) I wish to speak with my young lord.

    AGENOR

You see it is hopeless.

    HERMES

My master dances like a god.

    AGENOR

And if god dances like your master, he would not shake Europa.

    HERMES

Do I have your fatherly permission?

    AGENOR

I am sorry.

    HERMES

It is worth a try.

    AGENOR

I'll prevent it.

    HERMES

Entirely without obligation.

    AGENOR

I will only become richer through a bitter experience.

    HERMES

Today he practices—tomorrow he will perform.
AGENOR
And if he practices for ten years, it will be for nothing.

HERMES
Is it worth it?

AGENOR
Spare me the pain.

HERMES
That's a bargain. (He twists himself around in a dance step, which surpasses the dance on the meadow in lightness and figures, moving toward the left entrance.)

AGENOR
(Delighted.) Beautiful—lovely—wonderful.

HERMES
(Restrains himself and bursting out laughing turns around.) We keep our promise. (Exits.)

AGENOR
(Still looking after him.) What was that? (Involuntarily drawn into the dance, he approaches the left entrance. As this is opened, he hesitates.) What is that? (The procession enters into the court, as it had left the meadow.)

THE NINETEENTH
We are bringing you the happiest of the dead.

AGENOR
The--the--

THE NINETEENTH
The living dead--dead and therefore really living!
AGENOR

What does that mean?

THE NINETEENTH

(To the others.) Follow me farther. (Before the column.)

Put him down here. (They do it.)

AGENOR

All I see is flowers.

THE NINETEENTH

We plundered the meadow and decorated him. Unveil him again. (They do it.) Look at him.

AGENOR

(Confused.) Bumelos? Isn't it Bumelos?

ALL

(Murmuring.) It is Bumelos.

AGENOR

Bumelos in this dripping wetness. Hair and clothing soaked—Bumelos drowned?

ALL

(Silent.)

AGENOR

Didn't he drown? (Hastily.) Did he drown himself?

ALL

(Silent.)

AGENOR

(Seizing the nearest one.) Could no one save him? Don't you always go together?
He ran ahead today—

And as you arrived?

We couldn't find him.

And when you were there?

He drifted in quietly.

(Covering his head.) I am sad. My heart is torn with this pain.

I want to see no more splendor. Bumelos was close to me, you didn't suspect it. I had secret wishes for him—I nourished a hope, as a father, who has a daughter, nourishes hope. I confess it—I would have preferred him to marry Europa. What a disappointment—it has come to nothing. Why that—why? Why dead—and why at his own hands?

Now he has married her.

He who is lying so stiffly on the ground?

In the only manner, that is worthy of Europa.

What do you know?
I know, I see. I can see through the walls of his silence. He is speaking. Don't you hear? Look: doesn't the word still bloom round his mouth—that word—Europa? Look up: doesn't Rumelos roam round us in a dance as light as a feather? Isn't Rumelos fragrance—breath? Where is his heaviness now? Didn't he strip it from himself and let it fall like a garment, that has become troublesome. The garment is lying here—Rumelos rose up—upward—free—unincumbered. Now he is loving and happy—now he can marry. Now fragrance combines with fragrance—breath with breath: Rumelos and Europa are united. In the shadowy tie both are happy, their wedding is diffusing a wonderful breath. Breathe in and greet them by breathing out. Europa is married—Rumelos embraces her as light as a cloud. (To Agenor.) Now your wish is fulfilled. The father places his daughter in the arms of the nimblest man. (To the others.) Dance—dance a joyous wedding dance.

AGENOR

(Speechless.) Is that it—

THE NINETEENTH

We dance on the wedding day. (They begin their dance.)

AGENOR

(Royally.) No. I forbid it. (They stand quietly and look at him.) Here I command you to stop. This is the limit. Here—(He stops.) Take your burden away—that which is dead, is dead. No path leads beyond. Leave me alone. I must collect myself—I am confused. Bury the dead—and call me to the cremation. I will make it known, that
we bury the one who has breathed his last breath. (They have
shouldered the body again and remove themselves in quiet steps.)

AGENOR

(Stands rigidly—then he runs to the door, pulls it open, remembers
and closes the door and fastens it. Shivering.) That is enough—
that is the limit, which I will not allow to be surpassed. With no
favor—with no mercy. I shall harden myself against my own flesh and
blood. Is the man in the dance still too rough for her—too ponderous—
so that she may not complain to me? I believe that I as her father
have met the wishes of a girl more than is due. I have exceeded the
limit. (Clapping his hands together over his head.) What have I seen?
Here one lay, who drowned himself—in order to be worthy of Europa.
Scales are falling from my eyes. Where does the way lead? That is
certainly the beginning of the end—now close at hand. Tomorrow they
will bring the next—the next morning the third—on another day the
fourth, fifth—(Bursting out.) What does Europa want? Isn't she
flesh and blood—of solid flesh from father and mother. (Strongly.)
Europa doesn't want—Europa shall. This is the command of the king.
My sorrow has come to overshadow the entire land. I must maintain
the power of the people. It is not the end of all days—the people
have a right to live and to live happily and easily, as I make it
possible for them in my empire. Europa must—that has become the
pivot point of this action. I must act quickly. I must force her
to make up her mind. She must be satisfied. With her sky-high
wishes she has no right to drive all of them into the abyss. I will
speak my emphatic word—I have an entire people to preserve. I am
giving her the last time of reflection—(Behind the left door the quarreling voices of the Doorkeeper and Hermes.)

DOORKEEPER

It isn't allowed.

HERMES

Make way there.

DOORKEEPER

The entry to the court of the dead is definitely prohibited.

HERMES

I was already in there once. (He forces the door open, pushes the Doorkeeper aside, and steps in with a sigh of relief.) This fool—

DOORKEEPER

This man—

HERMES

Are you sure, that I am the like of you?

DOORKEEPER

(Looks at him with concern.)

AGENOR

Leave me alone with him.

DOORKEEPER

(With a contemptuous gesture toward Hermes, softly.) The likes of me? Imposter. (Exits.)

AGENOR

(Quickly moving toward Hermes.) Is your master coming?

HERMES

No.
Where is he?

HERMES

In the meadow.

AGENOR

Why does he hesitate?

HERMES

He is practicing.

AGENOR

What?

HERMES

His dance.

AGENOR

(Shouting for joy.) His dance?

HERMES

He is absorbed in the matter. He doesn't need days—weeks, he will be ready this evening. This evening he will dance for Europa—and if she isn't satisfied with him—

AGENOR

She will be satisfied.

HERMES

Are you going to allow him to dance?

AGENOR

I am giving the order. I have already pledged my word in your absence.
HERMES

In the meantime have you prepared your daughter?

AGENOR

No. I'm not going to speak a syllable to her. I want to let her have no time. I have formed my resolution.

HERMES

My master will be victorious.

AGENOR

Entirely immaterial. All shall dance. This evening. I am arranging this contest. He who comes off victor is all the same to me. I will pass judgment.

HERMES

Your daughter will not be disappointed.

AGENOR

I'll make it easy for her. I'll allow the dance one more time. That is the first and last thing I can do. She must be satisfied with it.

HERMES

You are a most gracious father.

AGENOR

It is an institution from above.

HERMES

You are more nearly right than you suspect.

AGENOR

All shall dance. I will have them all married. They shall have their dances one after the other. I will do my best to be just.
HERMÉS

It will be a great evening.

AGENOR

The most beautiful of my life. And I have the conviction to do the best, and at the same time to obey the necessity. It is a pleasant sensation.

HERMÉS

Every inch a king.

AGENOR

However, keep silent. I am expecting everything from this surprise and nothing from making it known.

HERMÉS

We will keep silent under the seven seals.

AGENOR

Even your master himself shall remain hidden until tonight--

HERMÉS

In the shadow of the willow.

AGENOR

Now the old willow is fulfilling your aim.

HERMÉS

Also a king never acts without sense.

AGENOR

This will be demonstrated tonight. (He stretches out his hand to him.)

HERMÉS

(Shakes it.) It is as much as accomplished.
AGE NOR
(Exits through the upstage entrance.)

HERMES

(He waits, then whistles sharply.)

ZEUS

(Appears on the wall to the right.)

HERMES

(Running to him.) Quickly.

ZEUS

(Climbs on Hermes shoulders into the court.) Where are we?

HERMES

In the court of the dead.

ZEUS

Where is she?

HERMES

Caution.

ZEUS

When do I see her?

HERMES

This evening.

ZEUS

Impossible.

HERMES

I have promised not to go further before evening.

ZEUS

And then?
HERMES
You may dance.

ZEUS
And then--

HERMES
(Solemnly.) You will be at your destination.

ZEUS
Don't torment me.

HERMES
Europa will belong to the lightest dancer.

ZEUS
Does she say that herself?

HERMES
(After hesitation, firmly.) Yes.

ZEUS
(Exclaiming.) Europa belongs to me. I will dance her out of her senses--I shall leap like the drunken Dionysus himself. (He executes a few goat like leaps.)

HERMES
That's the worst of all.

ZEUS
(Pausing.) What's wrong with that?

HERMES
You must compose a completely new dance. A dance which is not a dance. A dance like the long haired brothers stride. You understand--stride.
ZEUS

Does Europa like a slow rhythm?

HERMES

The controlled rhythm. That's why I'm warning you. You are violent and passionate in your human nature—don't let yourself be carried away by temperament. Apply reins to it. Dance solemnly—mistily—almost shadowy. Restrain yourself.

ZEUS

I won't be able to do it.

HERMES

At the best: be a cloud. Small, light feather cloud, that twists and turns itself and makes a thin whirlwind. Dissolve yourself—be without substance, finally a white shadow, through which one can stick his finger.

ZEUS

(Rising quickly.) Good, I must consider. As you say: shadow like.

HERMES

That is the best way to success. What comes to pass then, that is certainly your look out.

ZEUS

Let that be my business—and yours will be to prepare me for this occasion.

HERMES

(Already running toward the right.) Over the wall.
THE THIRD ACT

(The Hall of blue glossy stone. From a deeply set middle piece a stairway with many steps leads to a surrounding platform, which extends up stage. It is surrounded by a starry night sky. At the upper left, a single chair, right above, a number of chairs. A curtain closes off the open background of the center piece, on the sides are candlelabra with bowl shaped lights, burning green. Behind at the edge of the platform--turned away looking out into the night sky--the maidens form a straight line. Europa is in the center: those standing on her left are dressed in yellow, their hair--bound in a high dome--blue in color. To the right the clothing is blue and the hair yellow. Europa is in white, her hair covered in gold dust hangs like a heavy casque on her mature neck.)

AGENOR

(Entering in the company of the Doorkeepers through the curtain.) Nothing has been overlooked, in order to make this a beautiful evening of dance. The order of succession, in which the dancers will appear, has been settled. Their humor is excellent. They will show their ability in the best light. In this consideration, as I already said, nothing has been--(Breaking off.) What about the new dancer, whom you still haven't seen--whom even I haven't seen--I wish to recommend to you to wait on him with greatest attention. In case he expresses wishes--for example, a wise change in the lighting, in
case he demands—anyway, be of assistance to him—I am expecting extraordinary things from his appearance—certainly the highest—I may divulge that much already. You let me down, if you let him down. I will give the signal to begin by clapping my hands three times. Take your places. (The two Doorkeepers exit behind the curtain.)

AGENOR

(Now looking up.) We have assembled for a beautiful evening in the ballroom—(He hesitates, noticing the empty seats. As he listens to the voices above, he quickly climbs the steps. The maidens begin to count off from left to right. One--two--three--four--five--etc.)

A MAIDEN

(Shouting for joy.) Thirteen--my star. (They look again quietly into the sky.)

AGENOR

(Watches then surprised. New count.)

A MAIDEN

Twenty--my star. (Silence again.)

AGENOR

(Approaches them. New count.)

EUROPA

Eleven--my star. (Another count.)

EUROPA

Eleven--

ALL

Eleven again.
EUROPA
A double star for me.

ALL
A double star for Europa. (They become silent and stand as before.)

AGBNOR
(Stepping behind Europa.) What does that mean?

EUROPA
No meaning. We are amusing ourselves. What meaning should it have?

AGBNOR
(Shaking his head.) I know.

EUROPA
We have invented a new game. We play with the stars. When one falls, we count off, as long as it lasts, until it disappears—and whose number it is in the row, that is her star. I have won twice.

AGBNOR
You disappoint me—

EUROPA
Papa.

AGBNOR
Or don't deceive me intentionally.

EUROPA
Here we sit in the hall and stare at the walls, but there it is more interesting, to look into the starry sky of night.

AGBNOR
I see through your game.
EUROPA
(Surprised to the others.) Do you have something else in mind when you play?

AGENOR
Isn't it without meaning?

EUROPA
As long as it's amusing--no.

AGENOR
(Violely.) It amuses you--that amuses you!

EUROPA
Does this harmless pleasure which we have, disgust you?

AGENOR
I do not want to hide my emotions from you. I am shocked.

EUROPA
Because we count shooting stars?

AGENOR
That becomes your excessive wish: star brides, star brides, not on this earth, in fruitless marriage--star brides. It is clear as day--and it is time. Come.

EUROPA
But we don't understand what is so clear tonight.

AGENOR
Not just this evening--for a long time. But I closed my eyes. I didn't want to see. Today I became clear sighted, a bolt of lightning illuminated the abyss, along which we were wandering. I recoiled, shocked. I also know what your star is called: Bumelos.
EUROPA
(Laughing.) The good Kumelos--the little star.

AGENOR
You'll discover it. I have promised myself that no frost shall fall on the flower of your maidenhood. Today I can still prevent it--you should prevent it yourself. Don't be looking: what was, is dead, and what is dead--is gone. In the future turn your happy look--you all should look into a happy future. Your expectation leaps to the highest, sits quietly--a residue of patience will reward you abundantly. (He turns his attention to the Doorkeepers, who are stepping out excitedly from below.) Sit down, in the mean time--(He quickly goes down right.)

EUROPA
(To the Maidens, sighing.) Sit down. (They take their places above to the right, drop their hands into their laps and look straight ahead.)

AGENOR
What's the matter?

FIRST DOORKEEPER
(Out of breath.) Nothing.

SECOND DOORKEEPER
(Also out of breath.) No--nothing.

AGENOR
What causes your confusion?

FIRST DOORKEEPER
(Clenches his teeth together, shakes his head, stands stiffly at the left of the curtain.)
SECOND DOORKEEPER

(Stations himself at the right.)

AGENOR

(Full of misgivings.) The strange dancer?

BOTH DOORKEEPERS

(Running toward Agenor, nodding eagerly.) Yes.

AGENOR

Have you seen him?

BOTH DOORKEEPERS

We have seen him. (Almost solemnly.)

AGENOR

Is he plump, ugly--can't he dance?

FIRST DOORKEEPER

He is--

SECOND DOORKEEPER

Magnificent.

BOTH DOORKEEPERS

(Overcome.) Magnificent--magnificent--magnificent--

AGENOR

(Satisfied.) Magnificent. Yes magnificent. I suspected it, there is something about him, otherwise he would have forced himself on me. Coming in the last hour--there he is--dances--dances--and wins. He looks good?

FIRST DOORKEEPER

I can't describe him.
SECOND DOORKEEPER

To see him is to be called fortunate.

AGENOR

You shouldn't say anything to me. I want to drink in happiness from that which he offers himself. I am thirsty for his appearance. Does he even charm blind men--your eyes are blind compared to ours--(Breaking off.) Control your excitement--do your service--listen for every sign--and pay attention to my signals. Ease your mind outside--here however I have an introductory word to say. (The Doorkeepers exit.)

AGENOR

(Climbs to his chair at the left above and sits. As his glance falls on the motionless Europa, he becomes doubtful. Finally arousing himself.) A beautiful evening.

EUROPA

(Looks immediately away toward the precipice. Then all the others look away.)

AGENOR

(Starts again.) The evening sky is most beautiful. Rapid stars furrow golden paths in it. Where from--where to? A world all their own. The sky of night is indescribably beautiful. (Shaking his head.) Indescribable--it overcomes our strength. The thoughts fly up--our feet cling to the earth. We are clever, if we restrict ourselves. (Strongly.) A beautiful evening for dancing.

EUROPA

(Turning her head toward him.) A--
AGENOR

Yes—an evening for dancing—

EUROPA

(Leaning back, slowly.) A--

ALL

(Breathing like Europa.) A--

AGENOR

(Firmly.) I have arranged this evening. It was my will. I alone have the responsibility for whatever may happen.

EUROPA

I am thankful to you for the evening's entertainment. And so are my playmates.

AGENOR

I am taking care of your entertainment—as for your entertainment I have done, what only I can do.

EUROPA

You are letting men dance.

AGENOR

(After a pause.) My daughter, Europa—Lovely daughter of my land, I look across at you with fatherly and kingly eyes. I can see, that you are the daughter of happiness. I am glad that I can acknowledge it. I gather the first fruit of my life with this admission. Benevolent circumstances undergird my work, I do not set myself to the false god of my success—but the success heaps up wreaths upon us.

EUROPA

(Slowly.) When are the men going to dance?
AGBNOR
They will dance, yes—that is the object of my labor. And aren't you going to thank me? Haven't I provided for you magnificently? For the hearts of the Maidens?

EUROPA
(Looks down at herself. Others do the same.)

AGBNOR
I will share your feelings—I regard modesty as the most precious treasure a girl has. It is sacred to me—yet the words of an old man.

A DOORKEEPER
(Comes through the curtain and in confusion looks for Agenor.)

AGBNOR
(Signalling to him, softly.) What's happening?

THE DOORKEEPER
(Stretching to him—whispering his message.)

AGBNOR
(Quietly, with a short domineering gesture.) He shall—I command it.

THE DOORKEEPER
(Descends and exits.)

EUROPA
(Pointing toward a falling star which shimmeringly descends in the rear.) That beautiful star.

ALL THE MAIDENS
(Counting quickly.) One—two—three—four—
AGENOR

(Loudly.) A father and king may firmly touch the secret wishes of a girl's heart. Here we are sitting without any witnesses. Your wishes—you don't know them yourselves. How would you satisfy them? You are dissatisfied—I say it openly now. Because too many of your wishes have been granted. (Eagerly.) What frightens a girl? What is repulsive to her—what makes her shy and pushes her into a corner, where she quivers in fright. A girl's terror is man—as he comes forth from creation. Wild—shaggy—uncivilized—roaring as he has behaved from his origin. (All stare at him.) I don't want to frighten you with a spectre. For we have banished it. Through two generations we have conquered man. The revolution was thorough. What I have prepared for you, Europa—and you, lovely maidens, today is indicative of the highest degree of cultural civilization. However also the last. Beyond that you will find no path for human feet. A residue of heaviness remains—must remain in order to continue. I earnestly promise you—and yet when supported by experience this very day—we are close to the goal. It is attained—and now must be dealt with.

A DOORKEEPER

(Enters and mounts the steps toward him.)

AGENOR

(Warding him off with both hands.) Nothing—nothing from below. Your orders remain the same. Away with you.

A DOORKEEPER

(Quickly descends and exits.)
AGENOR

The last heaviness—so far as it can fade—is overcome with the dance. The men dance—therefore be confident. They promise you and themselves a marriage without hardships. Men, who dance, are not clumsy husbands. You have to bear them without complaint. You must put up with them.

EUROPA

What does that have to do with a dance?

AGENOR

These are considerations which suddenly came to me as I saw you sitting in a row. You are actually to be envied. I praise you already as daughters of happiness. I repeat it and repeat it again. To grow up in a land, that knows no strife—where men brandish no weapons—where all men have worked together to make themselves bearable to the maidens of the land.

EUROPA

Will there be a dance this evening?

AGENOR

We all want to enjoy this evening very much. I have arranged everything. They shall show, what they can do. They are not to spare themselves, they will do their best. And you, Europa, and you shall designate the one, who in your opinion has been most successful. You call the swiftest, lightest dancer first—and you select the second, the third, the fourth. You count them off, as you counted off with the stars—however these stars do not disappear in vapor and thin air, they remain and are patient. You are not idle spectators at this dance, you will be judges.
But they all dance passably.

There are differences. They shall show them. You will find them. Make every effort—be particular, but choose. What you find will be of some importance for the future. I hope, of very nimble importance. I want the smallest burden for you—however no life begins without some pressure. I think about your pleasure—pleasure above all!—This evening produces all kinds of things for you. It is a beautiful evening, the most beautiful evening of my life, considered through the eyes of a father and sovereign. (He leans back with a sigh of relief.)

(A MAIDEN)

(Entirely in the rear.) And what becomes of one who dances clumsily?

You are the last in line, so you will have to be reconciled with him.

THE MAIDENS

(In confusion.) What becomes of the second—what becomes of the third—what becomes of the fourth—?

The second is the second maiden, the third the third, the fourth the fourth—

ALL MAIDENS

The second maiden is second, the third is third, the fourth is fourth—(Laughing.) But men aren't maidens.
AGENOR

Men and maidens today will be one however.

EUROPA

Why shall one be the first?

AGENOR

Because you sit first among your maidens.

EUROPA

Because I--

AGENOR

The game will furnish the answer to all the questions. The game is beginning. (He claps his hands three times. The Doorkeepers step out and pull the curtain back: a stairway leads downward in a reddish light.)

AGENOR

(Nodding.) Beautiful--very beautiful. A beautiful evening.

EUROPA

Yes, a dance again.

AGENOR

A very beautiful evening. The most beautiful evening of my--

THE FIRST DANCER

(Suddenly appears--hesitating and with delay he reaches the dance floor. Again he has to overcome himself in order to place his feet and lift his arms. But he remains like that, without beginning to dance.)

AGENOR

(Wondering.) Good, my friend, now continue.
THE DANCER
(Tries a dance step—stands stiffly.)

EUROPA

The good friend is lame.

THE DANCER
(Suddenly makes a quick turn, rushes toward the opening and dis-
appears with long leaps.)

AGENOR
(Looks after him in embarrassment.)

THE DOORKEEPERS
(Lift their arms up entreatingly.)

EUROPA

A beautiful dance.

AGENOR
(To the Doorkeepers.) Have I allowed a doubt—? (To Europa.)
It concerns a purposeful prologue, the conclusion will teach us its
meaning. A beautiful evening—(Breaking off.) Now it will be clear
to us.

THE SECOND DANCER
(Comes in. He is noticeably confident, for he comes forward with
firm steps.)

AGENOR
There you see it already—part and counterpart. The first makes him-
self lame, in order to let the next seem all the more agile. A fine
inspiration, worthy of this particular arrangement. I am ashamed of
my hasty reprimand, it falls back on me. (Looking on.) Magnificent
turn.

THE DANCER

(Already halting.)

EUROPA

At the most a half turn, in order to reduce the praise to its true
measure.

THE DANCER

(Now quickly starts again.)

AGENOR

Nimble—more nimble, swinging out of slowness—swelling, until—

THE DANCER

(Stops, shaking violently.)

EUROPA

Exhausted.

AGENOR

(Painfully constraining himself.) Continue.

THE DANCER

(_looks imploringly toward him.)

AGENOR

(Still moderately.) Continue, friend.

THE DANCER

(Hurrying up the steps to him and throwing himself down at his chair.)
I can not dance. We can not dance. (Crying face downward.) None of
us can dance. We can not dance—we can not dance.
AGENOR

(Has sprung up. The cry of many voices rises from the precipice:
we cannot dance—we cannot dance. The stream of men flows out of
the opening up to Agenor.)

ALL MEN

(Determined.) We will not dance.

THE DOORKEEPERS

(Have quickly pulled the curtain.)

AGENOR

(After it is quiet.) One shall speak to me.

THE NINETEENTH

(Detaches himself from the crowd.)

AGENOR

Why won't you obey my wish—and the earnest wish of Europa?

THE NINETEENTH

King Agenor, you will modify your command.

AGENOR

(Stamping.) I still wish it.

THE NINETEENTH

King Agenor, you will forget your wish. King Agenor, you too will
sink under this enchantment, which overpowers us.

AGENOR

(Bending forward.) What is that?

THE NINETEENTH

You called for dancers—we are none. We are afraid to step out here.
After this evening we are awkward and tired and lame—from this evening,
in which you have appointed a new dancer in your house.
AGNOR

(Joyfully.) Has he already given you a demonstration?

THE NINETEENTH

(Shaking his head.) His arrival is dance—his dance must be a happy exaltation.

AGNOR

(Nodding.) The Doorkeepers were greatly impressed—you confirm the impression. My expectations are growing. I dismiss you. Step out and enjoy the show. I believe, one will dance for all. And I will take advantage of the mood, when it is excessive. Then I will take care of all of you. (To Europa.) No questions, but silence now. (To the Doorkeepers.) Leave and send on this first and last dancer of the evening.

THE DOORKEEPERS

(Exit.)

THE MEN

(Climb onto the center platform to observe.)

AGNOR

(Still murmuring.) Now silence—the most beautiful evening of my—

THE DOORKEEPERS

(Enter again and arrange the lights. The light changes to a faint yellow. Then they pull back the curtain.)

AGNOR

(Half aloud.) I remember it—extraordinary from the very beginning. (A drawn out, medium high flute note is clearly heard.)
AGENOR

Dance music.

HERMES

(Appears. He wears a short but colorful costume. With dancing steps he climbs the stairway in a zig-zag. Having arrived, he runs around the hall several times. Then he stands quietly.)

SEVERAL MAIDENS

Is he the new dancer?

HERMES

(To them.) No I am not he. I am only the foredancer, who announces the dance, which will be performed, and accompany it with a special flute song. (To Agenor.) My young master will dance three times. Each part of his dance is significantly related to the others. If he succeeds in holding your attention, then the particular meaning will be clear to you without further to do. (He blows a short trill, its notes soon become longer and the hall is filled with growing powerful music.)

AGENOR

(Astonished.) Did you do all that with your flute?

ZEUS

(Appears: a blue mantle swaying loosely and heavily on him, his hair bound in a dull yellow cloth. His dance: under the weight of the mantle and hindered by it in his free movements, his dance steps are slow and scanty. Several times he tries to lift his knees and arms gracefully. So he approaches the side where Europa sits. He starts to place his foot on the lowest step--the resistance of the clothing
is too powerful. With a gesture of sorrowful resignation he turns away and moves slowly to the opening and disappears.)

HERMES

(Stops with a lost sounding plaintive note. He follows, giving the Doorkeepers a signal. They close the curtain, exit.)

AGENOR

(To the Men.) That was clear enough. It was clear to me. No more than the game with a long mantle, and yet—{(Eagerly.)} He must throw off his mantle, in order to release himself. I should tell him. I have a desire to help him. I could make it easy for him. Who—

THE NINETEENTH

(Above at the edge, already gesturing excitedly.) He's wearing the blue mantle--our blue mantle. It covers him from his shoulders to the souls of his feet. The blue mantle is our outermost garment--it was too difficult for him to move freely. With our outer mantle on we are sluggish, he is giving us a lesson. We must lay aside even more of our weight, in order to be worthy. He will throw off the blue mantle--he will return without it.

AGENOR

His head was already showing yellow above the heavy blue.

A THIRD

He will come back in a lighter yellow mantle.

A FOURTH

We must all throw off our thick outer mantles.

SEVERAL

He is teaching us a lesson.
AGENOR

(To Europa.) Hope is warming me up, my daughter.

EUROPA

(Gathering her dress tightly about her.) The evening is cooling off quickly.

AGENOR

Music.

THE DOORKEEPERS

(Come and arrange the lights: blue light spreads.)

HERMES

(Leaps in--blowing the flute lighter and more quickly.)

AGENOR

(Astonished at the full tone.) Only one flute is playing. Also I learn it all depends on the flute player.

ZEUS

(In a yellow garment, however shorter and of softer material--hair and forehead now wrapped in blue--steps on with nimble strides. His dance is alternately triumphant and sad. One time he climbs half way up the steps, which lead to Europa--however he turns back shaking his head. He strives upward to Europa by rising again--again the reversal follows. He pulls at the mantle angrily, which tires him prematurely--and he withdraws.)

HERMES

(With the last flute tone--follows.)

THE DOORKEEPERS

(Exit.)
AGENOR

Clear--clear--clear, you can grasp it with your hands. I have never before seen such an interpretation of abstract meanings. That is dance and spirit--spirit and dance--dance as the language of the spirit. I haven't heard this clear expression before. I doubt, whether I do not hear with my eyes.

THE NINETEENTH

I said he would come back in a yellow mantle.

ANOTHER

It's our yellow mantle, that we wear easily.

THE THIRD

It isn't a light mantle.

A FOURTH

We believed we were light dancers in our garments--now our inner mantle pulls him to the ground.

A FIFTH

We drag weight after weight with us.

A SIXTH

Blue is heavy--and yellow is heavy.

A SEVENTH

Blue still presses in on his forehead.

AN EIGHTH

Yellow fastens knee to knee.

MANY

We can not dance--we can not dance, King Agenor.
AGENOR
(Signaling to them.) He commanded us to wait for him three times. What happens now? (To Europa.) What are you waiting for now, Europa, my only daughter?

EUROPA
(Very quietly.) We are waiting.

AGENOR
And not in vain.

THE DOORKEEPERS
(Come quickly and arrange the lights. It grows dark.)

AGENOR
The tension has reached a climax. (Music begins brightly and stops at the same pitch sounding brief notes. All of a sudden bright white light appears.)

ZEUS
(Stands there—snugly dressed in white—his hair gold. Behind is the music of Hermes.)

AGENOR
It blinds me.

ONE
Is he standing with his feet on the ground?

ANOTHER
He hangs on the air.

THE THIRD
A white bell clapper is swinging.
A FOURTH

He is swinging himself.

ZEUS

(Dances around fleetingly--enjoying his own lightness--in the lower space.)

AGENOR

I recognize it: a white feather with a golden quill is floating here.

ONE

You are wrong, King Agenor, if you can be wrong, a fragrance of islands far over the sea is rising faintly.

THE NINETEENTH

(Breaking out.) We are no dancers.

ANOTHER

We aren't white.

A THIRD

We aren't gold.

A FOURTH

None of us is worthy.

ZEUS

(Has mounted the stairway to Europa with agile leaps and now throws himself down before her with arms outstretched in desire.)

AGENOR

(Has sprung up, to the Men.) Tell her, are you agreed? This is enough. Now I will fulfill my royal word. (To Europa.) Europa
fill these open arms, your maidenly fate is sealed. In this night
you will celebrate your marriage.

ZEUS

(Stammering fervently.) Maiden--beautiful, you are beautiful--
you are worthy of a god.

EUROPA

(Has stood up, looks at Zeus--to Agenor.)

AGENOR

(Coming down the steps.) I will bring you to each other.

ZEUS

Do you make me a god again?

EUROPA

(Starts to speak--then she begins to laugh lightly, she crumples on
a chair and does not stop her outburst of laughter.)

ZEUS

(Startled, stands up.)

AGENOR

(Stands amazed, finally aloud.) Silence--silence--silence--

EUROPA

(Laughs and all the other maidens start laughing. A storm of laughter
fills the hall.)

ZEUS

(Blushes.)

EUROPA

(Throwing a wry glance at him, laughs.)
AGENOR
(To Zeus.) She is joyful on her wedding night. (New storms of laughter.)

ZEUS
(Has retreated with uncertain steps.)

AGENOR
(Down to him.) Finally it has come too much as a surprise. (Waves of laughter.)

ZEUS
(Still waits, then he rushes headlong out the opening.)

AGENOR
(To Hermes.) Is your master offended—by the happy mood?

HERMES
(Turns around shortly, exits.)

AGENOR
(To the Men.) Run after him—bring him back. I don't want him to escape at any cost. There is no way out below.

THE MEN
(From above exit toward the lower region.)

AGENOR
(Looks at Europa shaking his head.)

EUROPA
(Controls herself painfully.)

AGENOR
You don't know what you want. What do you want then? When will you be satisfied? Answer me this one question, that I still have for you.
When will you be satisfied?

EUROPA

(Looks at him, starts to speak—and laughter overcomes her.)

AGENOR

I remain without pity. He is coming back now—and now you will give him your hand. Control yourself, they are leading him up here.

EUROPA

(Cannot control a new outburst of laughter—she reaches the end of the platform moving to and fro. Exits with the Maidens.)

THE MBN

(Slowly return.)

AGENOR

Where is he? (Silence.) I command you—(Stopping.) Still he cannot steal away through the thick—thick walls. (A small moon-lighted cloud moves back toward the night sky.)
THE FOURTH ACT

(The quiet sea inlet. Zeus lies stretched out on his back in the grass—again as a fisherman—from time to time he kicks his legs—groans. Hermes sits leaning against the trunk of the willow tree and tries out a squeaking willow flute.)

ZEUS
Don't play that flute.

HERMES
You're right, the fresh wood of the flute still isn't pliant. (He knocks it on the palm of his hand and blows it again.)

ZEUS
(Threatening.) I told you, play that flute one more time—

HERMES
Wait. (He twirls the flute between the palms of his hands.) The sap's sticking under the bark and stopping the free tone. (He begins and draws an interrupted succession of sharp notes out of the wood.)

ZEUS
(Jumps up, goes to Hermes, tears the flute from his mouth and slings it out in the water.) If you don't want to listen—

HERMES
You do not want to listen.
ZEUS

Prattle--bellow--howl, the thinnest notes from your flute make me delirious.

HERMES

A harmless flute, that I carved out of a twig from this willow.

ZEUS

(Shaking him.) In order to heckle me. I understand you down to the foundation of your thieving soul. You aren't the first one to whistle. But I warn you. The first was also the last. I'll handle you the way I want to. The way I want to--do you understand?

HERMES

(Suddenly runs past him into the water with his arms raised.) Europa.

ZEUS

(After him with swinging fists.) Don't come back.

HERMES

(Comes back with the flute.)

ZEUS

Do you still want--

HERMES

(With the flute already to his mouth, makes a protecting gesture.)

ZEUS

What do you want?

HERMES

I want to play--so I won't laugh. (He plays quickly.)
ZEUS

(Turns around, starts to go up and down the meadow. Then he stops in front of Hermes and gently takes the flute from his lips.) What do you advise me to do?

HERMES

To slip off.

ZEUS

(In a rage.) To prove myself beaten—by a doll?

HERMES

Because she is a little doll.

ZEUS

Do you know it?

HERMES

Don't you say so?

ZEUS

(After a few hasty steps.) Have I behaved so stupidly? Haven't I followed your directions and have subdued the fire inside of me, although it boiled in all my veins? Did I become aggressive with a finger or impertinent with a knee? Could the picture of moderation, that I offered, of a man in love ever be surpassed? No--I have the proof twenty times over: none of the other men would make an appearance next to mine. I defeated them all. They gave up all claim to the contest. I was master of the field. I become a victor without a battle. I won in superior form. And in spite of them.

HERMES

She laughed.
ZEUS

(Stamping.) Why? Have I shown her the least doubt of my earnestness? Haven't I obviously exerted myself in an excessive way? Feel, my knees flutter like two frightened birds. It isn't simple to be a man and play a god.

HERMES

She made it difficult for you.

ZEUS

Haven't I made myself as nimble as possible, just so I didn't float away? I tell you, I have gone to the limit. About a quarter of a pound less and I would have flown away like a cloud between the columns of the hall.

HERMES

Then you would have been able to overshadow them from above.

ZEUS

(Clinching his fist.) I would have--

HERMES

We were obliged to slip away long ago. (He flutes dolefully.)

ZEUS

I am furious. To deride me--to whip me with her laughter and to my face. My cheeks burn, when I think of it. The first one to drop me like a big shoe. The first one to make me into a stupid fool, who will run away from an apron--I'm glaring red even behind my ears. I could box myself on the ears for my own cowardice.

HERMES

But with a bold attack you would have gained even less.
ZEUS

That would have been less than nothing.

HERMES

So be satisfied with nothing, because that is the most you can win here.

ZEUS

Not yet. I haven't lost the desire.

HERMES

What do you think of a longer stay?

ZEUS

I will stay. I am determined. I am not through with Europa yet.

HERMES

No you aren't.

ZEUS

With this defeat behind me I don't dare to change myself into a god again. Already I can't endure your sneering face. We'll accommodate ourselves, the willow's our airy pavilion. Catch fish. I want to eat some fish--I need thin blood in order to keep my senses.

HERMES

(Lays his flute down and submissively stoops to the water.)

ZEUS

(Steps to him and lays his hand hesitatingly on his back.) I fulfilled the conditions, which were given--why did she laugh?

HERMES

(Looks to the side.) Ask her--
ZEUS

Europa?

HERMES

She's coming with a group of her playmates.

ZEUS

(Pushing Hermes in front of him.) She's coming here.

HERMES

(Pulling him forward.) You are lucky. Now frankly demand an explanation from her.

ZEUS

Later. I'm not prepared. That must be considered five times, ten times, twenty times--

HERMES

We are discovered.

ZEUS

Not yet. Low--close to the ground behind the tree--and to the pavilion--into the pavilion.) (They have reached the willow by crawling on all fours.)

HERMES

(Snatching up his flute.) But my flute. (They climb into the concealing thicket.)

(In a quick run Europa and the Maidens come. They hold hands and form a chain. They have gathered up their thin bright summer clothing in rolls above their knees, their hair--in natural blond and brown--is loosened. Europa stops suddenly in the center of the meadow and stands firmly and of certain stature in the grass. The chain darts
with a whirling animation into a circle, quickly all turn loose, the last one rolls on the ground.)

ONE

(Breathing deeply.) I can't any more--air--it's still turning around me--I must sit down.

THE ONE LYING DOWN

I'll never stand up again.

ONE

(Shouting for joy.) That was beautiful.

EUROPA

(Folding her hands.) Girls, if the men had seen us.

ONE

(Covering her knees with the palms of the hands.) My legs.

ANOTHER

(Feeling her hair.) What a mess!

THE THIRD

I am perspiring.

EUROPA

You look like--

THE MAIDENS

Europa, you look like--

EUROPA

Now we are ashamed. (She spreads her fingers before her face.)

THE MAIDENS

(Do the same.)
EUROPA

I must still be blushing--on my wedding morning.

ALL

(Laughing.) This is Europa's wedding morning.

ONE

(Approaching her and bowing.) Are you happy?

EUROPA

In heaven, Maiden.

THE SECOND

Have you found your joy?

EUROPA

In the clouds, Maiden.

THE THIRD

Are you satisfied?

EUROPA

Maidens, dance!

THE MAIDENS

We haven't danced the wedding dance for you yet.

EUROPA

My sweetheart and I were understandably in a hurry last night.

THE MAIDENS

Come, we want to dance. (They quickly let their skirts down and begin--each one individually and yet competing--to draw in the slow figures of the Men's dance.)

EUROPA

(Clapping her hands together.) How do you behave? Is that a dance
worthy of you? Didn't you learn anything yesterday? You are so clumsy, and yet you are delicate maidens. My husband certainly can teach you.

THE MAIDENS

(Pressing toward Europa.) How does he dance. Show us how he dances. Dance, Europa!

EUROPA

(Gently refusing.) I can't.

THE MAIDENS

You don't want to.

EUROPA

I'm no white feather with a golden quill. I'm not wearing three garments on my body to throw off one after the other.

THE MAIDENS

You may dance, as you wish.

EUROPA

I want to dance.

THE MAIDENS

(Rejoicing.) Dance, Europa!

EUROPA

Lie down--be quiet.

THE MAIDENS

(Throw themselves on their sides in the grass and clap their hands.) We are lying down.

EUROPA

(After deliberation.) I want to dance my answer. (Bowing to the
Maidens.) I am also going to dance three times. Each part is significantly related to the other parts. If I succeed in holding your attention, then the particular meaning will be clear to you without further to do.

ONE

The young flute player announced the dance.

EUROPA

The person, who is worthy of my answer, is represented by the willow tree.

ONE

The wrinkled, stiff tree trunk.

EUROPA

(Stops.) The most important help is missing from my dance.

ALL

What?

EUROPA

The languishing flute.

ALL

Too bad. (The flute squeeks in the willow thicket.)

EUROPA

A little bird is helping me.

THE MAIDENS

(Stop up their ears and burst out with doleful cries.)

(In the willow thicket a forceful movement begins, as if there is a quarrel going on--however the flute carries through.)
EUROPA

Quickly, as long as the sweet little creature sings. (She approaches the trunk with baiting violence—nods invitingly and turns her back abruptly. The flute breaks off in the middle of a note.)

ONE

Rebuked.

ANOTHER

The bird screeches frightfully.

THE THIRD

He must be a crow.

THE FOURTH

If he screeches again, I'll be deaf. (The flute begins.)

EUROPA

(Against the tree.) I obey. (She repeats her arrival and escape building toward a climax. However this time she kneels down before the trunk and stretches her arms around it. Then she runs around the trunk. The flute dies away with a wailing trill.)

ONE

That was clear.

ANOTHER

(Pointing toward the trunk.) But he is standing perfectly stiff.

A THIRD

He has turned into wood from fright.

A FOURTH

He's been standing there since last night.
A FIFTH

He is in the tree.

EUROPA

(Turning in very quickly.) Where?

A SIXTH

His face is made of rolls of bark, and the twigs stick out like hair from it.

A SEVENTH

Willow trees are always men, who have been badly frightened.

AN EIGHTH

They walk around at night.

A NINTH

They come into the homes in the evenings.

A TENTH

And dance because they have slept all day.

THE MAIDENS

Dance this evening again with us. We want to laugh. We want to laugh at you.

EUROPA

(Halfheartedly.) He almost had me.

THE MAIDENS

Who?

EUROPA

I tangled my foot in the roots—or maybe it wasn't a root. Once all of a sudden it was difficult for me to get up quickly enough or else he might have grabbed me.
THE MAIDENS

(Laughing.) You are merry on your wedding morning. You owe us the third dance. The tree is waiting. The tree wants his answer.

EUROPA

I want to dance, if the bird will whistle a third time. (A flourish from the flute.)

EUROPA

(Hastily.) He's whistling for me.

THE MAIDENS

The nasty animal. The cruel crow. We'll scare him away. Let's throw stones at him.

A MAIDEN

Look--Europe's dancing again.

EUROPA

(Makes a short dance step toward the tree and remains standing still, but still swaying her hips. With a thin voice.) I'm waiting here. I don't run away. I'm not a coward. I don't run away blushing all over. I remain here. (Swaying more definitely.) Why don't you grab me? Do I bite; do I scratch? With these little fingers. With these little teeth? Do I defend myself with these little arms? Do I run quickly enough with these little legs? Why then don't you have any courage? Or am I not beautiful? (Dealing the tree a slight blow.) Silly tree, I am beautiful. I tell myself I am beautiful. (Suddenly wrapping her arms around the trunk and placing her cheek against it.) But you'll believe me, when I swear it to you. (Turning loose and stepping away.) You are as stiff as a poker--you are a stiff worthless
poker, as you stand there, and you'll have to stand there, until you rot from cold water. (Going to the Maidens.) I am finished with him, come. (Finale on the flute.)

THE MAIDENS

That isn't what it's supposed to be. The third dance must last longer. You must finally lie on the ground for a long time. You still haven't entirely given the answer. Europa must dance once more. We aren't going to stand up.

EUROPA

(QUICKLY.) I want to dress myself in flowers. The blossoms here are ugly. Scatter yourselves—we'll look for the most colorful ones. I need colorful flowers now—who will gather the most beautiful ones? (She runs before.)

THE MAIDENS

We'll meet here again. Let's go. (They chase her.)

ZEUS

(From the tree. He rushes toward the left—stops—curves his hands around his mouth and calls.) Just run—I'll come later—to the house—tonight—in the darkness—when the willow trees wander. Wait for me. (He shakes his arms.)

HERMES

(Slowly leaves the tree.) I'll escort you, in order to get my reward for the accompaniment.

ZEUS

(Attacking him, snatching the flute away from him and breaking it.) I'll pay you for that. You dare to uphold the mockery, that I had to
tolerate in the swaying tree. I'll tear your miserable reed flute away from you—and you resist me. Are you bold enough to forget, who I am, and who you are?

HERMES

We are two miserable fishermen.

ZEUS

I am the god, who has power over everything.

HERMES

I'd forgotten that.

ZEUS

Because this little tattle of a girl snubs me?

HERMES

It's better to leave now.

ZEUS

Why?

HERMES

I mean—for appearance sake, that a high god enjoys up there.

ZEUS

(After a battle with himself.) I'll retreat. Don't think that I consider myself defeated. I'm taking care of my dignity. As we see, there are creatures, who do not suspect our superior reality—to say nothing of understanding it.

HERMES

One can see it. Let's fly away.

ZEUS

Not yet.
HERMES

Europa's coming back. You're exciting yourself shamefully.

ZEUS

I'll wait for her. I'll prepare a reception for her.

HERMES

What do you want to arrange?

ZEUS

She will dance again--then I will lead her off in a dance, the like of which she's never seen. Nothing more of suspense--strides--de
dillusion and flirting. She'll be very surprised--then she'll forget her laughter. I'll jump into her dance--(He stops.)

HERMES

Your appearance isn't frightful. On the contrary--you are an attractive young man.

ZEUS

(Flash ing up.) I'll take on the form of a buffalo--of a powerful uncouth fighting bull. A skull--so thick, horns like trees, shoulders like a mountain, belly like a sack, tail like a rope--and then I'll plant myself--so--(He stands with his legs apart.)

HERMES

For what particular purpose?

ZEUS

--and I'll give off--(Turned toward the audience.)--with your per-
mission--a large heap of dung.

HERMES

(Taking up his flute.) That will leave nothing open to misunder-
standing—we won't whistle at the dance. (He blows rather horrible notes from the cracked flute.)

ZEUS

This time she'll run from fright.

HERMES

They won't let you go as far as you're suggesting.

ZEUS

We'll see a race, I promise you. Europa ahead of the others, fleeing with piercing cries—and with me after her with a few long jumps.

HERMES

You'll scare her away for good.

ZEUS

I'll spear a scrap of her skirt with a horn.

HERMES

So you won't leave with completely empty hands--horns.

ZEUS

Then I'll stop and swish my tail--

HERMES

You've already mentioned that.

ZEUS

And bawl a laugh, as only a bull can laugh.

HERMES

I'll blow my horn merrily.

ZEUS

Now you may play the flute. Draw from the wood, what it can give. A bull can take all sorts of things. What are you hesitating for?
HERMES

Aren't you going to take too gruesome a revenge? Think—they are maidens—and a bull—let's not forget it—is a bull.

ZEUS

I won't hurt them.

HERMES

Promise me solemnly.

ZEUS

But I'll enjoy their flight, head over heels. Turn about is fair play. And my reputation will be saved.

HERMES

Chase them—scare them, it is only a just revenge.

ZEUS

My blood is racing more savagely every moment—I must give it more circulation. (He starts toward the right.)

HERMES

I'll command from my airy position. (Calling to him.) You.

ZEUS

What?

HERMES

It's like you said: no hurting.

ZEUS

Just chasing.

HERMES

(Blowing a high note.) I'll remind you of your word with this note.
ZEUS
Unnecessary. (He quickly runs behind the willow.)

HERMES

(Blows.)

ZEUS

(Coming forward.) What?

HERMES

Slowly.

ZEUS

I am a noble bull. (Exits.)

HERMES

(Climbing into the willow.) It will give the maidens a dreadful fright. (He disappears. After a pause he plays a note. A growl answers.) Ready? (Growling.) You have both your horns? (Growling. More flute notes. Growling.) Chew some grass, it will soothe you. (Growling.) Quiet, beast. (Both restrain themselves.)

SHOUTS RESOUND
Europa.

SHOUTS FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE

Isn't she with you?

FROM THE FIRST DIRECTION

She isn't with us.

FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION

She isn't with us.

FROM THE FIRST DIRECTION

We have our arms full of flowers.
FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION

We do too.

FROM THE FIRST DIRECTION

We want to decorate Europa.

FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION

Europa, where are you?

FROM THE FIRST DIRECTION

Europa, where are you?

EUROPA'S VOICE

Europa, where are you?

ALL

(Shouting joyously.) Europa!

THE MAIDENS

(Lead Europa into their circle, which they complete with chains of flowers.)

ONE

You sent us after flowers, and you come back empty handed.

EUROPA

I threw my self on the grass. I suddenly became tired. It is sultry.

ANOTHER

It's cool by the water.

EUROPA

The air's stuffy here.

A THIRD

A light breeze is blowing from the sea.
EUROPA
I don't want to any more. I don't know--let me stay here.

SEVERAL
You have promised the third dance. You must dance three times.
You still have to give us the last answer. We are eager, how you will reply. We want to laugh. We'll decorate you with our flowers.

EUROPA
Throw your flowers on me--cover me with flowers. They are fragrant.

THE MAIDENS
(Wind the chain in rings around her.)

EUROPA
You shall dance with me.

THE MAIDENS
We dance with Europa.

EUROPA
Laugh gaily--your laughter'll be the music for the dance.

THE MAIDENS
(Join hands.)

EUROPA
Are you ready?

THE MAIDENS
(Laugh loudly and joyously.)

EUROPA
Dance in a circle. (She throws her arms high and twirls around on her toes.) Turn more quickly!
THE MAIDENS

(Circle around her faster and faster.)

EUROPA

So we dance, without feeling giddy—without end—(The Bull—
corresponding to his announcement—a powerful spotted monster—
breaks out from behind the willow. With a few high jumps he reaches
the circle of maidens and now stands with lowered horns and rolling
eyes, tossing great flakes of foam from his mouth—bellowing—whipping
his shivering flanks with his heavy tail.)

THE MAIDENS

(Motionless at his appearance.)

(The Bull makes other frightening leaps toward the Maidens.)

THE MAIDENS

(Set off screaming and fleeing in all directions. The Bull follows
them to the edge of the meadow, returns and drives out another from
the beach—finally he scares the last away, who had sought refuge
behind the willow trunk.)

EUROPA

(Does not stir from the spot.)

THE BULL

(Turns his attention toward Europa—bucks around her, frothing—
wheezing.)

EUROPA

(Turns only her head toward him.)

THE BULL

(Presses in on her furiously.)
EUROPA
(Stands still unmoved.)

THE BULL
(Retreats and starts to run over her. The flute whines highly.)

THE BULL
(Stops close to Europa.)

EUROPA
(Lays her hand in the fur on his forehead.) You heard that, you only startled a little bird in the tree. Is that brave: a great bull who frightens a little song thrush.

THE BULL
(Stands staring with all indication of animal stupefaction.)

EUROPA

Why do you roar so frightfully? Are you afraid? Of my playmates? They won't harm you.

THE BULL

(Stoops under her gently scratching hand.)

EUROPA

Do you believe me now? That is reasonable. Wait, I'll wipe the flakes away from your little mouth. That is ugly. (She brushes the foam away from him with her flowers.) Jump slowly. But pay attention to your horns. They are long and sharp, you can stick me. (The flute squeaks in a happier manner.)

EUROPA

Also the little bird is pleased. I see you are an understanding bull. Now show me what you can do.
THE BULL

(Stretches, tossing his head violently, in wide arches around Europa.)

EUROPA

I like you that way. Don't roll your eyeballs. You have such
beautiful brown eyes. They look better on you than dead white eyes.

THE BULL

(Starts to buck again, bawls.)

EUROPA

That spoils everything. (The flute breaks off with a shrill note.)

THE BULL

(Anggrily shaking his horns at the tree.)

EUROPA

(Holds him firmly by the horns.) Are you threatening that little
bird? Shame on you. (She strikes him lightly between the ears.)
There you have your punishment. If you don't improve yourself, I
shall run away too. Then you will be left here all alone. Must I
be serious?

THE BULL

(Shakes his head.)

EUROPA

I have warned you for the last time. I am very dissatisfied. That
is no behavior before a young maiden: wheezing--frothing--bucking.
I am very spoiled, do you know that? Shall I tell you something
about it? One approaches me only when dancing. And I am a stern
judge. Last night I first deserted a dancer. He must be sinking
into the earth for shame--I tell you, he has certainly sunk into the
ground, for no one has seen him again. (Changes.) Why didn't he
dance like you? (Laughing.) Your leaps amuse me. Jump around.
(The flute squawks.)

THE BULL

(Circles around Europa with elevated head—coming nearer and nearer
to her—finally sniffing at the flowers in her hair. The flute
shreaks.)

THE BULL

(Trembles violently and rushes with a single leap against the tree.)

EUROPA

What does the silly bird want? Let him sing. Come, I will feed you.

THE BULL

(Turns slowly, weaving back to her and moves directly toward her.)

EUROPA

That is a foolish bird, that is always disturbing you. Little Bull,
eat my flowers.

THE BULL

(Rubs his mouth on the offered flowers.)

EUROPA

Do you notice the flowers, because they are brightly colored—or
because I give them to you? However I want to give them to you. I
will decorate you with my chain of flowers. (She winds them around
his horns.) How proudly you carry your horns of transparent yellow
amber. Did you get them from the sea? Can you row—swim—dive? I
suspect it—you can do it. Because you are the strongest bull. (She
hangs chains around his shoulders.) Your fur is firm and close, the
ends of my fingers get tangled in the deep strands. (She lays chains over his back.) Your rugged fur smells bitter—like fat. The fumes steep into my nose. (Striking him on the flank.) These manly strengths—you are a manly fellow. (She slings the chain between his forelegs and ties them under his chest.) I have chained you. (Clapping her hands.) Europa has conquered the wildest bull. (Leads him behind her by the chain of flowers as a guide rope, she goes here and there in the meadow.)

THE BULL

(Stops, kneels on his forelegs.)

EUROPA

Are you tired already? All right, sit down--lie down!

THE BULL

(Remains in this position.)

EUROPA

(Supporting herself between his horns on her elbows and looking over the Bull's back.) One can have a good chat with you. (The flute brays an admonishing note.)

THE BULL

(Wincses.)

EUROPA

Don't lose your temper. (Playing with his ears.) In your ears much goes in and nothing goes out, you are a good listener. Yes, Bull, last night I had an experience—I told you already. I am still asking myself: why did he dance? Everyone still dances—why didn't he dance? Yes, I know, everyone dances as far as I'm concerned—and
that is good and beautiful, they make themselves nimble—and are nimble—however I lose my temper. Why do I lose my temper? Because they dance so nimbly? King Agenor is very pleased—I should be too. I'm not. I don't want to—I thank, King Agenor. (Explaining.) That is my father. (Violently.) But my father is not Europa—and I am Europa—and I don't know, what I want. (She stretches herself with her breasts above the Bull's back.) Why didn't he jump a little bit like you do—so furiously and courageously? (The high flute.)

THE BULL

(Winces.)

EUROPA

Don't move. I'm lying so comfortably on your furry coat. If I sleep on this sharp scented carpet, then the best thoughts come to me.--Yesterday a man came--another one--I didn't like him--I liked him--I--(She pulls the petals from a flower and counts them off.) I did not like him--did not--like him--did not--like him--(The flute.)

THE BULL

(Moves no more.)

EUROPA

(With the last petal.) Not. Yes, I didn't like him. Did I not like him because he danced? Why did he dance? Why for a change doesn't someone not dance--and not try to please me at all? And yet he pleased me--? How is that? (She has swung herself between his horns and now lies full length on the Bull's back. The flute.)

EUROPA

Quiet, bird, I must meditate. (She presses her forehead into the fur.) I must find it—I'll find it here--after that I am--
THE BULL
(Has cautiously risen up on all fours.)
EUROPA
I shall be dizzy from meditations.

THE BULL
(Expands his nostrils, stretches his neck out stiffly. The flute quickly shrieks one note after the other.)
EUROPA
Strain yourself, bird, I’ll still find it.

THE BULL
(Has looked to all sides, now has started toward the edge of the beach. Now, setting his fore hoofs in the water, he expels a powerful triumphant bellow. At the same time he whips the air with his tail.)
EUROPA
(Lifts her head in fright and grasps at his tail with one hand.) You’re striking me. Have you gone mad? (Becoming aware of the water beneath her.) Where are you running to? You are running into the water. I’m still on your back. I want to jump off first. (The Bull already is swimming.) I’ll fall into the sea. I’ll fall into the sea, if I jump off. Where are you swimming with me. (Beating on the end of his back with her small fists.) You wicked—wicked—wicked animal——(The Bull quickly disappears.)

HERMES
(Jumps from the tree, runs to the shore, and blows a shrill note, with all his strength. Then out of breath he lets the flute drop. He stands thoughtfully, then slowly.) He had only given his word for the Bull—
he hadn't obligated himself further as a human. (He looks at the flute.) As far as the flute's concerned, it has done its job. (He drops it.) I can't make up my mind, in which way I can be of further service. (He goes under the willow and lies in the grass.) The most reasonable will be--first of all not to disturb. (He goes to sleep.)
THE LAST ACT

(The Hall. Agenor sits at the left on a platform in his chair. The Doorkeepers stand next to him. The Maidens in front of him and on the steps.)

AGENOR

Your story sounds so incredible—I don't know whether it arouses my astonishment or my sorrow. You speak of a monster--

THE MAIDENS

(All together.) A bull--with horns as long as your arm--with blood red nostrils--with boiling hot breath.

AGENOR

One of you will answer my question.

THE MAIDENS

We were all there. (A few push forward.) I saw him first. He sprang right after me. He butted me.

OTHERS

You ran like the first, as fast as you could run. You held your hands over your eyes. You saw nothing of him.

A MAIDEN

I looked for a hiding place behind the dense willow—he finally found me.

AGENOR

(To this one.) You speak. Where were you, when this--
The Maiden

We--

Agenor

Who?

The Maiden

Europa was with us. While we were dancing--

Agenor

Europa danced?

The Maiden

We had gathered flowers in the meadow and Europa decorated--

Agenor

(More and more astonished.) Meadow flowers?

The Maiden

And then--

Agenor

Did the Bull appear?

The Maiden

He rushed toward us--bellowed--stamped--frothed--

Agenor

You fled in all directions?

The Maiden

We fled where we could, we ran in the road--the Bull chased every one, until the last was run out of the place.

Agenor

And you were last?
THE MAIDEN

No--

AGENOR

But didn't you say, that he drove you away from behind the dense tree last?

THE MAIDEN

Europa still stood there.

AGENOR

And the Bull?

THE MAIDEN

I didn't turn around anymore.

AGENOR

(Nodding.) I have to believe it—Your report is the same as the others. I certainly do not know anything about a Bull, which runs wild in the peaceful regions of my realm. I will investigate among the animal owners, although the trouble will be to no avail. Only lambs graze over our pastures—and also the few bulls which are necessary are gentle lambs and not of this frothing stamping kind. They attack no human beings—let alone maidens. (With a resolution.) I am going to send men out who will fight this monster with spears and swords. (To the Doorkeepers.) Deliver my command.

THE DOORKEEPERS

(Do not stir.)

AGENOR

(Striking his forehead with the palm of his hand.) Men—Weapons, I toss my wishes to the wind. (Sinking back.) Europa still stood there—
paralyzed from fright by the mere sight of this filthy creature with horns and fur. A bull—and the virgin, there is no more striking a contrast. And he had to display himself in front of Europa. (Toward the Maidens.) Why didn't you tell me about your adventure yesterday?

THE MAIDEN

We still thought, that Europa had safely returned to the palace like the others, and only when you asked about her this morning, we suspected, that she had not come home.

AGENOR

My daughter, a night—Europa a whole, long, dark night out of the house. There is nothing blacker devised under the stars than such a night. (Signalling to them.) Go—fill your empty rooms, crowd yourselves in there—don't let this terrible emptiness spread. It grows rampantly over house and court—it sinks into my head. Don't disturb me—I must think—think, in order not to sink.

THE MAIDENS

(Withdraw across the platform. Exit.)

AGENOR

(Hastily seizing the two Doorkeepers.) Two children, a present of happiness—two children, two graves as sad as death. Gift and theft in sudden change—he who is taking, is risking loss. I take up hastily and embed my loot in the ground. That became my happiness: graves. Graves? I do not even have them anymore. Nor the soil into which I can shed my tears. Now they stream down on my body, and turn to ice under the frost of my old age, in which I am choked. Still my mouth complains—I shake these walls with loud accusations. Why should
I be accused? Where am I guilty? When do I presume to be more than a father, who rejoiced in his children? Didn't I fulfill my fatherly duties to son and daughter? Didn't I look after them--didn't I look after them more than a father ever could--than even a king could? Was I punished for that?--I am not quiet--I rebel with my shrill cries. You children, where are you? Son who disappeared--a sign from you: Cadmus--Cadmus. Daughter, proclaim your fate of such dreadful strangely! A sign from you: Europa--Europa. Are you alive--are you lying dead? Have the hard hoofs stamped on you--the frothing mouth torn out your golden hair--the sharp horns thrown you here and there? Are you hanging in the willow--are you floating on the sea? (Folding his arms.) Two children--I shall forget, the two pillows who were the support of my old age. Cadmus--Europa, even one of you would be a magnificent possession. I demand an answer and a greeting from one--who approaches in this hour: Europa, is it you--Cadmus, is it you? (Already men have emerged from the rear of the platform silently making signs of a beckoning nature, undecided.)

AGENOR

(With half attention to one of the Doorkeepers.) Does it mean more?

DOORKeeper

(Goes there.)

AGENOR

(To the other Doorkeeper.) However only one thing will be of meaning in the future--
THE FIRST DOORKEEPER

(Rushes back to Agenor and falls on his knees before him.) Message from Cadmus.

AGENOR

(Jumps up.) Why don't they run--

A FEW MEN

(Come forward on the platform.) Messengers have come--they bring news of Cadmus.

AGENOR

(Almost speechless.) You know it already--and you let me wait?

ONE

They are standing in the courtyard--

AGENOR

In the courtyard? Those who come from my son, standing in the courtyard? Are you--? Everyone follow me into the courtyard.

THE SAME ONE

(Forcefully averting him.) You cannot go near them.

AGENOR

(Hesitating.) No--I want to receive them in the splendor of this hall. Escort them here.

THE SAME ONE

Impossible.

AGENOR

What is that: impossible? Cadmus is alive, he is sending to me--they are spirits, who come down to me from heaven. You are right, this room is not worthy. Beg their pardon for my poverty, I am only a King,
who invites them—however the rushing blood of a father surrounds their news with crimson glory. Do you still hesitate?

THE MEN

(Shaking their heads at one another.)

AGENOR

(Standing up straight.) I, King Agenor, command the majestic minister of the king's son, Cadmus, to be led into the hall.

THE MEN

(With a sign of dismay they exit.)

AGENOR

I am excited. My voice is hoarse. I will not be able to speak lightly. It makes a bad impression, if I have lost control of myself. A ruler who does not rule himself—they will put up with my harsh tone only in disgust, if I speak to them. I had better be silent. Is my clothing in order? Arrange the smooth drape of my mantle. How is the air in the hall? What is smouldering in the censer? I do not want to insult them in any way with sharp odors: they are messengers of the gentlest son in all the world. (Listening.) Is my blood roaring in my ears? Do you hear that? (Growing noise penetrates outward over the platform from behind: There are brusque voices, which drown out the rattle of weapons. The Men return and entreatingly stretch out their arms to Agenor.)

AGENOR

(Astonished.) Are the—? (Now appear a troop of foreign soldiers of powerful build, bearded, yellow thick curly hair—hair on their naked chests, muscular legs— and with weapons.)
THE COMMANDER

Where is he? (Pointing to Agenor.) There he is. That face is like his face. That is the father of King Cadmus. (They break out in wild cries and beat their weapons together, then they move down right.)

AGENOR

(Stammering.) Are you--?

THE COMMANDER

We are his descendants.

AGENOR

Is my son King?

THE COMMANDER

(Holding up his sword.) Our King Cadmus. (All cry it.)

AGENOR

In what empire is he King?

THE COMMANDER

In his empire.

AGENOR

Where does it lie?

THE COMMANDER

From where we come.

AGENOR

(Passes his hand over his forehead.) You must give me time--

THE COMMANDER

We don't have time.

AGENOR

My son is called Cadmus. Cadmus is a name which can repeat itself--
an error seems possible. You are falling victim to an error. I am not the father—of this Cadmus who is your King.

THE COMMANDER

(Looks at his fellows, points at Agenor and laughs.)

AGENOR

I tell you. I can explain it to you, however you will not understand. My son Cadmus is a—do you not consider yourselves to be descendants of your King Cadmus?

THE COMMANDER

Hide and hair.

AGENOR

So it is clear. My son is a mere boy. You see it is impossible.

THE COMMANDER

(Pressing against him with his sword.) Who is lying?

THE WARRIORS

(Crowding together around him.) Is he calling you a liar?

THE COMMANDER

Who is lying?

AGENOR

Everybody is speaking the truth. The truth has so many sides—I lost my son Cadmus from my eyes—very long ago—unexplainable events happened. (Quickly.) Do you know?

THE COMMANDER

We must explain to you, why Cadmus took such a short leave from you.

AGENOR

(Upset.) Yes. Yes. He disappeared one morning—before his birthday,
on which he would have become a man.

THE COMMANDER

He wanted to become a man. That is what he became. (Clinking of weapons.)

AGENOR

(Doubting.) But wasn't he born of manly sex by his mother?

THE COMMANDER

Where are your men? (Looking up.) There they stand. (Laughter from the warriors.) He told us about them. Smoothing blue mantles—yellow mantles, soft hair even to their h...—Even to their hips. (Laughing.) Men!

AGENOR

That's right—everything is right, only go ahead about Cadmus.

THE COMMANDER

He sends you this message: Your empire isn't his empire. He will never rule over these here. A king, for whom no weapons are shaken by his men, is no king. He has the right to a kingdom as a king's son. He looked for one, and made himself one—with men in arms.

WARRIORS

Men in arms.

AGENOR

(Lifting his arms joyously.) He is my blood—the blood of kings and king of my blood. Cadmus—new King in arms. (To the warriors.) Is he so strong, that he was able to conquer you powerful soldiers in your own land?
THE COMMANDER

No man tamed us.

AGENOR

How did he get to be your master then?

THE COMMANDER

He entered a waste land, there he sowed the teeth of dragons in rows in the fields—and we sprouted up complete with swords and spears.

AGENOR

Dragon teeth?

THE COMMANDER

The shining teeth from his dragon strong will. We are the children of his deeds.

AGENOR

Why didn't he come himself?

THE COMMANDER

Should he sweep the flies off the walls of your palace?

AGENOR

Are you going to return to him?

THE COMMANDER

We will return.

AGENOR

Do you have orders to hurry? I should like to entertain you, to give you a feast in this hall. (Correcting himself in a hurry.) No I will not give a feast, something else will come to my mind. Tell me your wishes.
THE COMMANDER

(Looks at his companions.) We should tell our wishes--

AGENOR

As much as you want.

WARRIORS

(Glance around, climb the steps and look over the platform.)

AGENOR

What is it? What are you looking for?

THE COMMANDER

We don't see anything here.

AGENOR

My house is very large.

THE COMMANDER

We should not return to King Cadmus empty handed--

AGENOR

I will load each of you with a treasure.

THE COMMANDER

(Laughs.) With a treasure--

AGENOR

So pick it out.

THE COMMANDER

King Agenor--this is it: King Cadmus gave us an order--

AGENOR

I am eager to know it and confer it.

THE COMMANDER

You know the story of our origin. We were not born of women. We have no women in our land. If men are to grow, there must be women. Give
us wives.

AGENOR

(Steps back.) You--(Suddenly the Maidens appear on the platform from behind to the center and stop out of breath.)

AGENOR

What is it?

A MAIDEN

(Breathless.) Europa--

AGENOR

(Loudly.) No.

ANOTHER MAIDEN

(Approaching.) Europa is--

AGENOR

(Quivering.) No--not. (Controlling himself.) Not now. (To the Men.) Get some rest. I'll negotiate with these warriors.

THE MEN

(Lead the Maidens away from the platform.)

AGENOR

(To the Warriors, who saw nothing.) You are entitled to your wishes--I, being a man, recognize it. Women are sweet--and are absolutely necessary--

THE COMMANDER

We aren't giving in.

AGENOR

(Quickly.) Women and women, there are such differences--such differences to be reckoned with.
THE COMMANDER

We want our women.

AGENOR

Your women are your women--I'm not going to argue with you about that--

THE COMMANDER

We are not afraid of an argument.

AGENOR

But I have to prepare them for you beforehand. (To the Doorkeepers.)
Lead these strange Warriors away. Every thing will come in time.
Patience--patience--

THE DOORKEEPERS

(Lead the Warriors out.)

AGENOR

Close the curtains--Tightly, tightly. (Stammering.) Yes, what will come?--Europa just at this moment. My daughter is welcome back, she is back home--she ought to sleep in her own bedroom--she has had a sleepless night behind her. I'll go see her in her room. Europa won't be able to stand this sight in here. (The Maidens sweep back on the platform, pushing the men before them.)

THE MAIDENS

Open up the way.

THE MEN

(Storming at the Maidens.) What are you saying? Is it true? A bull?

A MAIDEN

(Running up to one.) With horns.
ANOTHER MAIDEN

With a big mouth.

A THIRD MAIDEN

With a tail.

THE MAIDENS

Europa is coming.

EUROPA

(Passes slowly through the rows of both Maidens and Men.)

AGENOR

(With quick steps to her.) There you are. I have heard about your dangerous adventure. Have you come back unhurt? Didn't the fright harm you? Let me look at you--No, you seem to be all in one piece. You actually are radiant. Can you imagine my anxiety and sorrow. I have aged many years. But now I am young again. I am satisfied--I am happy.

EUROPA

(Paying only slight attention to him, she inhales the air in the room testing it.)

AGENOR

(Furiously.) This is not the time for excuses--for explanations. I know every thing already--I suspect every thing: how you hid in the reeds, how the animal hunted for his prey--how you sat quietly and deceived the enemy. Later when you are rested you may pour out your heart--but go to sleep now.

EUROPA

(Steps toward the front.)
AGENOR

(Stopping her.) I am not curious—I am not going to ask for a word from you now, I am only advising you about your care. You need rest badly. You have been under a strain—here is an unmistakable clue: a rose stripped of its petals. You lost the flower in your dangerous hiding place. Go to bed.

EUROPA

What does it smell like in here?

AGENOR

Here?

EUROPA

Sharp—bitter—like grease.

AGENOR

Like--

EUROPA

(Starts to step forward toward the edge.) Don't you smell it?

AGENOR

(Understanding.) I smell--It is nothing. The censers are not clean. It is still early morning. The Maids clean here in the hall last. That is an unpleasant sight—as you say, a bitter smell. I'll send for the Maid—and we will enjoy fresh air. (He starts to lead her with him.)

EUROPA

(Bending over.) It doesn't come up from the censers—it comes up from down there. (To the Doorkeepers.) Open the curtains.
AGENOR

(To the Doorkeepers.) Keep the curtains closed. (To Europa.) There is no reason to hunt here for fumes--for odors. (Calling down again.) Leave them closed.

EUROPA
It burns me--

AGENOR
(Starts to speak and begins to cough a little.) It burns me too. Keep them closed.

EUROPA
Why do you keep on ordering the curtains closed?

AGENOR
I don't order anything--(behind the curtain the noise of stamping feet and rattling weapons approaches.)

EUROPA
(Looks questioningly at Agenor.)

AGENOR
(Despairingly.) I don't know anything. (The Warriors have opened the curtain and rush out.)

THE COMMANDER
(Seeing Europa and all the Maidens who have stepped toward the edge.) We could tell through the wall. There they stand.

THE WARRIORS
Our wives.

AGENOR
(Steps quickly in front of Europa and covers her with his mantle.)
Flee, my daughter.

EUROPA

(Thrusts the mantle aside. She watches the Warriors attentively.)

Who are you?

THE COMMANDER

Your husbands.

THE WARRIORS

Your husbands.

EUROPA

Where do you come from?

THE COMMANDER

From King Cadmus.

EUROPA

From my brother?

THE COMMANDER

(Astonished.) Does our King have a sister?

EUROPA

I am his sister. Hasn't he ever spoken of Europa? Is he alive?

AGNOR

(Calming himself.) Your brother, Cadmus, has sent these men. They are hunters. They have come at the right time. (To the Warriors.) I am going to prepare some amusement. You will like it. You shall kill a Bull, which has broken into my land. I will give you free hunting.

EUROPA

(Laying her hand on his arm.) It is too late.
AGENOR

(Suppressing her.) I'm trying to engage them, so we can gain time. Flee.

EUROPA

The Bull is already out of the land. (To the Warrior.) You would chase this Bull in vain. Spare yourselves the trouble and remain here.

AGENOR

(In limitless astonishment.) You invite them. You don't flee from them--

EUROPA

Come here.

THE WARRIORS

(Hesitate.)

EUROPA

Why are you standing there stock still?

THE COMMANDER

(Shyly.) You are the sister of our King.

EUROPA

I'll not request--so I command you.

THE COMMANDER

We obey you. (The Warriors climb up. Agenor and the Men retreat in a wide arch before them.)

EUROPA

(Watches the Warriors attentively.) Are all the men in my brother's land like you Warriors?
THE COMMANDER

We all grew from the same seed.

EUROPA

(After a moment of reflection.) I want to visit my brother in his country.

AGENOR

(Starts back. Then he advances to the Warriors.) My daughter doesn't know what she is saying. She wishes nothing of the kind.

EUROPA

(Surprised.) Do you have beautiful women with you? Speak freely, you won't offend me.

AGENOR

(To Europa.) No, don't ask them to say it.

EUROPA

I'll ask them what I want to ask them.

AGENOR

It will only confuse you more than ever.

EUROPA

I can stand it.

AGENOR

Now, may the columns collapse over this hall. (He covers his head.)

EUROPA

(Uncertainly.) Are your women--very charming?

THE COMMANDER

(Grasping his throat, choking at the words.)
EUROPA
(Fumbling.) Does each of you have many wives?

THE COMMANDER
(Breaking out.) In our land there are no women. They are completely lacking—we are looking for them. King Cadmus sent us. We want wives.

AGENOR
Flee, my daughter, save yourself—I cannot protect you from their will.

THE WARRIORS
(Shaking their arms.) We want wives.

THE COMMANDER
(To Agenor.) We have brought the message from Cadmus. We want our reward.

THE WARRIORS
We ask for our wives.

AGENOR
I cannot give these to you.

THE WARRIORS
(Pressing up toward him.) You are the King—you can give us wives.

AGENOR
I'll kill them, if I give them to you.

THE WARRIORS
(Hesitating.)

AGENOR
Ask for one—ask for this one or that one—I will ask myself. (Turning toward the Maidens.) Is one of you ready—to go away with one of these Warriors? Who will answer—who can answer? (Silence prevails.)
AGENOR

(To the Warriors.) You see it with your eyes—you don't hear a syllable from a single mouth.

EUROPA

(To the Maidens.) Do you deliberate so long? Will no one risk the first word? I want to make you courageous. (Stepping in front of the Warriors.) Do you choose—or do we choose?

THE WARRIORS

(Stand dumbfounded.)

EUROPA

(Stepping in front of the powerful Commander.) Europa has found her choice.

AGENOR

(Staring.) I think it is a deceptive picture that is dancing in front of my eyes.

EUROPA

(Her cheek nestled on the Commander's chest, and smoothing the hair with her hand.) It is all so real.

AGENOR

It's true—you can't sink to the floor. The sharp bitter smell that pours out of that fur doesn't bring you to your senses. But you blow your breath on the bare chest of the strongest Warrior. Are you still the one, Europa, who was not satisfied with the nimblest dancer? For whom my gentle men have taken such efforts and such pains? Now you press yourself to the rough fur.
EUROPA
It doesn't make me itch.

AGENOR
You--

EUROPA
(Turning to the Maidens.) Are you going to let me go alone?

THE MAIDENS

(Hesitate.)

EUROPA
I'm not going to tempt you. (Snuggling to the hairy chest.) Come let's go.

THE MAIDENS
(Storming to the Warriors.) We are going with you. (They jostle here and there, finally they all stand in pairs.)

EUROPA
(Smiling.) Are you going to accompany your mistress?

THE MAIDENS
We are following our husbands.

EUROPA
(To Agenor.) Are you satisfied with us now?

AGENOR
(With growing joy.) I am. I am with you--with all of you. You make me very happy. I say--what shall I say? It is a beautiful day--the most beautiful day of my life.

EUROPA
The most beautiful day of your life.
AGENOR

Also a beautiful day for you. But--(He draws Europa to the side.)
How has it happened? Did it change—as it were over night?

EUROPA

(Nodding.) Over night.

AGENOR

Yes--over night?

EUROPA

(Nodding.) Over last night.

AGENOR

I don't understand this riddle--

EUROPA

Be satisfied with the solution. (With the Commander.) When are we going to my brother's country?

THE COMMANDER

We aren't going back to Cadmus.

AGENOR

(Taken aback.) What do you mean?

THE COMMANDER

The sister of the king must reign as a queen. We will look for a new country.

AGENOR

(Restless.) Where is it?

THE COMMANDER

We don't know.
AGENOR

You must tell me its name.

THE COMMANDER

It will have its name from its queen: Europa.

THE WARRIORS

(Wildly.) Europa!

AGENOR

And will you come back from this Europa again?

THE COMMANDER

We won't come back.

AGENOR

Thank heaven.

THE COMMANDER

But our sons will spread over the world. They will beat on your door. They will demand a stormy admission.

AGENOR

(Covers his eyes.) I understand it. I can see it coming. There are men with weapons, who thirst for great adventure.

THE COMMANDER

They are looking for the men in your land.

AGENOR

My Men? (Looking at the Men.) Then they will find only bald old men.

THE COMMANDER

(Turning back to Europa.) We will produce a vigorous race.

AGENOR

(To the Men.) Will our name perish? Will this fruitful life, which
runs through our veins, trickle away? Are we going to commit a sin against life with our laziness? I am turning to you. I call on you. I am your King. Give me men. Men, who can carry weapons and defend this race, that demands our protection.)

THE MEN

(Look at one another. Suddenly they run away over the platform.)

THE COMMANDER

(Laughing.) You talked too loudly—they won't come back again.

AGENOR

(Sinking down on his throne.) I am a King no more. My voice doesn't stir up their blood anymore. I have lost my power over men.

THE DOORKEEPERS

They are coming back.

THE MEN

(Throng onto the platform. They have tied their robes above their knees and tied up their hair. Each leads a vigorous maid, who is struggling in his arms.)

AGENOR

Who are these?

THE MEN

Our wives!

AGENOR

(Astonished.) Do I live on the earth? They have sought out the strongest maids in the court. Now how does that happen?

EUROPA

Because Europa is not a distant star—and we live on the green bountiful earth.
AGBNOR
(To the Men.) Are you conquering them then?

THE NINETEENTH
(Leading the only obedient maid forward.) She will give you your men.

THE MEN
(With the other Maidens.) The earth is blooming—because Europa has become radiant.

AGBNOR
(Spreading his arms toward them.) I can see your sons. An abundant race will also spring up here. (To the Warriors.) Come back later and compete with this new generation. Fight for the life that stands alone: a real life is a strong life—and the strongest is the best.

THE WARRIORS
We will come back.

THE MEN
We will wait for you.

AGBNOR
The time will bring everything that it must bring. Don't disturb it in its course. Do what the moment demands—and you will do the right thing. This is our next problem: kindle the marriage torch—hurry!—So that we can blow it out quickly. (Music has started and the end.)
THE WOMAN'S SACRIFICE

Play in Three Acts

by

Georg Kaiser

1918
CHARACTERS

Lavalette
The Countess
Excelman, a discharged General
D'Ormesson, the Royal Librarian
Joineau, steward with d'Ormesson
Mother Joineau
Bresson
Officer
Gendarmes

The play takes place during the evening hours of a day in March, 1815, and has for its setting the vestibule of the villa of the Royal Librarian d'Ormesson.
FIRST ACT

(An unusual Gobelin tapestry of the burning of Troy hangs over almost the entire back wall: a large number of figures in a very strong movement--conceived to be in flight--fills the room with excitement. At the right bookcases line the wall in which there is a small free door. On the left a steep stair rises to a short gallery leading to the upper rooms. In the front below are glass doors with a second one leading into a projection of the building, into which one comes from the garden. A door lies behind the stairway. Etchings in dark frames follow the line of the staircase. There is a table with open books on it by the bookcases. A wide seat stands in the center--near a bench on which loose sheets from a file may be placed. Between the glass doors at the left--Excelman in a long muddy overcoat, in which the right sleeve hangs empty, watches the outside. Now he hastily steps back into the room and closes the glass door noiselessly. Still apprehensive, he hurries stiffly to the wall. Then he relaxes, pulls the slouched hat from his grey scar-marked head, and waits by the newel post. The door in the bookcases is pushed open, Lavalette holds the latch firmly. He is pale to his lips, his thin body leans toward Excelman.)

LAVALETTE

The countess?!--Already up?!
EXCELMAN

(Lifts his single arm toward him.)

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Enters behind Lavalette from the right.)

LAVALETTE

(To her.) Do you call me first, when already a hundred of her glances have been wasted here on you?

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Looks at him questioningly.)

LAVALETTE

(To Excelman, hesitatingly.) Still preparing for something frightful? Nothing is intolerable, if she is alive!!

EXCELMAN

(Astonished.) Lavalette—-?

LAVALETTE

(Grasps his hand and presses it in his own to his chest.) Do not reprimand--I forgot gratitude in the storm of my emotion. More--more: I did not know, that there are friends. Only one idea was big in my mind, an idea which puts out all the others, like an all engulfing fire consumes all the lights in the house.

EXCELMAN

Count Lavalette----!

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Exits under the steps.)

LAVALETTE

(Pushes Excelman into the chair--clears away the file from the bench,
sits behind him.) Tell me who the helpers are. Name each one slowly, each should sink into me with his burden of duty. You open the list, General Excelman.

**EXCELMAN**

(Leaning.) Count Lavalette--

**LAVALETTE**

(Nodding.) The names of the eternal debtors.

**EXCELMAN**

--haven't you been arrested?

**LAVALETTE**

In Paris thrown to the rats, that slip away and breed in the sewers.

**EXCELMAN**

The heaviest punishment inflicted upon you?

**LAVALETTE**

The guillotine on my neck!

**EXCELMAN**

Has the King--pardoned you?

**LAVALETTE**

(Looks at him in boundless astonishment.)

**EXCELMAN**

Did the King forego his sacrifice?

**LAVALETTE**

An error toys with us. In certain expectation I shall stand next door--when you tell Mother Joineau your name. It is natural, that I establish the connections--which disappointed. (Dismissing.) Where are you going?
EXCELMAN

All I did was give my name—

LAVALETTE

Enough.

EXCELMAN

In the country nothing is known of your freedom.

LAVALETTE

Still not floated through the panels?

EXCELMAN

Was the petition of the Countess a success after all?

LAVALETTE

What do you know—

EXCELMAN

The terrible story: in Paris the Countess dragged herself from door to door. Finally this farce is invented, to place her in the antechamber of the King. The King will never call her to him. The Royal Librarian d'Ormesson goes past one day and is ashamed of the lady in black between the laced uniforms of the lackeys and suggests to her his country house an hour from Paris.

LAVALETTE

Only that happened. Nothing else.

EXCELMAN

Did d'Ormesson succeed--

LAVALETTE

Is it not enough for you, what your eyes show you? Here I walk around freely.
EXCELMAN

----Count Lavalette, it is not curiosity----I have reason to hide in this cloak---

LAVALETTE

You are right, I must take pains to recognize the great General Excelman, who was rocking on his fiery horse in front of the most glorious army of the world at the pyramids and at Jena.

EXCELMAN

Why did they give up claim to your neck in Paris?

LAVALETTE

I----have escaped.

EXCELMAN

Passing in front of the sentry--through the streets--??

LAVALETTE

Past five sentries. Through a tumult in the streets. Noon. Out of the gate, that opened for me!

EXCELMAN

Escaped?!

LAVALETTE

Fled!

EXCELMAN

From Paris--from the grave walls, that surrounded you--from the line of sentries--?? Have you slipped away from those bloodhounds, that cannot be bribed anymore, because blood means more than gold?

LAVALETTE

I went through Paris at noon.
Unbelievable!

Cautiously step by step.

Every one knows you!

People greeted me and went out of my way.

The hirelings must have stopped you!

They sneaked away to the side with fear.

Count Lavalette, are you telling me the truth—-for the Emperor's sake, who sends greetings to his followers from Elba.

At the end, General?

(Changing.) Are we alone?—Two words. Do you have new friends in Paris?

(Makes an impatient movement.)

Is your hatred still for all the hirelings in Paris?

(The same.)
EXCELMAN

(Reaches into his coat and brings out a document.) Read this!

LAVALETTE

Later.

EXCELMAN

The hour is decisive.

LAVALETTE

(Reads--to the end, returns it to Excelman.) Your work, Excelman?

EXCELMAN

The people cry for the Emperor!

LAVALETTE

Has the movement for the exiled Emperor reached such an extent?

EXCELMAN

(With the cover of the document.) You know the names.

LAVALETTE

All the discharged Generals.

EXCELMAN

The signatures stand for the old army!

LAVALETTE

Are there new developments of an inciting nature?

EXCELMAN

The sewer in Paris has overflowed and threatens to flood the country!--

Your fate, Lavalette--

LAVALETTE

(Averting gesture.)
EXCELMAN

Why do they take you out of the country and imprison you in Paris? Money has been given you by the Emperor, to keep it—without any definite purpose. You don't keep it a secret, that you keep the Emperor's money. You even reported it in Paris, so that they can seize it. But they seize you, arrange a trial and sentence you to the scaffold, because of a proven reserve of money for the deposed Emperor.

LAVALETTE

(Very quietly.) I was in danger.

EXCELMAN

Now we are dangerous. Now we have learned just how dangerous we are. We have interpreted this hint to our advantage. We have the power, we—we, not the others, if we want the power.

LAVALETTE

Have you made any definite decisions?

EXCELMAN

We are ready—and we wait for the Emperor.

LAVALETTE

From Elba?

EXCELMAN

In a day he must be half way across the country—just outside of Paris; he shall step out of his house—the Countess should protect his stay in this house until then!

LAVALETTE

From this house—??
EXCELMAN

(With haste.) The plan culminates in this hour. A wonderful happiness falls in our lap: you meet me here! The last difficulty is overcome. We find the messenger, whom we trust—whom the Emperor believes in without reflection. You are going to Elba.

LAVALETTE

----General Excelman, again we mean different things, when we talk. I am not the one you seek—you are not the one I--

EXCELMAN

You must go. Only you can go. You are believed captured or dead in Paris. No one will stop you. Put the documents in your pocket.

LAVALETTE

No.

EXCELMAN

Would you withdraw, after your fate has delivered the last attack? Your name would be a flaming torch!

LAVALETTE

I am not going.

EXCELMAN

Can you forget with a thought, how one has failed against you? Think about the mud and insults in the prison. Think about the jailer, who defiled you—Count Lavalette—with every kind of filth. Think about every hour in the days and nights of your oppression: —now your name shall rise up out of the dungeon to the highest glory—-it is blending in the cries for the Emperor!
LAVALETTE

(Shakes his head.)

EXCELMAN
The desire is burning in you already. Still for revenge—soon for glory! Didn't you stay here an hour from Paris?

LAVALETTE

(Steps up to him. With enormous self control.) You are looking for the Countess—the Countess begs pardon for her absence:—-the Countess was taken prisoner in Paris.

EXCELMAN

(Stammering.) The Countess—??

LAVALETTE

In my prison—in the same straw—-!!

EXCELMAN

(Confused.) Did they demand a security?

LAVALETTE

Guess nothing, do not guess. Torture your brains with guessing and searching—you will not find it. You will not hold it even at the end, if I say it!—Climb to the steepest point, where everything turns inside out—the possible is impossible—and the impossible falls as clear as drops of crystal before our feet!—-I enjoyed a privilege—-or should it be a special torment: the visit of the Countess to the cell.—-Then it was the last morning—-she lay curved around me—-I swayed shaken by her trembling body. I pushed her toward the door—-she pushed me away. She drove me into the farthest corner—-and with fluttering hands—-without a word—-she pulled her dress off.
I understood and did not understand. I stopped it—she ordered.—She stood naked—and soldiers were going by. They could come in—and because she was naked and resisted against putting on her clothes—I covered her with my clothing—only because she was naked!!—She pushed me into her skirt—and as the watch reported, I slipped past—into the tumult of noon in the street, where people stepped to the middle of the street for the legendary figure of the black countess—found at the gate the carriage of Father Joineau—rattled here—and live as Countess Lavalette!!

EXCELMAN

-----------Your flight---

LAVALETTE

Five weeks ago!

EXCELMAN

Just one hour from Paris?

LAVALETTE

You see, I remain unmolested!

EXCELMAN

News from the Countess--

LAVALETTE

This note today—the Countess reports her arrival.

EXCELMAN

Did they let her go? Are you the one to be liberated?

LAVALETTE

So many questions, so many----!
EXCELMAN

(Racking his brain.) One can imagine it. It gives the impression of generosity—it should flatter the people: the Count Lavalette pardoned—because they no longer hold him in prison. An involuntarily grand gesture.

LAVALETTE

You are losing the last hour of daylight for your ride to Paris. That would mean with a good carriage, which I cannot offer you. Father Joineau has gone to Paris for the Countess.

EXCELMAN

(Concentrating.) This hour for you—the next must belong to us.

LAVALETTE

(Strongly.) This life for me—without the loss of an hour.

EXCELMAN

Today the Count Lavalette has no right to his life.

LAVALETTE

Good, Excelman, our lives for the greatest aim. Here is a new one—most forceful—glory above glory: the deed of a woman.

EXCELMAN

A sacrifice—

LAVALETTE

Carried to the farthest extent. I have made my choice.

EXCELMAN

---The Countess will arrive tonight?

LAVALETTE

Do you still cling to hopeful thoughts?
EXCELMAN

Now all I hope for is the Countess Lavalette!

LAVALETTE

You will be disappointed. Here two lives are intimately united. As closely as never before.

EXCELMAN

(In the act of going.) I noticed a young man, who ran away from the fence and watched the house. Are you not concerned?

LAVALETTE

That is Bresson, an amorous young man, son of the mayor. Every day he sends flowers by Mother Joineau. He does not dream that the Countess has changed into the Count.

EXCELMAN

I was afraid for myself a short time ago.

LAVALETTE

In your clothing? The General Excelman has become a small suburban citizen. Everything about him is changed!

EXCELMAN

(Standing up straight.) Not everything, Count Lavalette! (Going away.) Never mind the door, I shall find my way. (Exits through the glass door. Mother Joineau entered under the steps with Excelman's last words—with a bunch of flowering twigs.)

LAVALETTE

(Quickly to her.) A sheaf today!

MOTHER JOINEAU

Today, do you want them up in the room?
LAVALETTE

What is that? These are reddish and this snowwhite. Bound to the black wood like bright and red corals.

MOTHER JOINBAU

The first peach and plum blossoms.

LAVALETTE

Does the clown plunder his father's fruit trees. It is rather costly: thrash him, Mother Joineau!

MOTHER JOINBAU

Shall I take them upstairs?

LAVALETTE

On the table, when we eat!

MOTHER JOINBAU

(Frightened.) Is the Count going to stay—??

LAVALETTE

You must lay the table, Mother Joineau. The milk--the cheese--the eggs. You have treasures in your pantry.

MOTHER JOINBAU

I have packed a basket.

LAVALETTE

Basket?

MOTHER JOINBAU

When the Count leaves with the Countess.

LAVALETTE

Empty it again. We cannot do without. A wedding feast demands expense!
MOTHER JOINEAU

Wedding--?

LAVALETTE

One time there was a splendid feast, and we were placed next to one another—and the Emperor sat in front of us. That was not the wedding! Who was the little figure—bound to me at this feast? That was not the wedding. Mother Joineau!

MOTHER JOINEAU

I want to lay the table. (She begins to remove the books.)

LAVALETTE

Do not lay the table!

MOTHER JOINEAU

Is the Count going to go on then?

LAVALETTE

I wish to sit at an empty table with her!

MOTHER JOINEAU

---?!

LAVALETTE

The smooth, clean, level table top between us. That will be our wedding celebration, Mother Joineau!

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Occupied as before.)

LAVALETTE

(Picking up—looking at a sheet which has slipped out of a file.)
It is done then. The wedding feast. Mine—hers. The dazzling show. Guests warmed up from music and eating. There are spectators. One invites spectators. It is a disgrace. One with a broad, red face that--wanted to entertain this wild bunch. Laughter stings insolently toward the face of the bride. The bridegroom does not jump up and hit him with a chair---(Glancing and knocking the flowering branches from the table to the floor.) No more tokens here from the world, that groans and greeds outside!!

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Breaking out.) I beg the Count to go away tonight!

LAVALETTE

(Séizing her roughly.) Mother Joineau!

MOTHER JOINEAU

Disaster will break over us from above!

LAVALETTE

(Slowly.) I have acted without hesitation. I sneak in here and pull the house into a cloud of danger around me. It happens behind the back of the master of the house. Without concern for you and Father Joineau.

MOTHER JOINEAU

Still the Count knows nothing himself!

LAVALETTE

What?

MOTHER JOINEAU

The Countess only sent a young man with a note for Father Joineau
to bring the carriage to the suburban hotel!

LAVALETTE

Mother Joineau, the letter told me more than all books.

MOTHER JOINEAU

The Countess does not know that the Count is in the house.

LAVALETTE

Do you envy your husband his message?

MOTHER JOINEAU

I remain before the Count on quaking knees. No one here knows what has happened. The Count does not know—the Countess does not know—Father Joineau does not know—I do not know. Whatever the King's gendarmes hold in their fists, they do not release over night. The Countess is coming! That is the first flash of lightning—and the other blows collect in a black cloud!

LAVALETTE

No, Mother Joineau, I do not know anything.

MOTHER JOINEAU

The Count must flee with the Countess without delay.

LAVALETTE

I promise you the departure—

MOTHER JOINEAU

Father Joineau will go even to the end of the world.

LAVALETTE

If the Countess commands him!
MOTHER JOINEAU

I am taking the basket to the carriage.

LAVALETTE

However has the slightest possibility been given— you are tolerating us under your roof. You stay out in the garden during the night and roam around the house. You fetch village dogs and use them——

MOTHER JOINEAU

(With a suppressed outcry.) Wheels are grinding on the gravel——!!

LAVALETTE

Cloth to the carriage!——— the wet fog is penetrating!———Blankets on the slippery gravel!!

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Exits through the glass door.)

LAVALETTE

(Holds his hands around the corner of the table behind him, leans forward. The Countess enters between the glass doors: a worn out coat covers her from shoulders to shoes, a rough scarf is drawn forward at her forehead.)

LAVALETTE

(Breaking forward, crosses the room.)

THE COUNTESS

(Toward him.—Tight embrace.)

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Enters and closes the door.)
THE COUNTESS

(Bending away from Lavalette--loose. To Mother Joineau--laughing.)
I have no trunk, Mother Joineau. I am going with you, help me up.

LAVALETTE

(Pulls her to him.)

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Up the steps, exits.)

LAVALETTE

----Beautiful--you are beautiful!

THE COUNTESS

Are you making a joke about my coat and scarf.

LAVALETTE

I am telling myself--about you, how beautiful you are!

THE COUNTESS

I--am tired.

LAVALETTE

Tell me--how beautiful you are under your coat and scarf.

THE COUNTESS

The trip in the carriage has tortured me.

LAVALETTE

The last hour grew unendingly. I have waited.

THE COUNTESS

Yes--you stayed.

LAVALETTE

Thanks to you, that you are alive!
THE COUNTESS

(Vigorously throwing her arms around him.) Everything is only life for you and me. We still have not lived and we breathe for the first time. It has all submerged. Without recollection—without dawn—without dream!

LAVALETTE

Do you want to forget?

THE COUNTESS

Our life has no earlier life. I do not know that. I am taking that off like a coat!

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Steps out above—goes back in.)

THE COUNTESS

Mother Joineau is warning. Later, my friend.

LAVALETTE

She is taking on another responsibility. About us.

THE COUNTESS

About us?

LAVALETTE

The question makes us hesitate.

THE COUNTESS

What is it?

LAVALETTE

Does she give us this night in the house?
THE COUNTESS
I do not understand.

LAVALETTE
Are you free—without being followed?

THE COUNTESS
I am—free.

LAVALETTE
(Drawing her to himself.) Are we going to be here tonight without danger?

THE COUNTESS
----?

LAVALETTE
I want to ask. I feel a burning curiosity for tales that are told between evening and night. The chair by the wall becomes an elephant. It makes us shudder—and we shake in safety.

THE COUNTESS
(Hastily.) Yes—tell it!

LAVALETTE
When did they find you?

THE COUNTESS
----

LAVALETTE

THE COUNTESS
(Worried.) They discovered the change.
LAVALETTE

Screamed out in disappointment.

THE COUNTESS

I--do not remember--everything.

LAVALETTE

Did it take them five weeks to sober up?

THE COUNTESS

Is it--five weeks?

LAVALETTE

(Opening a book cover on the table.) Marked down day by day, a record of impatience--and already canceled!

THE COUNTESS

Now tell me about yourself. No one recognized you in my clothes?

LAVALETTE

I stepped out of the cell--and did not believe that I carried the responsibility of the risky undertaking. I staggered about between the walls--and had to support myself in order not to fall. The grey alley seemed endless to me. In the courtyard, I covered my face with the veil, my cramped fingers tore the thin fabric. Then I wanted to turn back. A soldier pushed me in the back and shouted something. It started a laugh among the soldiers in the courtyard--and I fled in front of this insulting laughter--into the confusion of the street--found Father Joineau somehow--speeded the trip-----(He becomes silent and stares at the Countess.)
THE COUNTESS

(In the chair. The scarf has slipped from her hair, the coat falls open. The man's clothing underneath appears.) Do you remain here ill?

LAVALETTE

(Directly in front of her.) Do you want to hear more?

THE COUNTESS

I am listening.

LAVALETTE

I am staying here—in order to recover from a serious illness, that has lasted as long as I have known you.

THE COUNTESS

What is that?

LAVALETTE

I—did not love you enough.

THE COUNTESS

(Looks at him searchingly.)

LAVALETTE

Do you want to know the ugly story? I am their wild hero. I hated myself because I came to you earlier. I became my own enemy on the day that you slipped out of your clothes in the darkened cell and stood before me naked!—Tell me this, that I was blind, when I knew you before.

THE COUNTESS

(Leans back.)
LAVALETTE
I took the mirror down from the wall,—I could be tempted to strike
my own image. So I extinguished the other in me—in order to possess
you for the first time, you who have never been touched by a man!

THE COUNTESS
So—-you--love--me--now?

LAVALETTE
Never offended by any glance--never insulted by any hands, now you will
bloom first for me. You have to belong to me—not to the one who has
sunk. You must not remember!

THE COUNTESS
My friend----

LAVALETTE
It would make my life empty and drive me to insanity--are not these
hands strange to you as all men's hands!

THE COUNTESS
(Almost horrified.) Dearest----

LAVALETTE
Now you burst out of the cold night blazing down to me. Star that
never dips forward out of its element. Now it falls clearly and
purely over me. Do you feel that I see you? That the motion of your
limbs is open? Is it not the figure, that long ago twisted unsteadily
in my dreams? Out of the miserable coat--through scarf and cloth--
already complete the unveiling of the splendor of your body, which
lures and offers. Are you finally a body?
THE COUNTESS

(Starts hastily to gather the coat about her.)

LAVALETTE

(Keeps it open.) No dungeon is blowing on you here. We are ardently breathed upon----

THE COUNTESS

(Pushes away under him from the chair.) Not now, my friend----

LAVALETTE

The house is ours.

THE COUNTESS

(To the stairway.) I--will call you! (Goes up--exits.)

(Joineau enters through the glass door, with a whip.)

LAVALETTE

Hitch up your cart, Father Joineau. Take off your disguise. The basket is for you!

JOINEAU

(Frightened.) Is the Count going--

LAVALETTE

Could I with a clear conscious cheat you out of your sleep in bed with Mother Joineau?

JOINEAU

I can still sleep many nights--

LAVALETTE

Be careful, Father Joineau. The next day is not promised to anyone--to say nothing of the night after.
JOINEAU

I mean--

LAVALETTE

Wine with cinnamon for you--prepared by Mother Joineau. At my expense. The first debt that I pay, I am going to pay to you. What do you want for yourself from the Count and the Countess Lavalette?

JOINEAU

I have no wishes for myself.

LAVALETTE

You must be uncanny to have no wishes.

JOINEAU

I wish it to be a good night.

LAVALETTE

The greatest wish, Father Joineau.

JOINEAU

I am not going to bed. (Exits through the glass door.)

(Mother Joineau enters above.)

LAVALETTE

The Countess?

MOTHER JOINEAU

I want to call Father Joineau.

LAVALETTE

Father Joineau?

MOTHER JOINEAU

He should help me put up the bed.
LAVALETTE

A bed for you upstairs??

MOTHER JOINEAU

The Countess wants to spend the night in the outer chamber at the other end of the hall.

LAVALETTE

(Stares at her—then breaking out.) Mother Joineau—-it is my wedding night. The bridegroom should take the bride to himself. I shall take her to myself!!

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Exits under the stairs.)

LAVALETTE

(Rushes up the steps: the door will not open. He beats on the wood with his fists.) I am coming!!--I am coming!!--I am coming!!
SECOND ACT

(Lavalette above—in front of the door with his arms at his sides. D'Ormesson enters through the glass door: he is in his later seventies, his hair and beard like white ornaments about his shapely featured head of a scientist; some excitement is apparent. Mother Joineau comes in from the rear.)

D'ORMESSON

Good, Mother Joineau—good, Mother Joineau!—Send Father Joineau in here, when he comes back from the hotel with the trunk.

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Exits under the stairway.)

LAVALETTE

(Hesitates--rushes down the steps.) D'Ormesson?!

D'ORMESSON

(Immediately collected--stretching both hands toward him.) I am an impolite host to come later than my guests.

LAVALETTE

(Seizes his hands.) Do I have you to thank for this??

D'ORMESSON

I truly would believe that I was experiencing a fairy tale if my hands did not ache under this pressure.

LAVALETTE

(Letting go.) First here—you discovered----??
Mother Joineau's heart is overflowing—and in the surf of her hurried communications the steady skiff of my quiet reflection almost broke itself to pieces.

Do you not come from Paris?

From Paris. With an unexpected ride. An officer of the royal gendarmes hunted me up in the library and surprised me with his invitation.

Did you not hear anything in Paris?

I was very deep in the examination of a parcel from the first press, that had come in from Leipzig. The gendarme had business with the mayor of the place and wanted to make the tedious journey shorter with my conversation. And since I was advised by my own interest, which I never had an opportunity to satisfy, I accepted. Besides it happened for the first time, that a royal officer wandered into the library. And then along the way, he hardly spoke a word.

Neither you—nor the officer knew of my liberation and that of the Countess, did you?

I see you have lost none of your strength. The five weeks of fresh country air have made you again as you were before your imprisonment. I am glad that I could offer you such an apparently wholesome delay.
LAVALETTE

Does chance bring you out here?

D'ORMESSON

In the form of the officer of the royal gendarmes. Also that could be called a chance: a new master creates new beings. And so this officer is only a royal chance. (In the chair.) Has the time in my house been short for you? Do you have any complaints about my servants?

LAVALETTE

(On the cushioned bench.) You are steadfast in your goodness, D'Ormesson.

D'ORMESSON

Your indulgence drives you too far. You are a guest and I am the inactive host.

LAVALETTE

You find an intruder here.

D'ORMESSON

Of the most welcome type.

LAVALETTE

Just thanking you is not enough. It is too quickly said for all that you have done. I am overcome: you offered the Countess a shelter in your house—and without your pity for the Countess I would also have remained in bonds. (He bows quickly over D'Ormesson's hand.)

D'ORMESSON

You are puffing up a thing of little importance into one of great
significance. I have too small a part here, to let myself be included in such an occurrence. (Touching Lavalette's hand.) You drive up the gulfstream of your love. If there are whirlpools and cliffs—you do not need the pilot, who guides you. I am not the pilot!—Do I have the opportunity to pay my respects to my beautiful guest?

LAVALETTE

(After reflection--shortly.) The Countess is dressing.

D'ORMESSON

At my request kiss the best hands in the world.

LAVALETTE

Are you departing already?

D'ORMESSON

Without sleep for the first press from Leipzig.

LAVALETTE

What is your interest here?

D'ORMESSON

Books, books—the dry bread of the old. (He stands up and begins to heap up books on the table from the library.)

LAVALETTE

(Looks at him--then stands up.) D'Ormesson, you come from Paris. An hour ago you climbed down the steps of the royal palace, that are always surrounded by chattering parasites. You travel out here in the company of an officer of the royal gendarmes--

D'ORMESSON

--who sat as silent in his seat as a stick of wood.
LAVALETTE
No doors are closed to you. Your age and your profession are safe. Conversations do not stop, when you enter. The King lets you enter and stay. D'Ormesson, it is impossible that you do not know of my rash flight. You knew everything and let me live here undisturbed.

D'ORMESSON
You overrate my gift for disguise, that I am using to show astonishment at your presence.

LAVALETTE
Good. You have been deceived.

D'ORMESSON
The King had entertained me with it for hours. It would have given something of interest for many days which are all uninteresting.

LAVALETTE
It is possible: my person was replaced. The cell appointed to me did not yawn emptily. Whether Count, whether Countess on the straw pile—one held a victim of the blood of Lavalette. That is the calculation. Is it right?

D'ORMESSON
Your time belongs to the Countess.

LAVALETTE
D'Ormesson—that which is whispered in the most secret channel trickles into your ear:—by what kindness—by what luck is the Countess free today?

D'ORMESSON
(Silent.)
LAVALETTE
The rumor must be the lewd prey of the streets of Paris—and didn't you hear the echo of alarm one time?

D'ORMESSON
There is tumult in the streets but without any indication of a special reason.

LAVALETTE
Has the King for the first time been touched by a generous action?
Only if it is not too significant: the pardoning of a woman!

D'ORMESSON
I am crushed with you in admiring the deed of the Countess.

LAVALETTE
It could crush you. You are entangled in this foolish adventure. You sheltered the fugitive!

D'ORMESSON
Who knows it?

LAVALETTE
Subsequently they will insult you. Your white hair would not protect your head. I am afraid for you!

D'ORMESSON
Everything is safe when danger lies in wait at every step. We step on the back of a fat monster— it is pointless which one of our steps provokes it. The eternal values have become meaningless, and we give mankind a horrible example. It seems necessary, that the greatness stands up, and by its fall tears open a hole at the bottom of which the inferior creatures roll about in lust and filth. Even if you criticize
the weakness of the Emperor—he could only throw this kind of shadow. How should a man of his stature cast a shadow smaller than this? The planet on which we live sorrowfully and joyously has not become earth in order to breed the worm. (Holding a volume high in his hands.) Goethe great in grief over his battered fatherland, was greater in his free judgment over the appearance of the Emperor! The shame must shake him now. A haze of decay smoulders over this land—and in the filth the creature strives for the fattest morsel. I have given up the hope, that one still is coming and take a shovel to bury the filth! I plunder here richly in the rows and rob you of the single material of your conversation. I do it less voluntarily than under the pressure of the circumstances. I used to borrow books from Paris, books which I needed for a thorough study. I have to remind myself that they are royal property, therefore a burglary in the state of possession of the King. It is then a more incriminating fact, because the Emperor had read one or the other. This is what insults most of all!

LAVALETTE
You exaggerate, D'Ormesson. Your aversion to everyone, who opens no book, is still preconceived!

D'ORMESSON
Perhaps I do not entertain the supposition falsely, that they revised the library in my absence and put me under accusation upon my return—pointing at the gaps on the bookshelves. Accusing me of robbery. The visit of the gendarmes appeared to be very unusual, and it was done very cleverly, that they let me gather the pieces of evidence in this place.
LA VALETTE

(In front of him with a wincing face.) Do you not have to expect to find here an applicant of the one accused?

D'ORMESSON

(Opening a book.) No book title shows the merits of this pretender.

LA VALETTE

I—am the advocate for this scurvy cadaver. The deed of the Countess has awakened the King. The news flew to him and struck him flatly in the heart. The shock formed this one word only: mercy!

D'ORMESSON

Did he need five weeks to express it to the resolution?

LA VALETTE

You are shaking in vain!

D'ORMESSON

Your faith builds towers out of water.

LA VALETTE

(Seizing his hand on the table.) Excuses. I am not giving in. It will be cowardice to appease without pressing for an explanation. Why was the Countess released?!

D'ORMESSON

Again you are seeking indirectly, what you can provide yourself with cheaply.

LA VALETTE

Who is giving clarity to me?!

D'ORMESSON

The one whose arrival causes you unrest.
LAVALETTE

(Interrupting.) I did not want to tire the Countess with questions.
--Not tonight at any rate--tomorrow perhaps. One time in conversation.
Of course the time can be given better meaning, D'Ormesson, if husband
and wife are together. And the wife is beautiful--of great perfection.

D'ORMESSON

I believe in the solution of this type.

LAVALETTE

You consent almost extravagantly!

D'ORMESSON

You attack book knowledge as eagerly.

LAVALETTE

But you use only book knowledge!

D'ORMESSON

I would unveil our weakness and tear the fabric apart with unmerciful
hands, that we have produced around our particular strength. It is
not so superior, as it appears to us. We chop down a blossoming branch
with an ax--the woman smiles and forces the most powerful one on
ey earth into another path!--It is interesting to examine the revolu-
tionizing events in history, where the woman stands at the beginning.
Certainly we gladly attribute the glory to the man--however generally
crown him with a paper crown. And--with some courage--where sources
remain dark to us--a woman smiles her charming smile. We cannot re-
sist this game!--However it leads into detail, and we are the ones
who wither by, seeking for an explanation at all costs. We patch our
dignity—this is our particular task!

LAVALETTE

(Bending forward.) It is no more from books, that you—

D'ORMESSON

Dead history, Count Lavalette!

LAVALETTE

Are you trying to increase the number of examples—and to increase your fame as a scientist at my expense?!

D'ORMESSON

I had no more time to satisfy this ambition.

LAVALETTE

It fell to you—you only have to pick it up—and close the last volume of your history with this trump card!! (Joineau through the glass door with a leather trunk.)

D'ORMESSON

Does the mayor have hot or cold wine?

JOINEAU

This is not what caused the delay.

D'ORMESSON

Did it take you an hour to come from the inn?

JOINEAU

The trunk was no longer in the carriage; they had it in the room.

D'ORMESSON

They—who?
The mayor—the officer. They talked here and there about the trunk and knocked at the leather on the top and the bottom.

(Thoughtfully. Interrupting.) In the trunk. (He hands him some books.) Treated carefully, besides its value, it belongs to someone else.

(Packs the books in.)

You will have a difficult trip in the darkness.

It is still light. And when it becomes gradually darker, the eye will grow accustomed to the night.—Do I say farewell to the Countess? I am—as far as it is granted—happy to serve with my empty house.

(To Joineau.) Does Mother Joineau give me a share of the cheese?

She put a basket in the carriage.

A basket, already?

The basket was not packed for you.

Mother Joineau had prepared for our trip.

Then the cheese is in it? So the departure is made easy for me, the
host thanks the guest for the entertainment.

LAVALETTE

(Suddenly clasping his hands.) D'Ormesson----

D'ORMESSON

(Looks at him.)----In the carriage, Joineau. (Both exit through the glass door.)

LAVALETTE

(Remains motionless: energy is tightly drawn in his face. Now certain of his unchangeable resolution—he goes with calm steps toward the stairway. Bresson stumbles in through the glass door; his right foot is twisted into a club. His blouse and hose show fresh tears and stains.)

LAVALETTE

(Seizing him.) Boy, it is too early for me to be seen here. I will put you in the cellar!

BRESSON

I--Bresson--

LAVALETTE

What are you looking for here?

BRESSON

The--Count----

LAVALETTE

What do you know about my hiding place?

BRESSON

Always. The Countess was here first. Then the Countess went away—and the Count came back!
LAVALETTE

Your flowers?

BRESSON

I wanted to protect the Count!

LAVALETTE

Are you making claim for a repayment?

BRESSON

Today—the Countess is here!

LAVALETTE

You play the spy well.

BRESSON

Pressed to the gate—over the wall—through the bushes!—The Count must flee!!

LAVALETTE

What do you know?

BRESSON

My father has received many orders. An officer is with him in his room. Gendarmes from the next villages. They gather in the mayor's house. I will lead the Count to the other side of town.

LAVALETTE

(Slowly.) An officer of the royal gendarmes—

BRESSON

The Count can still save himself—if we run!

LAVALETTE

(Calmly.) Go home.
BRESSON

The Count must flee.

LAVALETTE

(Bursting out.) Back into life?! In solitude, tortured by thorns??

BRESSON

The Count's life--

LAVALETTE

What was it, that appeared to me to be more important than the great Emperor Napoleon once before today?! (The Countess enters above--dressed in woman's clothing.)

BRESSON

(Exits quickly, hobbling through the glass door.)

THE COUNTESS

At the window--I saw; was it D'Ormesson, who went away with Joineau?

LAVALETTE

D'Ormesson paid us his visit.

THE COUNTESS

(Coming down the stairs.) Without an opportunity for me to thank him for our sanctuary?

LAVALETTE

He was in a hurry.

THE COUNTESS

Did he come from Paris?

LAVALETTE

And back to Paris.
THE COUNTESS

With news for you?

LAVALETTE

He gave himself the appearance—I did not urge him.

THE COUNTESS

I would have made him talk at any rate.

LAVALETTE

He was here for his books—and besides you had locked yourself in.

THE COUNTESS

(In front of him smiling.) I could not use you, my friend. I was not pretty. You must forgive a wife's small vanities. Forgive me. (Taking his head between the palms of her hands.) Now I have come to you—and will always remain with you.

LAVALETTE

(Withdrawing and shaking his head.)

THE COUNTESS

Dearest—?

LAVALETTE

You gave Mother Joineau an order.

THE COUNTESS

(Looks at him. Then quickly.) It hurts you--

LAVALETTE

(Pushing her into the chair.) You are tired from the trip—from shock—-

THE COUNTESS

(In the chair.) Such a soft cushion is tempting.
LAVALETTE

It is tempting to meditation. A need of the body is satisfied—and one begins to contemplate.

THE COUNTESS

(Lifting her arms to him.) Beautiful new days are beginning!

LAVALETTE

(Stops in front of the chair.)

THE COUNTESS

Do not be impatient—all time is left for us!

LAVALETTE

---D'Ormesson dropped a hint—we move here without any danger.

THE COUNTESS

Did D'Ormesson say that?

LAVALETTE

He is near the King—and the King let it creep out in the conversation.

THE COUNTESS

You?—I?

LAVALETTE

There are grounds for a double pardon.

THE COUNTESS

D'Ormesson knows?

LAVALETTE

The report goes—from a mediator.

THE COUNTESS

Who?
LAVALETTE
He wanted to give me his name—I refused to listen to him.

THE COUNTESS
Why?

LAVALETTE
(In front of her.) Because I want to know the last thing only from you!

THE COUNTESS
No, I do not know anything.

LAVALETTE
We are walking around here without any restraint—we have to enjoy this freedom.

THE COUNTESS
Nowhere however do shadows gather, you said it.

LAVALETTE
Debt surrounds more deeply, debt which I do not cancel.

THE COUNTESS
What kind of debt is that?

LAVALETTE
To the mediator.

THE COUNTESS
Is it not a trifle, that tortures you?

LAVALETTE
It is appropriate to poison my life to the end. I could not endure the sight of mankind. Every person would force the question on me: is it he—he—he—, who obligates me by my blood!
THE COUNTESS
Stranger to us both!

LAVALETTE
Spectres are grinning at me everywhere. I do not want to look up, there it is whispering behind my back. I turn my head away at the meeting—there heads swell to the size of moons, which burst above me as red as blood!

THE COUNTESS
You are torturing yourself—

LAVALETTE
(In front of her, on his knees.) Save me!!—save me again!!—you have the skill!!

THE COUNTESS
(Her head to his.) Have you not forgotten?

LAVALETTE
Give my feelings that overcome me a resting place:—whom do I thank— for you?!

THE COUNTESS
I do not know that we owe thanks.

LAVALETTE
(Stands up.) I lied. My presence completely surprised D'Ormesson— and your arrival confused him boundlessly.

THE COUNTESS
Why did you lie?
LAVALETTE
I tried to get an explanation. I irritated him pitilessly—and at last he did not hesitate to invent stories—of the means, that are at the disposal of a woman, in order to open all the ways. I laughed at him—he left me insulted!—Now I should be sorry—with every regret for my errors. No longer for my sake—D'Ormesson deserves, that one knows the truth. It brings no warmth to me, no coldness—I sit here with complete calm and listen. I am an unconcerned listener.

THE COUNTESS
(Slowly.) If D'Ormesson comes once more—

LAVALETTE
So we sit here—and wait.

THE COUNTESS
--------I had no one----who was kind to me!

LAVALETTE
D'Ormesson's answer would read: you were good to someone—and this one paid you, by helping you to your freedom. According to D'Ormesson's opinion.

THE COUNTESS
D'Ormesson----would understand me.

LAVALETTE
Am I a blockhead?

THE COUNTESS
(Breaking out.) Nothing is true.

LAVALETTE
(Stands up.)
THE COUNTESS

Where are you going?

LAVALETTE

I am cold in this room.

THE COUNTESS

(Beside herself.) I have not given myself to anyone—in order to escape!! I swear it to you—as only a human being can swear!!

LAVALETTE

(At the door.)

THE COUNTESS

Are you coming back to me?!

LAVALETTE

I will know you too little in the future, in order to risk life with you.

THE COUNTESS

Do you doubt my love?

LAVALETTE

I do not want to live in the shadow of a friend!

THE COUNTESS

I had no friends——only enemies!

LAVALETTE

Then the puzzle of your liberation becomes only more difficult—and I can only solve it at the place, from where you came.

THE COUNTESS

Do you want——
LAVALETTE

Up and down the streets—to ask from door to door for the protector of the Countess Lavalette.

THE COUNTESS

(To him.) Escaped and alive—is it not sufficient?!

LAVALETTE

Life has a deeper death, if we are strange to each other!

THE COUNTESS

(Looks at him—leads him to the cushioned bench—sits in the chair.)

I have not lived—since I have been here. (Shaking.) Tell me that one can blot oneself out—and be dead and stiff—when horror creeps over us!

LAVALETTE

(Silent.)

THE COUNTESS

They still had no suspicion—and you came out luckily—I stayed back for you. I was so preoccupied in your escape—that I had forgotten myself. I stood erect and also prayed. To beautiful angels who protected you. I saw them as they went behind you with their tall white wings. It was magnificent to know that you were under the blue sky. It was certainly a beautiful day. I did not know anything about the darkness around me!—Then someone stepped in—I only felt his presence—and saw through him along—he went away—and returned with soldiers—who crowded around me—they babbled—and I kept listening for your steps. It was like the sound of a bell in my ears—and I could laugh—yes I laughed—I had to laugh out loud——
— and my laughter awakened an uproar within the walls—the echo silenced me—still it resounded on without me—and even grew more frightful—the soldiers screamed it in my face—and something closed my mouth—hands grasped for me—a heavy weight fell over me—and tore me down on thorns, which stuck in the back of my neck—the straw!—and the roaring stream rolled over me—from animal—and animal—and animal!!

LAVALETTE

(Bending backward sharply.)———Did they not come again later?

THE COUNTESS

They left the door unlocked.

LAVALETTE

They crowded into you—according to their humor?

THE COUNTESS

They brought their friends to me.

LAVALETTE

Every night?

THE COUNTESS

It never became day down there.

LAVALETTE

———And today?

THE COUNTESS

A coat and scarf were thrown in to me.

LAVALETTE

Without direction?
THE COUNTESS
Free!

LAVALETTE
(Turning his face toward her. His lips become distorted little by little. He suddenly laughs freely and stretches his hands toward her.) You have conquered my suspension. It now is made of bronze and stands firmly for all time:—I have no friend to be afraid of. They are enemies—repulsive even to you. It has become clear and unequivocal. I move away from that—and crunch under my feet whatever is under my feet.

THE COUNTESS
Does everything lie far behind you?

LAVALETTE
I kiss you. Can I prevent that the glances touched you? You did not return them, that is final! I kiss you.—The taste has not disappeared. You have not given your lips.—Surprise is no granting!

THE COUNTESS
Kiss me again!

LAVALETTE
With no joy dearer than this!

THE COUNTESS
We know nothing more!

LAVALETTE
(Raising himself.) One must think it through to the end—and throw light where the threatening shadows are growing. They have fallen
over you. They have hardly understood who you are. The way they stretch their wenches on the straw!

THE COUNTESS

Not remember!

LAVALETTE

It concerns events lying far apart. I am complicating nothing—
I am clarifying it. Have you lost me with a feeling. Power forced you. Could you ward them off? Therefore you remained untouched.

THE COUNTESS

We love each other more than ever.

LAVALETTE

Who has no enemies? How does one protect oneself? Can I prevent tramps from climbing into my garden at night and tearing out the most beautiful flowers from the beds? Should I now root out the bushes?—
—The violation happened when it stood unprotected!—Or they break even into the house, they break into pieces whatever they find with their filthy hands—-they tear this tapestry—and strike at this woman who is naked—who shines from the darkness——(Losing himself more and more.)—who take her—and possess her—and desert her as the day dawns—at which time the master of the house comes—and with disgust carries her weary body to bed!!

THE COUNTESS

Oh, do not trouble yourself—

LAVALETTE

I can heap up examples. I am roaming through the streets. A brick is
loosened from a roof—and strikes me right in the face. My nose is crushed—and so I meet you. Without a nose—a bleeding bone grins between my eyes and chain. My mouth takes part in it. It is a large yawning hole down to my throat. My throat heaves visibly before your blue glances. And you come to me—and do not hesitate the length of a breath—and you kiss into the hole that the heavy brick made.

THE COUNTESS

(Starts to lift her hands to him.)

LAVALETTE

Are you warding me off? Is disgust shaking you? Does the picture offend you already?----It is also repugnant to me—to touch you!

THE COUNTESS

I would--like--to kiss you.

LAVALETTE

Why did you not cry out and demand protection?!

THE COUNTESS

You won time to flee far.

LAVALETTE

Why did you not kill yourself?

THE COUNTESS

Someone had to be in the cell.

LAVALETTE

How could you bear it?

THE COUNTESS

I saved you!----I felt nothing--no pressure, no embrace. I lay with
stiff limbs—like they were carved from wood!—Only inside—deeply
hid—delight sparkled:—it was blissful in order to bear that for you!

LAVALETTE
The blood rises in your cheeks! You suffered because you responded
with delight. You did not remain stiff—your body curved to meet the
pressure—and enjoyed it.

THE COUNTESS
Do not say---

LAVALETTE
Shall I suffocate it? Shall I crawl down in my shame—like a dog
that has been whipped with a switch?—Am I anything else but a filthy
beast? Before those, who had their pleasure with you—until they
tired of you?—Then they sent you to me. I am certainly of your kind:
they do not care about the love of a hussy. That is my freedom for
which I thank you!!

THE COUNTESS
Kill me if you cannot bear it.

LAVALETTE
(Shaking her by the shoulders.) To cheat me out of the rest. It is
my turn now! A right for everyone!!

THE COUNTESS
Not---not here!!

LAVALETTE
(Holding her with a brutal grip in the chair.) The opportunity is in
every cushion. You are not spoiled—and soft is better than hard!!
THE COUNTESS

(Pushes him away from her with utmost exertion and runs to the stairway--starts to speak--climbs up the steps--exits.)

LAVALETTE

(At the newel post.) You have made up your bed in the outer most chamber. Where is Mother Joineau? Is she wandering through the village? Is she going to incite the young men?! (Bresson limps hastily in through the glass door.)

LAVALETTE

Come here. Your scent does not deceive you. Go up!--Clubfoot, are you waiting to be urged? Where is the whip?

BRESSON

D'Ormesson is captured!----Father Joineau is captured!

LAVALETTE

The horse is gone!

BRESSON

The officer sent for the Count!

LAVALETTE

Has he confided in you?

BRESSON

I roamed through the rooms--I played dumb--but could hear!

LAVALETTE


BRESSON

The Count should keep close behind me--the brook is shallow at one
place. A sandy hollow is on the other side. We will escape!

LAVALETTE

(Changes--composed.) How far to Paris?

BRESSON

But not to Paris!

LAVALETTE

Get a cart and make the nag run, whatever it costs!!

BRESSON

The Count is known in Paris.

LAVALETTE

Where they know me best: we stop at the prison.

BRESSON

The Count--?!

LAVALETTE

I am not master of the desire---to kiss the wretched straw!!

BRESSON

(Listens at the glass door--exits.)

LAVALETTE

(Goes with a firm step through the room--through the door in the
bookcases, which he pulls to with a bang, exits.)

THE COUNTESS

(Clothed in the thinnest drapery--enters above. She leans over the
bannister--searches and listens. She goes to the door in the book-
cases--tries the latch, which does not open. With a low call.) I
am waiting----I am waiting----I am waiting------
THIRD ACT

(The Countess is still at the door in the bookcases. The rattle of the glass door rouses her. Bresson enters with a bundle—he stands stiffly at the right of the Countess.)

THE COUNTESS

(Drawing her clothing more closely about her.) Are you bringing Mother Joineau's vegetables for the kitchen? The entrance is behind the house.

BRESSON

No vegetables!

THE COUNTESS

(Smiling.) Flowers for me?

BRESSON

This—for the Count!

THE COUNTESS

You must be dreaming. The Count is in prison in Paris. I doubt that he is alive.

BRESSON

(Violently shaking his head.) The Count has been here—since the Countess went away.

THE COUNTESS

You have not observed very carefully. I am very similar in appearance to the Count.
BRESSON

The Countess first came this afternoon with Father Joineau!

THE COUNTESS

Did you see the Count here?

BRESSON

Watching from the gate.

THE COUNTESS

The purpose?

BRESSON

Protection for the Count. Always my flowers. They laughed at me there in the village--and it started no suspicion!

THE COUNTESS

Why do you come now?

BRESSON

The Count is waiting.

THE COUNTESS

Has the Count spoken to you?

BRESSON

I warned the Count--twice.

THE COUNTESS

Of--

BRESSON

Arrest.

THE COUNTESS

How?
An officer is at the mayor's with a warrant. D'Ormesson--Father Joineau are already arrested.

The Count--

--wants to get away!

Alone?

With me--in my clothes!

Where to?

To Paris!

To--??

To the prison!

(Supporting herself.)

The Count must disguise himself immediately. They are in the room in the act of leaving. The officer and many gendarmes. The Countess must make the Count hurry!
THE COUNTESS

(Controlling herself.) The Count—will hurry. Stay in the kitchen.

BRESSON

The flight is urgent!

THE COUNTESS

However he will follow you willingly----if you lead him farther than Paris!

BRESSON

(Exits under the stairway.)

THE COUNTESS

(Staggers to the table. Mother Joineau enters below the steps.)

MOTHER JOINEAU

Our master is arrested—Father Joineau is seized. The good, dear sir, D'Ormesson!

THE COUNTESS

Do not speak so loudly!

MOTHER JOINEAU

There is no object in whispering any more. We are all lost. The house is on fire—and whoever runs out is hunted down like a rat!

THE COUNTESS

You are foolish, Mother Joineau.

MOTHER JOINEAU

I see ghosts! I have already seen the grey dog—bloated like a calf. It is too late now!

THE COUNTESS

As little danger threatens you as D'Ormesson and Father Joineau.
MOTHER JOINEAU

I would listen to that so long, until they tied our hands behind our backs!

THE COUNTESS

The Count is getting ready to flee during this hour. With Bresson's help. I will deny that he ever was here!

MOTHER JOINEAU

So a thing like that should save us?!

THE COUNTESS

This or that—you all will escape disaster together with the Count!—Wait for the Count with Bresson!

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Exits below the steps.)

THE COUNTESS

(Starts toward the door under the bookcases.)

LAVALETTE

(Quickly coming out. Hesitates,) You?

THE COUNTESS

I wanted to call you.

LAVALETTE

You ought to go on up. It is getting cool here from the garden.

THE COUNTESS

(Very calmly.) Bresson is here. You can change your clothes in the kitchen. Into Bresson's clothes.

LAVALETTE

----?
THE COUNTESS

He urges you to hurry—and is standing in the kitchen with Mother Joineau. She will help you with the disguise.

LAVALETTE

What did Bresson say to you?

THE COUNTESS

You want to force him to go to Paris with you. I am sorry about the lad.

LAVALETTE

What should happen to him?

THE COUNTESS

You are involving him an adventure that will end in the prison.

LAVALETTE

Where?

THE COUNTESS

The aim of your flight.

LAVALETTE

(Stares at her.)

THE COUNTESS

You are wrong however: you can hardly hope for mercy from the bandits, if you surrender yourself.

LAVALETTE

(Short laugh.) Hope for—(Almost screaming.) I am looking for protection—-from myself!!

THE COUNTESS

(Icily.) The Count Lavalette will be so kind—before he puts on his
beggar's clothes—to listen for the last time to the Countess Lavalette.  
(She goes to the chair—sits.)

LAVALETTE

(Follows her as in a daze to the couch.)

THE COUNTESS

(With the same stiff composure.) You must not interrupt me, in order to destroy the space of time which is allotted to you.—Neither does it allure to stay with the disappointments of life longer than is absolutely necessary! (After a short fit of weakness.) Childhood without parents is sad. Out of deserted homes to black nuns. Disciplining from the convent teaches you: not to dream. Large gardens are silent. Tall trees without a sky. Resignation drops in the blood. From hour to hour a drop.———My look was stiff—I betrayed other motion without a shrug. I submitted to the appearance——and burned in fire, that grew inwardly and excited itself with every opposition, which held me inside the walls. I dreamed! I lay awake at night——and painted glowing pictures in the blackness—I climbed and climbed—steps over high steps——toward the gleam of life! (Breathing deeply.) One time——in the garden——nuns held me up to the main gate. There the beam broke over me: the Emperor! The Emperor held my hand— I kissed his hand deeply—he lifted the kissing mouth to his——I blazed up in triumph: mistress of the Emperor!———However he offered me only the Count Lavalette to be my husband!

LAVALETTE

(Bending far forward.)
T H E  C O U N T E S S

(Opening her eyes again.) The Emperor fell. He pulled the Count Lavalette with him, like everyone. My pride returned: to be the wife of a prisoner in filth and straw. Greed for your splendor, with which I rose, spurred me on. It became ridiculously unimportant—to crouch in your place on the flagstones. And eat from a bowl of rotten soup. Most daring expectations whipped me—the dream of the maiden shot upward: the Emperor destroyed!—Lavalette the hero of the street—Lavalette emperor!!

L A V A L E T T E

(Laughs gasping.)

T H E  C O U N T E S S

(Scarcely controlling herself.) Here I met you. Under Mother Joineau's wings—by Mother Joineau's kitchen. So entirely self-sufficient. You eat—you sleep. And you are satisfied—you have carnal desires. So you wait for your maiden. She comes—and is disgusted with the imposter, who gave her the name of Lavalette.

L A V A L E T T E

(Heartily.) Go on——

T H E  C O U N T E S S

Nothing can persuade me to go on lying any more. You are not any better than Bresson. If you hide in his clothes. I am afraid of mistaking you. However I would prefer Bresson in the rags. Bresson has ambition—he throws his life away in order to save Count Lavalette!!

(Rising half toward Lavalette.) What is life worth? Is it worth it:
to eat—to sleep—to grow old and die and be forgotten? Who throws away this expenditure—when his means reaches the end?! (She tears her garments open.) I would not have coveted. I was prepared from the first day. You should climb. Where resistance stopped—I stepped in. With my means I overcame it—as only a woman can overcome. And laughing I had risen again to be thrown down again and again!!

LAVALETTE

(Stands up.)

THE COUNTESS

(Already with a breaking voice.) They pressed me on the straw—and I let them have the pleasure. I gave—and gave—and gave. They should forget their duty—in order not to destroy my glittering dream: to be by your side envied by all the world—and chilled by the unapproachable pride in the tumult!!!!

LAVALETTE

(Threw his arms high—laughs.) The idol laughs—the idol roars—
(Falls back on the couch.)—The idol rolls about on his cushioned throne—the great idol is worthless—he does not want to thunder and lighten!! (Jumping up.) There are the people behind him—he should give a chase with bugle calls. The great idol starts running. Over sticks and stones—the night swallows him—and the morning spits him out: saved—saved!!

THE COUNTESS

(Subdued.) You must go farther, Count Lavalette.

LAVALETTE

Saved! For the second time freed from a narrow jail. However today
I am not going to stop my flight. It rushes over mountains and valleys. I have a wanton desire to drink in the air with both lungs. My chest expands—and I would offer it to the bullets!! (Directly above the Countess.) Where is ballast? Where reflection? Where return? (Standing up.) What are you here? A vile thing—and bad and vile like young hussies, who do not know whether they are creatures or stones!! (Bresson comes forward from below the stairway.)

BRESSON

D'Ormesson—Father Joineau shot in the village street!!

LAVALETTE

So quickly?!

BRESSON

The house is surrounded!!

LAVALETTE

Then save himself, whoever loves his breath!! (Up the steps—exits.)

BRESSON

(At the glass door.) They are here—they are everywhere. I heard an order: the Count better dead than alive—like D'Ormesson and Father Joineau! (Mother Joineau comes below the steps.)

MOTHER JOINEAU

Here I lock up—as in the kitchen. Here I put down. I have no orders from my master D'Ormesson—he announced no guests to me.

BRESSON

(Half way up the steps—listening.) Window clatters—the Count is going to make a leap into the bayonettes.
THE COUNTESS
Bresson--the Count! Without a sound in my room! The last in the hall!

BRESSON
They will even hunt in the attic.

THE COUNTESS
That--I may prevent!

BRESSON
(Exits above. Blows of clubs against an outside door.)

MOTHER JOINBAU
Knock--knock, I do not know you. Ask D'Ormesson whether you are welcome. I help you farther. (Exits under the steps. Bresson enters above.)

THE COUNTESS
The outer room?

BRESSON
(Coming down.) No safe hiding place!

THE COUNTESS
Thank you, Bresson. (Up the steps--exits. The glass door is opened: Officer and gendarmes enter in wide capes.)

OFFICER
(To Bresson.) What are you doing here?

BRESSON
(Standing stupidly.) I am the mayor's son. Vegetables for the kitchen.

OFFICER
Away.
BRESSON

(Exits left. Between two gendarmes Mother Joineau comes forward from below the steps.)

MOTHER JOINEAU

(Resisting.) You boors—walk in filth even up to your necks—would you stamp your dirt into the carpet? Go to the devil—your master!!

OFFICER

The Mother Joineau?

MOTHER JOINEAU

The Mother Joineau—that I am! I am she—and where is he? This is the property of d'Ormesson—Royal Librarian in Paris. He has stolen nothing—seized nothing!

OFFICER

His majesty does not owe d'Ormesson anything. The house has fallen to the crown.

MOTHER JOINEAU

Thieves!!—in night and darkness—gang of thieves! Steal—plunder—pull the tapestries from the walls—foul the furniture—-(A gendarme strikes her across the mouth.)

OFFICER

Which room is the Count's?

MOTHER JOINEAU

Ask Father Joineau—I am not the valet.

OFFICER

The sentence is executed on Father Joineau.
MOTHER JOINEAU
Have you killed the old man? Respect for your courage!!

OFFICER
Old woman, it is dangerous—(To the gendarmes.) Take that woman into the garden!

MOTHER JOINEAU
Shoot!! It cracks louder inside the walls.—(Exits with the gendarmes through the glass door.)

OFFICER
Obstinate companions of thieves. (Two gendarmes go back out the door in the bookcases.)

OFFICER
Not below? (To other gendarmes.) Up with me. (He starts up the steps. The Countess enters above, where it is now dark. She is dressed as in the beginning in Lavalette's clothes. One hand to her back.)

OFFICER
(Surprised, stepping back.) Count Lavalette—you are solving my problem for me. I should have had to open your door with force!

THE COUNTESS
(Motionless above.)

OFFICER
You are surprised to see me here. With obtrusiveness on my part. I remember rather wearily that you were mine already one time. You deserted me without further formality. It was a pitifully frank confession of your aversion. I have to be angry with you. Count Lavalette!
THE COUNTESS

(Does not change her carriage.)

OFFICER

I decided to pay you back for this insult. With later convenience. I could not be angry with you at the moment. Nor my soldiers. After all, you did not leave the straw empty behind you. And my men helped themselves!—Surely the Countess has not given you any further details—Count Lavalette?

THE COUNTESS

(Steps deeper.)

OFFICER

What do you want? There are beings of flesh and blood. Your own was at stake—you left your own blood as security. Should they not compensate themselves a trifle? It became delightful hours for lovers. Rousseau would have been ecstatic:—the Countess and her nature boys!

THE COUNTESS

(Steps still deeper.)

OFFICER

As every charm fades, fatigue stepped in here too. And finally I could not deny to myself that the Count Lavalette would be demanded of me one day. Your disease, a trick which helped me get a delay, could not last forever. It was necessary to exchange the beautiful false prisoner with its original again. I do not pride myself in this idea. It is cheap: where the pigeon flies, you also find its mate. I let the birds fly today and followed their flight. You do not applaud, Count Lavalette! (A gendarme comes hastily through the glass door, whispers
to the Officer.)

OFFICER

(Surprised, suppresses it.) Already?? (Shifting--to the Countess.)

Surrender yourself to me, Count Lavalette. I have full power over your life. You hesitate--

THE COUNTESS

(Brings her hand around and turns her pistol on the Officer. The gendarmes raise their muskets--salvo.)

THE COUNTESS

(Unsteady against the bannister.)

OFFICER

Leave him there. To Paris--whoever can shoot! (All exit through the glass door.)

THE COUNTESS

(Down at the railing. Bresson through the glass door.)

BRESSON

The Count is saved! The Officer is looking outside of the village! The garden is empty!

THE COUNTESS

(At the bottom.)

BRESSON

(Understanding.) The Count is not--??

THE COUNTESS

(To the chair.) Tell the Count--good Bresson---(She sinks into the chair. Lavalette steps out above--in his shirt sleeves.)
LAVALETTE

Bresson—what happened??--a shot in the house--steps going away under the window--??

BRESSON

--------

LAVALETTE

(Looks around. Sees the Countess. With a leap down the stairway--to the Countess. Lifting her hand from her breast, he uncovers the wound. On his knees--crying.) No!!

BRESSON

(Moves off through the glass door.)

LAVALETTE

Not silent----I do not understand it, when you are silent!

THE COUNTESS

(Lifts her hand toward him.)

LAVALETTE

Numbed--I undermine you still!

THE COUNTESS

(Feebly.) My friend----

LAVALETTE

Finish the tale----which you invented.

THE COUNTESS

You----are alive----

LAVALETTE

Not yet!
THE COUNTESS
You----ought----to live----

LAVALETTE
How shall I live?

THE COUNTESS
Loved----beyond death----loved--------(She stops breathing. Excelman comes in through the glass door.)

EXCELMAN
Great times strike earlier than expected. The Emperor has landed from Elba. The King disappeared with bag and baggage. Paris is in a riot!

LAVALETTE
(Stands up in front of the chair.)

EXCELMAN
Your name is being tossed about in the tumult, Lavalette, surging between the houses. They want to see you--free from prison. Come with me I want to bring you to the boundless celebration!

LAVALETTE
(Motionless.)

EXCELMAN
No second reflection. The tumult needs a flaming torch. Present the rejoicing Paris to the Emperor!!

LAVALETTE
(Goes to him--leads him to the chair.)

EXCELMAN
(Starts to ask.)
LAVALETTE

(Averts him. Almost softly.) Excelman, is it in your memory, what I praised about my liberation? Forget it, it has become unimportant. So it had lost its value--before the burden of the last event. She who lies here, gave her delicate body in the cell to the rough rabble of the watches--for me! She who is silent here, endured the most frightful insult, which women bear--for me!----Spare your praise. Take a look at the wounds--bleeding for me!----She loved it, to exchange herself for me. Then the bullet that was fired for me hit her.

(Violently.) Is it not worth your shock!--------Other things flame like stars out of this night, in which she sleeps. She killed herself--before her death! Do you recognize the invisible weapon, which carries it out? How one dies by lies?--------Does not everyone of us die by the rape of such a body? Who wants to live with such destruction?!----There she made the urgency to her will and placed herself to the prostitute--salable for gold, power, glory. She turned the sacrifice into lust after the lustre and glitter of the throne!----At a distance she did not frighten herself--I laughed at my wooing for her favor. Set free of the ban, I flee. The rescue succeeded!

EXCELMAN

(Bends over the corpse.)

LAVALETTE

The wounds are small--scarcely the paltry size of a child's mouth--and merely bleed. However do not torrents break out of them? Do they not spread to a flood, in which we must be wrecked--with our lust and raving desire? Excelman, must I not loathe--every quarrel--
every boastfulness of mankind!! (Bresson through the glass door.)

BRESSON

The Emperor has been in the country seven days!! The Emperor will be in Paris this evening!! The Emperor is marching by!!

EXCELMAN

(Takes a step toward the glass door, hesitates. In great confusion.)

The Emperor---? (March music in the distance.)
HELL, WAY, EARTH

Piece in Three Parts

by

Georg Kaiser

1919

To You:

Dante Anselm

and

Michael Laurent
CHARACTERS

Stroller
Lili
Edith
Jeweler
Lawyer
Police Lieutenant
Penal Director
Hotel Keeper
Man with a Top Hat
Man with Kid Gloves
Young Gentleman
Lady with Little Dog
Lady in Silk
Cashier
Errand Boy
Shop Girl
Waiter
Escaped Prisoner
Prostitute
Soldiers
Prison Masters
Arrested Ones
Prisoners
HELL

(Grand-Hotel: round red-gold drawing room. Telephone buzzes.)

EDITH

(Quickly from the right—still with hat on—listens.) Lili?
(Drawled.) The delivery man ought to bring it. (Listening again.)
The delivery man ought to come on. (Exits right—she comes back
without her hat—takes money from her leather bag. Knock at the
left.)

EDITH

Yes. (Stroller enters: deformity in a wrinkled cape. Knotted
bound cardboard box under his arm.)

EDITH

(Starts to give him money.) Put it on the chair.

STROLLER

(Smiles.) I am—the artist.

EDITH

(Looks at him.)

STROLLER

(Embarrassed.) I was interested in the buyer.

EDITH

(Laughs loudly.) Pardon—I laugh—: But that is rather amusing,
that I want to give you the delivery fee—and you are the artist.

STROLLER

(With a slight bow.) Stroller.
EDITH
(Coolly.) I will put the print in the trunk. Not with the cardboard box.

STROLLER
(At the table--fussily unfastening the cords--his face deeply bent over it.)

EDITH
(Attentively.) I have paid in the Art Club and have a receipt.

STROLLER
(Excited and uncertain.) The things that I have exhibited--since you are anxious about the "Orchids"--(He takes the print out and lays it down)--I wanted to hold back with these works--and the single piece goes first. (Standing up straight--toward Edith.) I have brought everything that I have--because you have picked the "Orchids"!

EDITH
Was my print "Orchids"?

STROLLER
(With effort--shortly.) I want to sell the entire collection.

EDITH
To me?

STROLLER
For a thousand marks.

EDITH
I must disappoint you---I am traveling as a lady companion.

STROLLER
You bought and paid for this print.
EDITH
I paid the sum.

STROLLER
(Looks away.) Would you recommend my things to the lady?

EDITH
(Amused.) I can do that on my own.

STROLLER
(Brightly.) Leave the collection here?

EDITH
You can do that.

STROLLER
Give her a hint with two or three words: I am interested in selling.

EDITH
At the set price of--

STROLLER
A thousand marks!

EDITH
A round number, easy to remember.

STROLLER
(Still standing--rummaging in his inside pocket--hastily.) The thousand marks, yes! (Exits. Edith opens the window--looks out and begins to gesture with exaggerated anger. She sits at the window sill--looking toward the door. Lili enters--remains at the door.)

LILI
(Complaining tone.) Friendship over?
EDITH
Now, now. A person can expect that sort of thing, when she invites someone on a trip and covers the expenses.

LILI
After all I intended to be punctual.

EDITH
You can do it if you want to.

LILI
(Shakes her head violently.) Sometimes you can't. Definitely not.

EDITH
You can--

LILI
When you have to buy heavenly pearls, you just can not! (She runs to Edith--embraces and kisses her.)

EDITH
For Bob?

LILI
(Shakes her head and tugs at her ear lobes.) For these two poor naked tips!

EDITH
Ear rings?

LILI
A little hook with grey-white drops--almost colorless--now and again a hue of mother-of-pearl.

EDITH
Can't I see?
LILI
Still at the jeweler's. He is sending them. I wanted another alteration.

EDITH
You have ideas.

LILI
What will Bob say, when I appear with them?

EDITH
He doesn't notice anything at all.

LILI
You underrate Bob.

EDITH
Possibly as far as the bill is concerned.

LILI
No, Edith, I have that much in my pocket. When I travel, I must be able to buy the world for myself. Otherwise it has no attraction for me.

EDITH
I have also bought something--on your bill.

LILI
I should pay the charges, because I made you wait. Is it that bad?

EDITH
A drawing.

LILI
Which was exhibited in the Art Club? (She takes the print.)

EDITH
Local celebrities.
LILI
The print is capricious. A la Beardsley.

EDITH
Which I have finally picked. The director made quite an effort. He presumed that I was particularly interested, because I didn't leave the hall.

LILI
The price?

EDITH
Complete with portfolio: one thousand marks.

LILI
Edith!

EDITH
Thirty down—the rest—(She laughs—hugs Lili.) Swindle! You must have your pearls—my Lili. (Telephone buzzes.)

LILI
(Answers.) Who?—yes I'm upstairs. (To Edith.) The Jeweler is coming. (Before the mirror—smoothing her hair.) Of course pearls are effective only in the evening.

EDITH
(Closing the heavy curtains—lighting all the lamps.) The spotlight's on.

LILI
Why is the portfolio here?

EDITH
The man was charming. This gracious simplicity: out of embarrassment I am taking a print—he must have known immediately from the Art Club—
a buy—sensation. After five minutes he brings his oeuvre into the hotel. With the eager desire for a sale.

LILI

Who will take the things away? We are leaving this afternoon.

EDITH

He will get them himself from the desk clerk. (Knock.)

LILI

Avanti. (Jeweler—stout figure—enters.)

JEWELER

Do I interrupt?

LILI

That's all right. Do you have—

JEWELER

(Hold the little box out.) That was only a trifle. I personally—if I may say so—would have decided on the longer mounting. Particularly for the oval face of the lady—it is definitely oval. But it is a matter of taste. Good taste is personal—and should remain personal.

LILI

(Examining.) But—no. That is a misconception. But what have you—

JEWELER

Is the lady dissatisfied?

LILI

This is awfully compact. It is certainly too short.

JEWELER

Madame, you decided—
LILI
Edith, see for yourself how stiff—how boring. It makes my face lifeless. Like a sphinx. Dull.

EDITH
The pearls have to swing.

LILI
Incessantly in motion! (To the Jeweler.) So I can't wear them. Not for all the world will I go around like that. Like Sunday servant girls. No you must take them away with you again.

JEWELER
Madam you may remember, that I allowed myself to express hesitation—

LILI
We will settle the size exactly.

JEWELER
(At the table.) That will be the best. (Knock. Edith opens.)

(Stroller enters.)

LILI
(At the table.) A pencil.

JEWELER
(Looks in his pocket.)

LILI
Edith, have you a pencil?

EDITH
In my bag.

LILI
Give it to me.
EDITH

Certainly--where is my bag?

STROLLER

May I help you?

LILI

(Looking up.) Who are you?

EDITH

The painter from whom I--

STROLLER

Stroller.

LILI

(Accepts.) Thanks. (Signing.) I am making it larger--

EDITH

Lili, you are drawing on the portfolio!

LILI

Catastrophe!

JEWELER

Would you use my notebook, madam?

EDITH

(Gives the portfolio to the Stroller.) My friend has already looked
at the print and likes it. There are several fabulous pieces among
them, that have taken our fancy. We already have the pleasure of
owning one.

STROLLER

Thank you. Thank you.

LILI

Between the pearls and ear--
JEWELER

Transfer this portion of the pearls to the platinum bar.

STROLLER

The lady is not interested in--buying?

EDITH

No.

LILI

(Standing up.) I will pick them up myself on the way to the station this afternoon.

JEWELER

The work of half an hour, madam.

STROLLER

Did you mention the price of a thousand marks?

EDITH

Sorry, it is out of the question.

LILI

(With her wallet.) I should like--what was the price?

JEWELER

Two thousand four hundred. Please, madam, upon delivery. I do not charge before the lady is perfectly satisfied.

LILI

As you wish to handle it.

JEWELER

The lady must find no fault. (Exits.)

EDITH

Lili, the gentleman loaned you his pencil.
LILI
Which the Jeweler put in his pocket.

EDITH
You can still reach him.

STROLLER
(With a hoarse voice.) I--don't want to sell my drawings----in order to make money for myself----the drawings are only pretext----I made the attempt----because a thousand marks must become available----!
(Lili and Edith look at one another.)

STROLLER
I am carrying with me a telegram from a friend--from an acquaintance of mine--he needs a thousand marks, which will save him from--otherwise he will be dead this evening.----I don't know why he asked me----I am not a very close friend of his--I lost sight of him for a long time----the reason why he called me----: but I have been called--and can save a life. (Lili and Edith wink at one another.)

STROLLER
I have been on the go in the streets since morning----I must find help!----I run to the Art Club----I have exhibited--perhaps I have sold--and there is a piece sold!----I get the buyer's name--I want to show him what I have----perhaps he will buy more----for the thousand marks, which I have to have!

LILI
It is very sad, what you are relating--but I certainly do not know your friend.

STROLLER
He is almost a stranger to me!
LILI

So don't take the misfortune of another person too tragically.

STROLLER

The telegram exists—in wrinkles and rumples! The fate of a man is placed on my shoulders—and I can not toss it off. (To Lili.)—
And now you share the responsibility too, because you know about it!!

LILI

That is very amusing.

STROLLER

Horrible, when one shuns his obligations!

LILI

I will not buy your picture.

STROLLER

Don't buy—the pearls!!

LILI

(Declining.) Please.

STROLLER

Two thousand four hundred for pearls, which you flippantly attach to your ears—and not a thousand for a man, who can live?!!

LILI

That is none of my business.

STROLLER

That this man, who is cringing now in the fear of death----

LILI

I do not know the man!
EDITH

But why does he need the money so urgently?

STROLLER

In order to live--like you--like me--like anybody!!

LILI

I do not give away a thousand marks to complete strangers.

STROLLER

Don't buy the pearls--that you are paying for with a man's life!!

LILI

I have two ears----

STROLLER

You hear----and know!!

LILI

--and need two pearl ear rings. Edith, open the window.

(Edith opens the curtains. Stroller grasps his forehead--stares after Lili--collects himself hastily--exits swiftly.)

EDITH

(Turning off the light.) Away with the spook.

LILI

Come along--now I will have some little holes pierced in my ears.
(Prison. White walled four cornered room. Grey stone floor. Two square black iron sliding doors in the rear wall, steps lead up to them. At center a black iron block table, red signal lamps with flaps in the table top. Small black iron doors right and left; there is a black iron bench: sitting stiffly—three soldiers in green. Behind block table—manipulating it, staring—sits the Police Lieutenant. Silence. Red signal lamp turns on. Cracking knock in the block table.)

LIEUTENANT

(Opens flap—takes cylinder out, from which he unfastens a rolled red ticket. After reading.) Soldier.

(Soldier steps to the block table.)

LIEUTENANT

(Gives him the ticket.) The prison. (Soldier exits left. Lieutenant restores cylinder—closes flap—presses lever: short rustles in the block table. Red signal lamp goes out. Silence. From the right another soldier enters with a prisoner: a bearded man—moving quietly.)

SOLDIER

The prisoner.

LIEUTENANT

(To the prisoner.) The person as identified by the red ticket?)
PRISONER

(Looks up--glances around--stares into space--stands erectly.)
I am--not guilty!

LIEUTENANT

The question only concerns: the person as identified by this red ticket.

PRISONER

I am--definitely not guilty!

LIEUTENANT

The question for the third time: are you the person identified by this red ticket?

PRISONER

(Screaming.) No one can be so guilty----: here, separated from humanity.

SOLDIER

(Quickly handcuffs his wrists.)

LIEUTENANT

The person is prisoner.

(Soldier leads the subdued prisoner to the door at the right above--slides it aside--another black iron gate before the room in grey light: fettered prisoners--men--surging against the bars--shouting: I am not guilty!! Soldier opens the gate and pushes the prisoner in. Gate and door closed again. Soldier crosses left to the front--sits stiffly. Silence. Noise in the block table--red signal lamp flares up.)

LIEUTENANT

(Opens flap--takes out cylinder--removes red ticket.)
Soldier. (Third soldier steps to the block table.)

LIBUTENANT

(Gives him the red ticket.) The prison.
(Soldier exits left.)

LIBUTENANT

(Returns cylinder—closes flap—presses lever—red signal light goes out. Silence. From the right first soldier enters with a prisoner: woman with a hat.)

SOLDIER

The prisoner.

LIBUTENANT

Person as identified by this red ticket?

PRISONER

(Her eyes searching the walls—murmuring.) I am—not guilty!

LIBUTENANT

The question only concerns the person as identified by this red ticket.

PRISONER

(Sharper.) I am—not guilty!

LIBUTENANT

The question for the third time: are you the person as identified by this red ticket?

PRISONER

(Knees giving way—hands clasped around block table.)

No one can be so guilty----: here, separated from humanity!!

SOLDIER

(Puts on the handcuffs.)
LIEUTENANT
The person is prisoner. (Soldier brings the prisoner to the door at the left above—rolls it open—same as the room at the right with women with similar gestures and cries: I am not guilty!!—soldier pushes prisoner behind the gate—closes it—waits at the left at the front. Silence. Stroller—still with portfolio—enters from the left.)

STROLLER
(Close to the block table.) There is no time to lose. It will be murder.

LIEUTENANT
Are you making an indictment?

STROLLER
I am making an indictment. It will be murder.

LIEUTENANT
Who has been killed?

STROLLER
There is no time to lose. The culprit gains time.

LIEUTENANT
The name of the culprit?

STROLLER
I don't know. In the Grand-Hotel. Round red-gold drawing room. A woman. A woman with her friend. Travelling—and putting up at the Grand-Hotel—and it will be murder.

LIEUTENANT
The motive?
STROLLER
Premeditated. With knowledge and intention. With the approval of her friend. With warning on my part.

LIBUTENANT
Did you know about the premeditation?

STROLLER
There is no time to lose. The woman is travelling tonight. Between now and evening it will happen, what is going to happen.

LIBUTENANT
What is going to happen?

STROLLER
Murder.

LIBUTENANT
Is it not committed?

STROLLER
The premeditation remains. The action proceeds--must proceed with every minute toward murder.

LIBUTENANT
Who is in danger?

STROLLER
A friend. An acquaintance. A somebody. Why?

LIBUTENANT
He will be protected.

STROLLER
He is not in the city.

LIBUTENANT
Who carries out this deed in another city?
STROLLER

The woman.

LIBUTENANT

Does she incite a third person?

STROLLER

She will kill here—and she will kill there. There is no time to lose.

LIBUTENANT

No one murders unless he participates or incites.

STROLLER

It is not possible? Murder not possible--across roofs--across cities--across railway stations--around the world murder is not possible--out of every spot on earth?? (Knocks in the block table--two signal lamps light up.)

LIBUTENANT

(Attends the block table.) Soldier--soldier. (Two soldiers go to the block table.)

LIBUTENANT

(Gives each a red ticket.) The prison--the prison. (The two soldiers exit left.)

STROLLER

(Takes out the telegram.) The friend--the acquaintance--the somebody telegraphs. Read. Please, Lieutenant, read for yourself.

LIBUTENANT

(Reads.)
STROLLER

I can't send. I am destitute. I get acquainted with the lady's friend--through her the lady--I bring her the information, of what would happen if nothing happens. The lady buys pearls from a jeweler for more than double, what will be necessary here--she is able to buy pearls--can do what is necessary--and does not do it.

LIBUTENANT

How do you build up the suspicion of premeditation of murder?

STROLLER

I do not build up—I learn! I hear with my ears—I see with my eyes--I know, that between now and evening nothing will be prevented that can be prevented!!

LIBUTENANT

(Gives the dispatch back to him.) The woman is not liable.

STROLLER

Because it hasn't been committed yet?

LIBUTENANT

Because the premeditation does not exist. (From the right soldier enters with a prisoner: a youth.)

SOLDIER

The prisoner.

LIBUTENANT

(To the prisoner.) The person as identified by this red ticket?

PRISONER

(Looking around--whimpering.) I am--not guilty!
LIEUTENANT
The question only concerns: the person as identified by this red ticket.

PRISONER
I am not—that guilty!

LIEUTENANT
The question for the third time: are you the person identified by this red ticket?

PRISONER
(On the floor.) No one can be so guilty-----: here, separated from humanity!

LIEUTENANT
The person is prisoner.

SOLDIER
(Handcuffs—leads him toward the right above: gestures and cries from the men behind gate—prisoner inside—Soldier returns to the left at the front.)

STROLLER
Lieutenant, do something,----that could be effective—of unimaginable consequences. Murder has not been committed—murder has not been pre-meditated----: prevent the purchase from the Jeweler. Invent a pretext, with which to arrest the woman. She is travelling—she is suspicious to you. You want to obtain information. And everything this evening turns out to be in error.

LIEUTENANT
(Returns the cylinder—closes the flap.)
STROLLER

She will now be unable to go to the Jeweler's. She becomes conscious—it comes to her mind. She was not allowed to buy from the Jeweler—she had to save a somebody's life. It will come to her like lightning—the knowledge makes her glow—and giving help flows out of her hands—enthusiastically, of her own accord!!

LIEUTENANT

(Silent.)

STROLLER

Lieutenant, she knows and waits on the sharper impulse. She knows about her knowledge of the somebody's being in danger. That knowledge is passive in her no longer—from an aroused sense of responsibility she clearly sees the direction in which she must act: to be forced toward happiness by giving help to somebody, who is somebody somewhere!!

LIEUTENANT

(Unmoving.)

STROLLER

Lieutenant, the red ticket for the woman!!

LIEUTENANT

(Unchanged.)

STROLLER

Lieutenant,—the red ticket!!

LIEUTENANT

(As before.)

STROLLER

The red ticket!! (From the left two soldiers enter with two prisoners: a woman with a scarf around her head and a man bare headed.)
LIEUTENANT

(To the prisoners.) The persons as identified by the red tickets?

MAN PRISONER

(Lifting his hands toward the Woman Prisoner.) I am—not guilty!

WOMAN PRISONER

(Lifting her hands toward the Man Prisoner.) I am—not guilty!

LIEUTENANT

The question only concerns: the persons as identified by these red tickets.

MAN PRISONER

(Stretching his arm toward the Woman Prisoner.) I am definitely—not guilty.

WOMAN PRISONER

(Stretching her arm toward the Man Prisoner.) I am definitely—not guilty.

LIEUTENANT

The question for the third time: are you the persons identified by these red tickets?

MAN PRISONER

(Moves toward Woman Prisoner; hindered and handcuffed by the soldier.)
I am not so guilty—that they will separate me from you!

WOMAN PRISONER

(Moves toward the Man Prisoner; hindered and handcuffed by the soldier.)
I am not so guilty—that they will separate me from you!

LIEUTENANT

The persons are prisoners. (Soldiers conduct the Man and Woman Prisoners to the separate doors---open them.)
MAN PRISONER

But I am not guilty——!!

THE MEN

(Behind the gate.) Nobody is that guilty——

WOMAN PRISONER

And I am not guilty——!!

THE WOMEN

(Behind the gate.) Separated from humanity!!

SOLDIERS

(Push Prisoners inside--close--turn back down left.)

STROLLER

(Staggers out at the left.)
(Lawyer's chamber. Three cornered room pointed toward the glass
door in the rear. File shelves surround the room covering the walls.
There is a door on the right. In the center a green covered table.
Behind the glass door: counter under a bright lamp with a safe.
Lawyer in a grey coat, red bristly hair, red long square beard—at
green table: presses a bell button. Beyond the glass door: Cashier
and Gentleman in a Top Hat counting money. From the right the Gentle­
man with Kid Gloves enters.)

LAWYER

The case?

GENTLEMAN

Urgent. The debtor is going to escape me.

LAWYER

Debt requisition?

GENTLEMAN

Even to the seizure. Even to stripping him clean. The last nickel
must show up.

LAWYER

Evidence?

GENTLEMAN

(Takes paper out.) Every scrap of paper on file.

LAWYER

(Looking through sheets.) Advance payment 800?
GENTLEMAN
(Already with money in hand.) In cash.

LAWYER
I accept. (He writes a note--gives it to the Gentleman.) The cash register through the glass door.

GENTLEMAN
(Goes to the rear. The man in the Top Hat has already withdrawn to the left.)

LAWYER
(Presses bell button.)
(From the right a Lady with a Little Dog.)

LAWYER
The case?

LADY
I don't want to become excited. It excites me, as often as I tell it. Would you read?

LAWYER
(Reads.) Advance payment 300?

LADY
With halloo and heydey.

LAWYER
I accept. (He writes a note--gives it to her.) Through the glass door to the cash register.

LADY
(Already with money in her hand.) That is provided for. (Goes to the rear. Man with Kid Gloves has already withdrawn to the left.)
(Presses the bell button. Stroller enters from the right.)

LAWYER

The case?

STROLLER

The simplest in the world. One human being is dead—and another
dangles pearl eardrops in her ears.

LAWYER

The evidence?

STROLLER

(Takes telegram out of his pocket.) Overwhelming.

LAWYER

(Reads.) You loan this one a thousand as requested in the telegram
and now you sue for repayment?

STROLLER

No. Everything is less complicated. The thousand has not been paid.

LAWYER

Did the sender have a claim to this amount?

STROLLER

The claim of the sender doesn't stand in question here.

LAWYER

Did the sender offend you when he refused to repay you?

STROLLER

What kind of questions are you inventing?—I said: The simplest case.
One human being is dead—and another dangles pearl eardrops in her ears!!
LAWYER
I am not abandoning the basis of the fact.

STROLLER
It is fact: a human being dies--and another buys pearls!!

LAWYER
Who is the other?

STROLLER
A lady.

LAWYER
Her connection to the sender of the telegram?

STROLLER
I am establishing the connection to bear here, by sufficiently ex-
plaining about the lady: a man will be dead, if she buys the pearls.

LAWYER
You bring an indictment?

STROLLER
Of murder.

LAWYER
What murder?

STROLLER
The man is dead! Pearls hang in the lady's ears!

LAWYER
The indictment is not well founded.

STROLLER
The indictment is not well founded?
LAWYER
The incident collapses. (He presses the bell button. From the right a Young Man enters.)

LAWYER
The case?

YOUNG MAN
Inheritance.

LAWYER
Evidence.

YOUNG MAN
(Giving him papers.) The entire slough.

LAWYER
(Reads.)

YOUNG MAN
Last time thoroughly defeated at the hands of the opposing lawyer. Other heirs and their shyster grin and cheat me out of a fifth part.

LAWYER
Advance payment 900?

YOUNG MAN
(Money already in hand.) Extra 900 for full success.

LAWYER
I accept. (He writes—gives him a note.)

YOUNG MAN
Finally we are hitting—my dear friends.
LAWYER

The cash register through the glass door.

YOUNG MAN

(Goes to the rear. The Lady with the Little Dog has already withdrawn to the left.)

LAWYER

(Starts to press the bell button.)

STROLLER

(Firmly grasps his hand.) Sir—among the laws—in your books of all the laws—in your library of law books there must be that law. My law.

LAWYER

It does not exist.

STROLLER

No--no, not in your law books. They aren't complete, as books never are. Sir--notice the essential fact: this omission. This destroying omission!

LAWYER

I am a robot, who applies existing laws.

STROLLER

Laws have to be invented anew every hour. One may set up schedules for railroads, streetcars, steamships--but not for men.

LAWYER

This is no case for me.

STROLLER

Until today. No case for you, for everyone. Because no one has seen
it before. But today some one got hurt. For the first time it becomes evident and becomes the case of all cases. A new opposition for plaintiff and defendant is produced. Nobody is able to live any longer, who has not seen the decision. And the decision is made, the way it has to be: condemnation of the one, who is the culprit. Culprit with every indictment— with every repentance. The condemnation delivers millions of culprits. No one remains innocent—and under this suit all suits are settled. The eternal cleaning will be done. There will be dooms day with a judgement that accuses everybody!----

Sir! Your appeal for right may flow from your rigidity!!

LAWYER

I will accept.

STROLLER

Do reasons and more reasons overwhelm you?

LAWYER

A trick will be useful.

STROLLER

Everyone will be good.

LAWYER

Do you remember, that the lady mentioned something which you might have taken for a promise?

STROLLER

I remember. That is the way I understood it. Otherwise I would not have left the hotel room!

LAWYER

That is where I begin.
This or that. The indictment must succeed--must be duly respected--visible to all the curious, who become excited in the pros and cons--and only the pros should sound like a trumpet in the thundering verdict of the final solution. Fanfares above everything--clear sounding horn to heaven and earth!!

The result is questionable.

No question about the final results!

The lengthy legal procedure----

Judgement day will be speeded up.

An estimation of the costs----

 Humanity will reward humanity.

An advance payment of 1000 in cash.

With an advance of 1000--??

I accept with an advance payment of 1000.

I am destitute----
(Presses the bell button.)
(From the right a Lady in Silk enters.)

LAWYER

The case.

LADY

Divorcès.

LAWYER

The evidence?

LADY

(Hands him paper.) My husband's love affair has been observed. 
*Apres moi le déluge*—namely the divorce. He shall have it.

LAWYER

(Leafing through.) Advance payment of 600.

LADY

He will pay for everything. (Money in her hands.)

LAWYER

I accept.

LADY

That goes without saying.

LAWYER

(Writes—hands her a note.) The cash register through the glass door.

STROLLER

(Staggers out at the right.)
(Bend in the street with a jewelry store. Blazing heat of noon.)

STROLLER

(Presses against the show window.) There it lies----! It is spread out----It is arranged broadly and densely----lines flow in every direction----light splashes----a human being melts away! One can not think of resistance. He who passes by here--will be bribed. This is what stirs it up. He who passes by here--is doomed. Everything has been arranged simultaneously with this show window. A human being melts away--and commits murder!----I want to be content with this statement and not pick a fight against the world. No one can demand that from me. A human being melts away----and commits murder. I can neither close the Jeweler's shop nor buy up all his stock. It doesn't lie within my power to clean up this street. The Jeweler's shop will be wide open--and human beings will melt away at the show window--and commit murder. These are the daily incidents in this bend in the street. Neither can I straighten out the street, which is crooked. That is quite impossible. (He pulls himself back.) The Jeweler will not listen to reason in his store--his capabilities of listening to my reasons are paralyzed. The attempt would be doomed. I can spare myself the trouble.----I can leave this street----to the dancing on the curb----one step with the left foot----one step with the right foot----one step with the left foot----one step with the right foot----(He does it----turns around.)----In order to return!! (Running up to the show window----
spreading out his hands on the glass.) A man is dead—and lines flow—light splashes—and human beings melt away—and murder other human beings!!—This is where evil deeds are incited---behind this skin of glass, temptation is luring—the cause of the evil displays itself impudently. (Pressing his back to the pane and spreading his cape forward:) Shattering impact of the sun upon me—flow of heat which devours, after me:—withering I must cover the glass wall forever!! (He lowers his arms and listens along the street.) Passer-by? At this hour? In the heat of noon? (Glancing up at the houses.) The Venetian blinds are lowered at the windows. Happily a shadowed room. Around the table a domestic gathering. Clear glances. Guiltless human beings!—No passerby. You remain in your shadowed room. Do not step from the door—do not go into the street—do not pass here:—so far I have not been able to protect you!—Wait awhile—they certainly never have been in a hurry!—But wait:—I still have to make arrange-
ments—which will serve all of you!—Because otherwise human beings will melt away—and will murder human beings!!—Once I have seen a lady become guilty, because the temptation was not re-
moved:—now I have tracked down the cause—now I will make a clean sweep!! (He goes into the Jeweler's store. Screams from the store. Stroller staggers into the street—runs away.)

JEWELER

(From the store—supporting himself—pressing pocket handkerchief to his neck.) I—have—been—assaulted—in—my store—!!
WAY

(Highway with a bridge. Stroller enters--reaches the center of the bridge. From the right an Escaped Prisoner runs in--gasping--tugs at the Stroller's overcoat. From the left a Prostitute enters--a scarf over her face--starts to jump over the bridge railing.)

STROLLER

Like an invasion from both sides. (To the Escaped Prisoner.) Don't claw at my threadbare overcoat--which you are going to hold in your fist, instead of me. I will listen to you without resistance. Defense at the other side is more urgent--friend and foe together, there you have to make a distinction. (He pulls the Prostitute down.)

PROSTITUTE

(Crying.) I--into the water--

STROLLER

Your wave has slipped away under the bridge. You passed up the opportunity, which will not come again.

PROSTITUTE

I--into the water--

STROLLER

There now: on the solid floor of the bridge. With tears flowing from your eyes, that have held them back all your life. Free your lungs--your heart is quivering strongly--blue heaven is coming down.
PROSTITUTE

(Whimpers.)

STROLLER

Sit down—you and I are turning fate around. (To Escaped Prisoner.)

Why are you after me? Something on me, that I owe you?

ESCAPED PRISONER

(Breathing heavily.) Comrade--

STROLLER

Who?

ESCAPED PRISONER

Fellow Prisoner--

STROLLER

You know me?

ESCAPED PRISONER

You were dismissed today—from the dormer window I saw you marching along the straight highway----

STROLLER

Are they sending you after me?

ESCAPED PRISONER

I broke out—over the wall. It was quite a jump.

STROLLER

So you brag about your master stroke?

ESCAPED PRISONER

My clothes—my haircut give me away--: leave me your hat and coat!

STROLLER

(Taking the scarf from the Prostitute's face.) Have you got a face?
PROSTITUTE
(Murmuring.) What do you want from me?

STROLLER
I am curious.

ESCAPED PRISONER
Comrade--give me your hat--give me your coat--I must run!

STROLLER
Where will you run?

ESCAPED PRISONER
Run--run!

STROLLER
Until weakness overcomes you--until you collapse?

ESCAPED PRISONER
Hat--coat!

STROLLER
Tell me your aim; my hat and coat are valuable.

ESCAPED PRISONER
How free you are!

STROLLER
I have served my time.

ESCAPED PRISONER
I will be locked up for years to come.

STROLLER
Where?

ESCAPED PRISONER
In the prison!
STROLLER
Can they lock you up?

ESCAPED PRISONER
The walking in circles in the court yard!

STROLLER
A circle, isn't it infinite?

ESCAPED PRISONER
Three hundred steps around—thirty up and down the cell!

STROLLER
If you counted, you would also be locked up in the Sahara.

ESCAPED PRISONER
The tin plate with the mush!

STROLLER
Don't you have something to eat and drink—and no one asks you for any service which would destroy you!

ESCAPED PRISONER
Comrade--

STROLLER
I will give you my hat and coat, if they will help you gain freedom. (To the Prostitute.) Why do you want to jump from your freedom into the water?

PROSTITUTE
Don't ask me!

STROLLER
Finally I reproach myself because of my strong interference with your plans. Have you strangled your child?
PROSTITUTE

A child—I?

STROLLER

You are young—as well as pretty.

PROSTITUTE

A prostitute—a child!! An animal—a human being in my womb!

STROLLER

A human being is a human being—an animal is an animal.

PROSTITUTE

Human beings who do that are animals. (Erect.) Hundreds do it a hundred times—until the hussy becomes an animal—and jumps off the bridge, in order to become human!!

STROLLER

There was a reason.

PROSTITUTE

You don't believe me?—You are right to doubt—: I strangled the last one with my own hands! Not a child—a big man! That is why I am jumping from the bridge.

STROLLER

The doors of the prison are opening for you.

PROSTITUTE

I won't go to the prison!

STROLLER

This fellow will show you the way.

ESCAPED PRISONER

Should I go back?
STROLLER

If you seek freedom? There is only one door; for her into the prison. They will give you something to eat, something to drink—and no one asks you for any service which would destroy you!

ESCAPED PRISONER

Leave me your coat and—

STROLLER

Your request already means renunciation.

PROSTITUTE

I—into the water—

STROLLER

You send your wave under the bridge. (To the Escaped Prisoner.) Run in the court yard—and don't count the steps: you are free. Pace off your cell—and don't count: you are free. Don't measure the wall any more—Don't knock on the cell door any more: you are free. Where does danger press you, while you are locked in there? (To both.) Human beings are troubled about other human beings; you are not hungry—you do not have to slave for pay. No demand presses you, which may overcome you. As men are able to grant liberation to one another, it succeeds in the prison.—We punish the others in the prison! (To the Prostitute.) Your revenge will become justice in the prison—the others allow you to live and eat there. (To the Escaped Prisoner.) Your uniform is your suit, which the others wrap around your body, as long as they do not hurt it. In giving you my hat and coat I would only deliver you to violence. In the first night—(Pointing to the Prostitute.)—you would overcome her—
yesterday you would have been her victim, as you would be her victim tomorrow!—

ESCAPED PRISONER

You aren't coming with us?

STROLLER

Am I guilty of another crime?

ESCAPED PRISONER

You must give your reason.

STROLLER

The girl goes with you. The others will come with me. You both shake the prison—I will storm through the city!

PROSTITUTE

Who are you?

STROLLER

Your victim of last night.

ESCAPED PRISONER

Are you—?

STROLLER

Your fellow man!

(Escaped Prisoner and Prostitute exit toward the right away from the bridge. Stroller exits to the left over the bridge.)
(The bend in the street. Jeweler in a cane chair with cushions and a wool blanket. Errand Boy comes from the store.)

ERRAND BOY

The package slip must be signed.

JEWELER

Why?

ERRAND BOY

If it isn't, I can't get the packages.

JEWELER

What packages?

ERRAND BOY

The packages that are in the post office.

JEWELER

Are there any at the post office?

ERRAND BOY

The package slips have been brought, and so the packages most likely have arrived.

JEWELER

No, I won't sign.

ERRAND BOY

Will you let the packages go back?

JEWELER

That is a matter for the post office.
ERRAND BOY

(Exits into the store.)

SHOP GIRL

(Comes out of the store.) I cannot deliver that brooch, that was ordered, because we have no gold for the mounting.

JEWELER

Perhaps there is gold in the packages.

SHOP GIRL

The Errand Boy won’t get them.

JEWELER

No, they will not be delivered without my signature on the package slips.

SHOP GIRL

The gentleman asked for the brooch yesterday, and today he will call for it for the last time.

JEWELER

You may tell him, that there is not enough gold in stock.

SHOP GIRL

The gentleman will cancel the order.

JEWELER

That is the gentleman’s affair.

SHOP GIRL

(Exits into the store.)

STROLLER

(Coming into the street. In front of the Jeweler’s.) You sit in an easy chair with cushions and the heat of noon under a wool blanket.
Did the wound, which I gave you, finally paralyze you?

JEWELER

(Looks at Stroller.) Are you at liberty again?

STROLLER

I was released from the prison today.

JEWELER

You came straight to me?

STROLLER

I haven't stopped wandering yet.

JEWELER

I am sitting here, because I don't wish to be in the store. The wound left only a thin scar. I can't even put the tip of my finger in the groove.

STROLLER

The show window is almost empty. The rows show gaps. --Light doesn't flow any more. --Did the incident scare the customers away?

JEWELER

I lost my judgement. My power of concentration began to scatter. Sometimes it would be sharper, and at other times it would be even the more confused. It suddenly appears--and then disappears. It is always the same. (With a quick question.) Are you going to plunder the store?

STROLLER

To fill my pockets and then come out with my hands full of loot.

JEWELER

It was on a bright day.
STROLLER
I was unable to slip any piece into my pocket—you stood in the middle of the store.

JEWELER
You would have been able to disappear with an excuse.

STROLLER
I found the silver letter opener and thrust it at you.

JEWELER
You never would have succeeded in defeating me, a tall man, with the letter opener.

STROLLER
That was my error—and I had to pay for it.

JEWELER
(Looks forward—in an undertone.) The culprit has to be found.

STROLLER
Was I sent to prison without being guilty? I was caught less than a hundred steps from the store, here in the street, with you behind me screaming: Culprit!

JEWELER
No--They still must find him.

STROLLER
Have I denied the deed?

JEWELER
Now you come to me right from the prison in order to confess.

STROLLER
Don't you know that already?
It appears--and disappears--

It is perfectly evident.

Am I--?

You are the culprit!

--It is correct: because I expected the assault--when have I not expected it? The execution of the sentence, which I had even passed over myself? No judge showed mercy on me and marked my guilt, when I cancelled it.

Did you know your guilt?

I sit in this easy chair in the sunshine of the street--the houses scorch in the swaying fog--the city becomes extinct--I hear a voice coming over the stone slope--it is your voice!--Who are you?

A prisoner who left.

How much did you have to endure?

Nothing. I wasn't hungry--I wasn't thirsty. They gave me food and water. They felt obligated to give you something to eat and to drink.
This astounding thing happened!

JEWELEER

(Sitting up in the cane chair.) Are we so near the fulfillment?

STROLLER

When culprit and crime mingle?

JEWELEER

I will tell the Errand Boy and the Shop Girl. I wish to close this store. It can be said in a couple of words. Therefore it will be a proclamation, because it is so easy to say. The Errand Boy can talk it around the post office. The Girl will inform the gentleman who has ordered the brooch. It was clear to me from the first minute, as I received the wound. We all kill each other. We strike ourselves, because there are no judges. For the law was not yet invented, which made the laws superfluous. It is of extreme importance, that I bring about the closing of the store.

STROLLER

Are you closing the store while you are the Jeweler?

JEWELEER

I am not the Jeweler, who opens the store. Where every one comes running, who is attracted by a display. The display attracts, so that every one comes running. I have lost the control over that which I do and that which the others do to me. It is a fault in the calculation. They drive me toward bankruptcy—Until a wound in the neck saves the balance!—I am a Jeweler. I fashion gold and silver and platinum and mount stones—pearls with skilled fingers. They ought to give me food and drink!—It must be agreed upon with the Errand
Boy, who carries the responsibility! (He picks up the cushion and
the blanket.)

STROLLER

You can not tell the Errand Boy and the girl yet.

JEWELER

There are two words--and the lowered shutters make discussion un-
necessary.

STROLLER

You won't be able to do it.

JEWELER

I have made up my mind to the closing of my store--in order to be a
Jeweler!

STROLLER

You will be one when the city is obliterated.

JEWELER

The brooch for the gentleman--they send the gold in a package--
I must sign the package slip--the Errand Boy runs the errands--the
girl cashiers--: we three cheat the gentleman who ordered the brooch.
(He claps his hands. The Errand Boy comes out of the store.) Where
are the package slips? I will sign them. I want to destroy the
packages. There is something foul about them. I will get wind of
it. It will become evident. (Errand Boy exits into the store.
Shop Girl comes out of store.) Write an apology to the gentleman,
that we can not deliver his brooch. Circumstances have arisen, which
are of profound importance. I declare that I fully agree with the
assailant, who at the time stabbed me in the neck. Write a few words--
or let it be a simple refusal of the greatly appreciated order.

(Errand Boy comes out of the store.)

JEWELER

(To the Stroller.) Your time is precious. What do you think of the consequences?

STROLLER

Come when the city becomes extinct.

JEWELER

We three?

STROLLER

Everybody is everybody.

JEWELER

Will you let me know by telephone?

STROLLER

Call me at the Grand-Hotel.

JEWELER

I will not forget it. (To the Errand Boy.) To the post office.

(To the Shop Girl.) Add up the cash.--I am putting the shutters down. (Errand Boy carries the cane chair into the store. Stroller walks down the street.)
(Lawyer's room. Lawyer before an empty table. Behind the glass
door the Cashier is idle.)

LAWYER

(Stands up--opens glass door.) The Stroller's file.

CASHIER

(Enters--takes a bundle of legal papers from a shelf on the right--
lay them down on the table.)

LAWYER

(Remains some distance from the table.)

CASHIER

(Hesitating.) I should like to give my notice.

LAWYER

Why do you wish to leave?

CASHIER

I don't want to cashier any more.

LAWYER

Don't I still pay you your salary?

CASHIER

I sit behind an empty counter all day.

LAWYER

We'll get work again.

CASHIER

The customers have gone off to the other lawyer.
LAWYER  
Because I have lost the suit?

CASHIER  
Which?

LAWYER  
The Stroller's.

CASHIER  
No one blames you for that.

LAWYER  
I wonder.

CASHIER  
The suit is forgotten.

LAWYER  
No.

CASHIER  
(Shrugging shoulders.) I repeat my notice.

LAWYER  
I can't permit you to leave before the settlement of the suit.

CASHIER  
What do I have to do with it?

LAWYER  
I will pay you double salary. (He sits at the table.)

CASHIER  
(Exits behind the glass door. Lawyer opens the files--supporting his head in his hands. Stroller enters from the left.)
LAWYER

(Looks up—stands up.) Served your penalty?

STROLLER

Today.

LAWYER

(Striking his forehead with his hand.) I should have been able to figure it out.

STROLLER

Did you intend to get me?

LAWYER

In order to better prepare myself.

STROLLER

Why?

LAWYER

We will file a revision.

STROLLER

Are there obscurities?

LAWYER

Obvious violations against everybody.

STROLLER

How did you discover that?

LAWYER

Why do you come to me?

STROLLER

The Jeweler gave new interpretations.
LAWYER

The Jeweler knows nothing.

STROLLER

Who more than the one attacked?

LAWYER

That shall not confuse us again!—are you tired out?

STROLLER

From what?

LAWYER

Prison.

STROLLER

No.

LAWYER

(Toward the glass door.) Your chair.

STROLLER

Can he be dispensed with? Your Cashier is counting the advance payments streaming in.

LAWYER

(To the Cashier, who brings the chair.) Be ready. It is possible that we shall work all night.

CASHIER

(Looks at the Stroller.)

LAWYER

It is highly probable. Therefore be ready.

CASHIER

(Astonished.) I am ready. (Exits.)
(Sitting down.) My law practice is at a standstill. It subsided. I sent the clients away. I couldn't dedicate myself to their affairs. I listen inattentively. Finally I remain here alone with the files.

STROLLER

(Sits.) My files.

LAWYER

I occupy myself with them exclusively. I read them over and over. I know them by heart. The proceedings passed very clearly with but one meaning. That is the reason why it is full of contradictions. Will you answer?

STROLLER

Every question you ask me.

LAWYER

It was mere chance, that I was appointed your defence counsel, after you had solicited me earlier about assistance in a case which I have half forgotten, because you didn't pay the advance payment.

STROLLER

I charged the lady in the red-gold round drawing room of the Grand-Hotel with murder.

LAWYER

In this connection you undertook the plot against the Jeweler.

STROLLER

In the solvent confusion.

LAWYER

This is where my defense should have taken its start. They punished
injustice, against which there was no law according to your judgement. Why did you keep this secret from me in our discussion in the prison?

STROLLER

It is still immaterial.

LAWYER

This might have been able to justify you gloriously.

STROLLER

Everyone is forced into darkness, where one kills the other!

LAWYER

Did you consider yourself guilty?

STROLLER

Just at the time that I ran out of the Jeweler's shop, the suspicion came to me: that the murderer may be guilty and the victim innocent.

LAWYER

(Closes the documents—stares at the Stroller.) Has the Jeweler made admissions to you?

STROLLER

He has confessed his guilt.

LAWYER

Why does the Jeweler do that, to shake the existant law in such a striking manner?

STROLLER

I still confirm him strongly.

LAWYER

Thus you take the means out of my hand, by which the truth might be seen.
STROLLER
If you intend to dismiss me, it will be possible with the confession of the Jeweler.

LAWYER
Not murderer—not victim has taken part in the deed in the Jeweler's store--there are other ones in the plot.

STROLLER
You search for them?

LAWYER
With ingenious demasking. There were accomplices in the action. A plot in the bulging scene. Close to the spotlight. Harsh darkness closes them in. At first unintelligible in black. Accomplices—the word is like a flare. Visibleness glimmers in equal exposure. Accomplices. Others!

STROLLER
Do you pursue a straight or twisted track?

LAWYER
From the center signals gleam in all directions. The deed, where culprit and victim are entangled together, has come to pass. There I start and spread circle around circle. None too far, that he doesn't finish the circle. We will have to work!

STROLLER
Wouldn't you begin a case, that would last to the end of your life?

LAWYER
As long as life lasts. No one dies away before accomplishing what may be possible. Here success definitely can be reached.
Your first step?

You should be compensated.

For what?

You have suffered unjustly.

In prison?

With torturing punishment.

I was not hungry—I was not thirsty. And no one asked me for any service that would destroy me.

(Under a spell.)—Accomplices—that's it. The discovery is near. To be found behind a glass wall. The cover, no thicker.

Do you still see indistinctly?

The wall is glass—and glass is a mirror. In the reflection—(Stopping.)—who is stepping forward?

Doesn't everybody step forward?
LAWYER

(Shaking himself—briskly.) The law suit must be taken up again. A special court must be formed. Perhaps a supreme court will have to be erected. These questions are not of subordinate demand. The halls will have to include crowds of defendants. It will be tried in the open city squares. Who can build halls of such dimensions?

CASHIER

(Has put on an overcoat behind the glass door—coming forward.) I'll be ready.

LAWYER

To which judge's bench shall we go? The case must be tried urgently. The decision can be of fundamental importance. I will make a report in technical periodicals. It will be the case of cases. It will inspire literature. Opinions will crash on invective. The argument will be a public matter. Before which judge's bench shall we go?

STROLLER

Wait here, until I call you.

LAWYER

The postponement spoils the urgency.

STROLLER

Minutes do not count anymore.

LAWYER

There are hours between here and there.

STROLLER

There is no time left, as there once was time.
LAWYER
If you want to send a message, use the telephone.

STROLLER
As everything will be in a hurry later on.

LAWYER
(To the Cashier.) Stand by the telephone.

CASHIER
(Exits behind the glass door.)

LAWYER
I am tying up the documents.

STROLLER
Discard the burdens. (Exits left.)
(The Prison. Behind sliding doors and gates open space. Soldiers sit at the left relaxed. Lieutenant looking across the block table, on which all the red signal lights burn brightly.)

FIRST SOLDIER
The relief doesn't report.

SECOND SOLDIER
Is it time already?

THIRD SOLDIER
For quite a while.

FOURTH SOLDIER
We are on duty for the other four, that don't report.

THIRD SOLDIER
The four will sit here like us.

SECOND SOLDIER
For half a day.

FIRST SOLDIER
As prisoners.

SECOND SOLDIER
Is that a reason to stay away?

THIRD SOLDIER
Because soldiers aren't to be sent out of the prison for prisoners?

FOURTH SOLDIER
Should we take their duty for half a day?
Are we the prisoners?

(Stands up.) It is useless to wait.

The four don't want to report.

(Stands up.) We aren't being taken in by the other four.

(Stands up.) We know their half day has begun.

We always get tired from sitting.

The four should relieve us.

We'll get them from their rooms.

We'll lead them to the prison.

Like prisoners.

(The four Soldiers exit left. Knocking in the block table--Lieutenant motionless. From left Stroller enters.)

With important instructions for you from the Lawyer. The trial will be called up again. Imprisonments have to be expected. I can make revealing denunciations.
Out of prison?

Penance is done.

Without opposition?

The determined time.

If your trial--?

It is spreading.

You knew yourself not guilty.

No--only since today.

Which was revealed in a hurry.

Because the guilty ones denounce themselves.

Not one--not two. Many?

Who isn't guilty?

How do you come to such an extensive denunciation?
STROLLER
The Jeweler accuses himself. The Lawyer refuses him. He hints at accomplices. You have to share his opinion, when you listen to him.

LIEUTENANT
Your information is too general——

STROLLER
The matter is still maturing. Still a formless nucleus, but it is solidifying. The Jeweler—the Lawyer are at work. It will lead to sensational disclosures. Who will be safe from the prison?

LIEUTENANT
(Up.) Why didn't you cry out?

STROLLER
When?

LIEUTENANT
When the soldier brought you in.

STROLLER
At that time it wasn't clear to me. I had lifted up my hand against my fellow man.

LIEUTENANT
(Eagerly.) You see the signal lamps. All are burning and report. I do not take the cylinders out and do not remove the red tickets. It has overcome me--I can not explain to myself as to how it began. My service at the block table slowly died away. The prison became empty. You have seen the crowd, which we had. As with the men--so with the women. Now the door and the gate are open--and today the soldiers have no more relief. You recognize the complete shut down of the prisons.
STROLLER
The distressing consequences for you?

LIEUTENANT
I can not be reproached. The explanation will be sufficient, that one came here who did not cry out and who walked without hand cuffs in front of the soldiers. The testimony of the soldiers and the prisoners, who did not answer with a yell, stands for this. That was a resounding experience for all, and the impression of it has not been obliterated. Therefore they will not be able to call me to account for later negligence. I am sure of the outcome of this personal matter. Moreover my enthusiasm will not be doubtful, if I voluntarily fill the prison with prisoners whom you accuse. Have you names of persons?

STROLLER
No one can be so guilty----: here, separated from humanity.

LIEUTENANT
You say that now?

STROLLER
Because every one is guilty.

LIEUTENANT
Does it burst open the walls of the prison?

STROLLER
The limits of the city.

LIEUTENANT
How should I keep the prisoners?

STROLLER
Right among them.
LIEUTENANT

Am I--??

STROLLER

Here, separated from humanity--as guilty as all!

LIEUTENANT

Do you blame us because you starved in prison?

STROLLER

I was not hungry--I was not thirsty. They felt responsible to feed me--and to give me water.

LIEUTENANT

The Jeweler is active? The Lawyer busy again?

STROLLER

Even the Errand Boy the Shop Girl and the Cashier.

LIEUTENANT

I will instruct my people. The problem will be carried through without difficulty. It will depend on the initiative of the individual man.

STROLLER

Are you sending them out without a red ticket?

LIEUTENANT

Doesn't each look for--??

STROLLER

Since you and every one have been found already.

(From the left the eight soldiers enter.)

LIEUTENANT

Soldiers from the half day--and soldiers from the half day--you report,
other wise I would have had to alarm you. This is to be a special search. You must act with extreme caution. I can't give you any red tickets. All this will be clear to you, when you are on the way. It is important that you move out. Wide and narrow are overflowing there. Deliverance into prison will be impossible here. The two rooms behind the door and the gate will not hold them. (To the Stroller.) Where will we lead them?

STROLLER

The destination lies in the beginning.

LIEUTENANT

The crowds of prisoners will shake the streets. To be gathered in the center of the main square.

STROLLER

From a window I overlooked the Grand-Hotel.

LIEUTENANT

So direction and reunion are agreed upon. Another thing—remove weapons and handcuffs from your pockets.

STROLLER

Are you disarming the soldiers?

LIEUTENANT

They can't force others in any other way here. (The soldiers discard weapons and handcuffs.)

STROLLER

Are you certain of the result?

LIEUTENANT

For the first time, no mistakes—every one will arrest the right prisoner.
STROLLER

Come to the right. (Exits.)

LIEUTENANT

(Puts his cap on.)
(The round red-gold drawing room.)

HOTEL MANAGER

(Opening the door.) Only the round red-gold drawing room left, then I have shown you all the rooms. (Lili and Edith in traveling clothes enter the door.)

LILI

Edith—

EDITH

Do you remember?

LILI

As yesterday. As if we had not left, and as if we return to the hotel from a walk in the city. (To the Hotel Manager.) We will live here. (To the window.)

HOTEL MANAGER

Will the luggage be taken care of?

EDITH

We are traveling without luggage.

HOTEL MANAGER

Pardon?

EDITH

Lili—We have neither trunks nor bags.

LILI

What is it? No—we travel, as we are. I'll pay in advance. (Gives bill to the hotel manager.) Settle the account.—Edith—you still
remember, how you turned on all the lights—the spot light is on.

HOTEL MANAGER

Can I help the ladies out for the night?

LILI

Thank you.

EDITH

Do you still want to do some shopping? The stores are closing.

HOTEL MANAGER

They are closed.

LILI

We don't need anything.

HOTEL MANAGER

(Starts to go.)

LILI

If I am asked for, I am out.

HOTEL MANAGER

(Exits.)

EDITH

Are you expecting a visitor?

LILI

No one. (She takes her hat and coat off.)

EDITH

You must telegraph Bob.

LILI

Yes, we have to do that. It can be done at the post office.
EDITH
He will be terribly excited.

LILI
Yes Bob gets excited.

EDITH
Without a word about the departure.

LILI
Edith, don't undress. You must go to two places. Inquire for the Jeweler at the bend in the street, where I bought my pearl ear drops, whether he is well again. Then to the Art Club for the address of the Stroller. There some one will be able to give you some kind of information about him.

EDITH
Our trip appears to be more and more mysterious to me.

LILI
You came with me that time—-I could not leave you behind today.

EDITH
In order to ask the Jeweler about his state of health?

LILI
In my name---

EDITH
Do you want to get Bob into more trouble with still more strollers?
It will make him sick.

LILI
I burned the print this morning.
EDITH
Are you going to tell that to the artist without regard for his feelings?

LILI
Go on, Edith.

EDITH
Jeweler--

LILI
At the bend in the street.

EDITH
Stroller--

LILI
In the Art Club. (Edith exits. Lili takes a newspaper clipping from her coat pocket, smooths it and lays it on the table. The telephone buzzes.)

LILI
(Quickly to it.) Who?--He may come. (She stands at the table. A waiter opens the door--Stroller enters.)

LILI
Have you watched me from the Railroad Station to the Hotel?

STROLLER
Did you arrive today?

LILI
Just now.

STROLLER
I don't wish to sell any drawings for a thousand marks.
LILI
Because it is too late for me.

STROLLER
Do you blame yourself now after it has happened?

LILI
You should clear it up.

STROLLER
Are you looking for me?

LILI
I sent my companion to the Art Club.

STROLLER
Until this morning I had a permanent address.

LILI
How did you live?

STROLLER
Out of danger.

LILI
Where?

STROLLER
In prison.

LILI
Please, sit down. (To the arm chair.) That is fate. Your drawing made my husband disagreeable. He approved of the pearl ear drops. The little dispute went back and forth every day. Often at last, he stood behind me and would swing my pearl ear drops. Which he called: Ringing Bells of Peace. With that a pearl was lost from the mounting.
I sent to the Jeweler here. The Jeweler declined to repair. For the filling of the box he had used newspaper. A clipping in it was a report of your trial. I read it this morning and traveled.

STROLLER

(In the arm chair.) While I was marching from the prison over the bridge.

LILI

Why did you ask immediately for me in the Grand-Hotel?

STROLLER

The way would not have been finished.

LILI

(She pulls the scrap of newspaper toward her.) Am I responsible?--Yes, it stirs me up. With growing agitation. A thorn, which advances slowly and persistently. Fear of the final result--stops the investigation. I would have been able to do what could have been done. I paid--for the ear drops with the amount--with even more. You broke into the Jeweler's shop and stabbed the Jeweler, who sold to me. Have I incited you?

STROLLER

Anything may become the cause.

LILI

First I have to recall that day. My head burns. Suddenly my blood is awake. The man steps out of his embankment. Overflowing one is overflowed himself. Why didn't you call for my testimony, which would have released you?

STROLLER

It was not effective then.
LILI
Not to shorten the time of your imprisonment?

STROLLER
Who would have borne the rest?

LILI
That is not required.

STROLLER
No—Where there is no obligation to help each other.

LILI
(Violently.) That is no explanation. That is subterfuge. That is intended to confuse. That is your revenge. You want to say it to my face—to make me blush in front of you. It is extremely insolent to know of one's martyrdom.

STROLLER
I have not suffered.

LILI
(Ironically.) The prison is a park pavillion with flower beds of roses.

STROLLER
I was not hungry, I was not thirsty. I was given food--and water. No one asked me for any service which would destroy me. They feel obligated to feed a man--to give him water.

LILI
(From the arm chair.)--Am I still accusing myself tonight?

STROLLER
Did you intend to kill?
LILI
I don't know, how I am involved. Accusation is loud--Purification is bright. I have nothing to do with it.--I am confused by hailstorms of accusations. I am not guilty, I want to be guilty. I do not know the Jeweler--I have caused the Jeweler injury. I have denied the Jeweler.--I want to confess in front of the Jeweler!

STROLLER
The Jeweler will send you away, like he rejected the repair job.

LILI
Deaf to my confession?

STROLLER
He will tell you the culprit.

LILI
You?

STROLLER
The Jeweler.

LILI
That is a wilder fraud. Which tears down the endless cloud over the truth. Thus justice will not be done. Shame suffocates in darkness. He wished to rescue another, because an innocent man suffered. That calls for lies. The masked deception.--Open the prison for me!

STROLLER
The prison deserted by the Lieutenant.

LILI
Where the guilty ones go free?

STROLLER
He searches far.
LILI
For--

STROLLER
For the Lieutenant.

LILI
--Does the tumult roll over me? I dive into it. The Lawyer who defends speaks clearly. The Lawyer defends my guilt before your acquittal.

STROLLER
The Lawyer pleads a great case.

LILI
Does the Lawyer appear--?

STROLLER
Opposite the Lawyer.

LILI
Where are the innocent?

STROLLER
Where the guilty are.

LILI
Where are the guilty?

STROLLER
Where the innocent are.

LILI
--(Slowly.) The cause has no value. The avalanche buries it. A telegram--pearl ear drops: scarcely jostled it with the tip of a child's finger.
STROLLER
Nothing is prepared, unless the mountains are leveled by a puff of midday breeze.

LILI
Is much prepared?

STROLLER
Haven't you moved into the Grand-Hotel?

EDITH
(Enters.) Lili--to the window. (With her there.)

STROLLER
(Stands up.) I must communicate with the Jeweler and the Lawyer.
(He starts to the telephone. Hotel Manager enters.)

HOTEL MANAGER
(To the Stroller.) Some one inquires for you down stairs.

STROLLER
Who?

HOTEL MANAGER
The Jeweler and the Lawyer.

STROLLER
Have they found me already?

HOTEL MANAGER
The Lieutenant is managing the crowd under the window.

STROLLER
Are more behind him?

HOTEL MANAGER
The soldiers join hands.
STROLLER

Does it create a sensation?

HOTEL MANAGER

The crowds in the streets flood into the center of the main square.

STROLLER

Hear that: Unending silence thunders. That is a raging noiseless beginning.

HOTEL MANAGER

Of course, I will dismiss the staff. I will personally make the arrangements. I am an energetic pedestrian. (Exits. Leaves door open.)

EDITH

(Gaily.) We have neither trunk nor bags.

LILI

(Taking hat and coat—to the Stroller.) We are ready.

STROLLER

For the beginning.

LILI

For the first action.

STROLLER

To spoil the intentions of the culprit forever!

(The three to the door.)
EARTH

(The highway with the bridge. Grey morning. Stroller with Lili and Edith enter from the left.)

STROLLER

(Stopping in the center of the bridge.) We are ahead.

LILI

And not tired yet.

EDITH

Refreshing night makes you strong.

STROLLER

Now in the dawn no moon—the guidance fades. I want to go back and show the others to the bridge.

LILI

Do the highways cross in front of us?

STROLLER

Not behind the bridge.

LILI

We want to go on.

EDITH

Rest makes weak.

STROLLER

No hurry. We must arrive together. (Lili and Edith cross over the bridge. Stroller comes with Jeweler and Errand Boy and Shop Girl.)
JEWELEER

(Propping himself on a stick.) Are the women ahead?

STROLLER

Two veils in the drifting grey.

JEWELEER

Excellent walker. Who would have thought that.

STROLLER

Onward—after them.

JEWELEER

We will reach them yet.

STROLLER

Then stay close. (Jeweler with Errand Boy and Shop Girl cross over the bridge. Stroller back to the left. Stroller enters with Lawyer and Cashier.)

LAWYER

It sounds incredible. The Jeweler, somewhat lame in front of me.

STROLLER

Foot is willing, who hurries.

CASHIER

(Observing attentively.) With Errand Boy and Shop Girl.

LAWYER

We stayed ahead.

CASHIER

We gained distance.

LAWYER

I didn't hear him pass by.
CASHIER

In the stillness of the night.

LAWYER

In marching spread out in front and behind.

LAWYER

Gone too far.

STROLLER

On and close up. (Lawyer and Cashier cross over the bridge. Stroller turns back. Stroller with the Lieutenant.)

LIEUTENANT

Have I got far away from my men? Who is marching in front?

STROLLER

The Lawyer with the Cashier.

LIEUTENANT

Where are the Soldiers?

STROLLER

Not there yet.

LIEUTENANT

I ought to stop.

STROLLER

Why?

LIEUTENANT

Orders may be necessary.

STROLLER

For which case?

LIEUTENANT

Have you no misgivings?
STROLLER

The culprit will not escape.

LIEUTENANT

No way out?

STROLLER

Tied in between front and behind.

LIEUTENANT

Forward. (Over the bridge. Stroller turns back and immediately reenters with the Hotel Manager.)

HOTEL MANAGER

I am an energetic pedestrian. (Over the bridge.)

STROLLER

(Remaining on the bridge. Signalling to the left.) Here--over the bridge, who is coming. (The Soldiers on the bridge.) Others in front---you march behind. (Soldiers over the bridge.--With still more violent gesture.) Across the bridge here--over the arch. I am on top, who directs. Down the arch after the others, who hold in front of you--to the gathering, which closes up before and behind!--March on!

(Column--not ending--passing over the arch of the bridge.)

STROLLER

(Continuously swinging and loudly.) March on!
(In the prison. Walls of the buildings. Rows of dormer windows.
Four cornered gate. Twilight. Gate half opened. Prison Director
and Prison Master step out.)

DIRECTOR

(Looking upward.) It should be day by now.

MASTER

By the clock it is almost time for sunrise.

DIRECTOR

The clock deceives, otherwise the phenomenon can not be explained.

MASTER

The sky is empty of darkness and light.

DIRECTOR

The splendor will come two fold, as air—long motionless--thunders
in the breath of wind. (Clock strikes.)

MASTER

The clock strikes the same from hour to hour.

DIRECTOR

I wish to retire from my post. The resolution has become firm with
the weeks. I don't know: it is my fault--I am even in my own way--
and it has impressed you too.

MASTER

The Prisoners watch us, the Prison Masters.

DIRECTOR

The revolution has come about. They have made the Director as well
as the Master unnecessary. You can grasp it with your own hands.
I am long since ashamed to make arrangements, which grant privileges.
It never reaches what they give to themselves, as they willingly
subordinate themselves to the laws of the prison.

MASTER

Do not bolt the gates any longer.

DIRECTOR

That is not what I would order—and yet it would break my neck if
inspection comes. Therefore I take my leave. I can take responsi-
bility for the one as little as the other.

MASTER

We all will be suspended from our offices.

DIRECTOR

It began as the Escaped Prisoner came back and brought that girl with
him. The girl told me her crime made amends here after the sentence.
The Escaped Prisoner confessed his crime to me, which was still un-
discovered, and serves his time here. Both had no reason to accuse
themselves. I would have preferred to keep silent, but I also opened
my mouth on my own accord.

MASTER

It opened the era of the voluntary confessional for all.

DIRECTOR

I became an eloquent plaintiff. In doing so I had always a certain
feeling, that the culprits accuse. Today this feeling prevails: we
hold only the not guilty.
MASTER

It is our conviction.

DIRECTOR

Do you see that too? It is too obvious, for being hushed up. The observations force themselves upon us. The smile on the Escaped Prisoner's face—and the girl's silent happiness—have also gently come over the others. The marching circle in the yard has become like a round dance. A full understanding rules there.

MASTER

We don't watch in the yard anymore.

DIRECTOR

You with your rifles—are you disarmed by those who do not resist. I had trouble in overcoming the desire to question the Escaped Prisoner and the girl. The simple question would open an abyss, which could not be bridged over. I still hope to solve the mystery. The opportunity will present itself. If an event stirs up, then a second one is near. (Second Prison Master opens the door all the way: view into the empty prison yard.)

FIRST MASTER

Why are you still opening the other door?

SECOND MASTER

They won't go into the yard.

FIRST MASTER

Do you want to make them come by opening the door?

SECOND MASTER

More light comes in.
FIRST MASTER

The clock has just struck.

SECOND MASTER

You can't go by that.

DIRECTOR

We should be patient. If they hesitate before their hour of freedom, there must be a reason, which we cannot recognize from down here. They can see farther from the dormer windows. We also are surprised by this delay of the dawn. It is possible that they up there already know the reason.

FIRST MASTER

(Looking up at the high masonry walls.) There are heads at all the dormer windows.

SECOND MASTER

It seems as if all the bars have sunk behind the faces.

FIRST MASTER

What does not exist grows in twilight.

DIRECTOR

Fountains not flowers over broad window sills. (Third Master enters.)

THIRD MASTER

The ones who come are visible above.

DIRECTOR

To the prison?

THIRD MASTER

Approaching on the straight highway, which leads here.
STROLLER

Do you know me?

DIRECTOR

Dismissed yesterday. Today here with new confessions?

STROLLER

Released forever yesterday--back forever today with accomplices in multitudes.

DIRECTOR

(Looking out.) The column out of the dawn?

STROLLER

One night's wandering is crowding here.

DIRECTOR

(To the Prison Masters.) The clock is deceiving. I said it.
(To the Stroller.) Without sentence in prison?

STROLLER

The penalty of all is atoned for.

DIRECTOR

In the prison?

STROLLER

By these in the yard.

DIRECTOR

Does one take the place of the other?

STROLLER

Since one becomes the other.

DIRECTOR

(Looking out.) Why don't they come nearer?
(Two other Prison Masters enter.)

FOURTH MASTER

Are they already in front of the prison?

FIFTH MASTER

They appear to be now near----now far.

THIRD MASTER

A movement rolls ahead.

FIRST MASTER

(Looking into yard.) Has the first one come behind the aim before the arrival? (The prisoners have stepped into the yard--the men from the left--the women from the right: they remain noiseless and motionless.)

DIRECTOR

I will have to take my leave. No regulation can be maintained. The proceeding in the prison obeys new laws, which I am not allowed to endorse. Before further events I announce my resignation. (Stroller enters.) No explanations to me. I have resigned a few minutes ago from the place of the Prison Director. The Prison Masters are witnesses.

STROLLER

Are you convinced of the innocence of all those in prison?

DIRECTOR

My personal opinion--don't confuse that--confirms it: yes.

STROLLER

Is that the reason?

DIRECTOR

In direct opposition to my duties.
STROLLER
They are already too far.

DIRECTOR
The extent of the crowd—a city's population.

STROLLER
One and everyone—and no gathering with many!

DIRECTOR
(Looking into the yard.) Are you going to summon them to participate in the demonstration?

STROLLER
I am neither their voice nor their dependant.

DIRECTOR
How do they see, and how do they hear?

STROLLER
The immeasurable force, out of the free judgement.

DIRECTOR
It could not take place without preparation. According to my knowledge--

STROLLER
Don't you notice anything?

DIRECTOR
I must confess the truth: the prison flourishes.

STROLLER
It is your merit.

DIRECTOR
To such a result.
STROLLER
You have something to eat and drink—and no one asks you for any service, which would destroy. They feel obligated to feed you and give you something to drink.

DIRECTOR
(Stares at him.)

STROLLER
(In the door.) Have no hunger—have no thirst! Perform no service, which would destroy. Responsible for you: to give you food—to give you water.

PRISONERS
(Immovable.) We are guilty!

STROLLER
You are guilty!

VOICES FROM OTHER CROWDS
(In the distance.) We are guilty!

STROLLER
You are guilty!

DIRECTOR
Where is someone not guilty?

STROLLER
(In the yard.) Who are not guilty?

PRISONERS
We are not guilty!

STROLLER
You are not guilty!
VOICES FROM OTHER CROWDS
(In the distance.) We are not guilty!

STROLLER

(To them.) You are not guilty!

DIRECTOR

Confession and purification from the same tongue?

STROLLER

The double is the simple one: between the shells the clear pointer stands in the middle.

PRISONERS

We are guilty!

VOICES FROM OTHER CROWDS

(Distance.) We are not guilty!

DIRECTOR

(To the yard.) Confession here. (Toward the distance.) Purification there?

PRISONERS

We are not guilty!

VOICES FROM OTHER CROWD

(Distance.) We are guilty!

STROLLER

(Toward the distance.) Confession there. (To the yard.) Purification here.

DIRECTOR

How would they come to an agreement?
STROLLER
Don't they force their way through you--through me to each other?
(The prisoners have started out of the yard. Ceaseless clamor:
We are guilty!--counter calling: We are not guilty!--the Prisoners:
We are not guilty!--counter calling: We are guilty!--The Prisoners
passing.)

DIRECTOR
Will we be able to dispense with you?

STROLLER
I am the cause, which made the revolution roll.

DIRECTOR
(Looking out.) The great column seems unsteady in its course.

STROLLER
Because twilight conceals.

DIRECTOR
Do you know the landscape?

STROLLER
Until it is light. (Exits.)

DIRECTOR
I will join them. It isn't pure curiosity. The empty prison makes
the expense of a Prison Director no longer necessary. Protect the
inventory, which amounts to nothing. The most valuable thing has
been lost: the prisoners. (Exits.)

FIRST MASTER
(Closing the door.) Shall we leave the key behind?
SECOND MASTER

Do we want to go away?

THIRD MASTER

We are the last. (The Prison Masters exit.)
(Stony plain. Still twilight. Figures here—there moving about.
Lili and Edith distinct.)

EDITH

We have turned away from the highway.

LILI

Crossed over into a stony field.

EDITH

For dull twilight.

LILI

Country around us without boundaries. (Stroller to them.)

STROLLER

We have arrived.

EDITH

Lili, he is with us.

LILI

Where are we?

STROLLER

Before the new discovery.

LILI

It has been promised us.

STROLLER

Conquered in the night's marching. (Lili and Edith move off.
Lawyer and Prison Director distinct.)
LAWYER
The column is in full dispersion.

DIRECTOR
Who gave the signal for this turn.

LAWYER
I heard nothing.

DIRECTOR
Whom am I speaking to?

LAWYER
The Lawyer.

DIRECTOR
Prison Director.

LAWYER
Excellent. I need your evidence. You know the trial will be revived?

DIRECTOR
Which?

LAWYER
With that you ask me almost too much. The case will be against—

(STROLLER to them.)

STROLLER
Sharpen your observation.

LAWYER
There you are.

DIRECTOR
One sees poorly.

STROLLER
Tumult is everywhere.
LAWYER
Does the culprit reveal himself?

STROLLER
The not guilty ones move about the guilty ones.

DIRECTOR
Are you thinking of my prisoners?

LAWYER
Your people are in the brighter uniforms?

STROLLER
You can still distinguish by crude colors.

LAWYER
Don't you promise us too much?

STROLLER
You will satisfy your demand. (Farther. Lawyer and Director farther. Jeweler—on the stick—distinct. Stroller to him.)

STROLLER
The Jeweler on the stick.

JEWELER
Undoubtedly. Will you announce me now?

STROLLER
You and everyone.

JEWELER
I accept the full guilt.

STROLLER
As everyone in the field.
Who accuses them?

He who started and arrived.

Are they involved?

Everyone is loose in everything. (Fade. Jeweler fades. Lieutenant and Hotel Manager distinct.)

I am an energetic pedestrian, still I pause—without actual fatigue.

Are you a mountain climber?

Hotel Manager.

Otherwise you could give me information about the kinds of stones we are standing on.

It seems as if it is still barren land. Gravel—one shuffles underfoot—soon we will reach fertile ground.

True, it readily gives way. I am testing it.

Are you a farmer?
LIEUTENANT

Prison Lieutenant. (Stroller in.)

STROLLER

Are you digging up the culprit?

HOTEL MANAGER

The Lieutenant is examining the ground.

STROLLER

The ground returns what you give it.

LIEUTENANT

More.

STROLLER

Don't be led into temptation with abundance, which overcomes you!

(Farther. Jeweler distinct.)

JEWELER

Treasures in the ground? I am a Jeweler. I signed the package slips and the gold came with the mail. I manufactured jewelry and laid it out in the shop. For whom I did that, I do not know. Evidently I did not develop my abilities. For I am a Jeweler with body and soul. I could have developed myself, if only the gold had not been sent in the mail. One works on his supply, that is a paralyzing occupation.

HOTEL MANAGER

Would you be astonished, if I told you, that I have two hundred beds in the Grand-Hotel? Beds--beds--beds for all the world!

LAWYER

(Distinct.) What do you mean by that? I am a lawyer. Have you given shelter to suspects?
LIBUTENANT
(Raising himself.) I can give you the answer. I am a Prison Lieutenant. The Hotel Manager only confirms the words of the Jeweler.

LAWYER
Why don't you speak? (Lili and Edith distinct.)

EDITH
Lili, they are talking about the Grand-Hotel.

LAWYER
Can the ladies give information?

LILI
We lived in the Grand-Hotel twice.

EDITH
In the round red-gold drawing room.

HOTEL MANAGER
The last time the ladies travelled without luggage.

LAWYER
This is a burdening statement.

LIBUTENANT
Although I am unable to give orders to my soldiers any more—

LAWYER
We shall alarm them.

DIRECTOR
(Distinct.) Can you explain the movement in the field to me?
(First ray of light from heaven.)

LILI
The day!
Silver bars pour out!

White torches!

Still growing!

Inflammation!

Lili!

The light is now revealing the culprit! (In the plain the dispersed crowd is turning toward the light. Stroller presses near the Lawyer.)

You are not finding the culprit!

He starts out of the darkness.

Vanished away in the light! (New rays spreading.)

Where is the leader?

(Pointing with his stick toward the Stroller.) He marches in front of us.

As drops flow in a stream.
PROSTITUTE

(Coming forward.) Where is the leader?

LAWYER

(To the Stroller.) You will not deny yourself. (Full cries over the plain: Where is the leader?!) 

STROLLER

(Resounding.) Your cries extinguish me.

ESCAPED PRISONER

We are searching into the light! (Calls over the plain: We are searching into the light!)

STROLLER

Light beams over you! (Newer light rays. Calls over the plain: When will the light be full?)

STROLLER

When guilty and innocent are one! (Calls over the plain: Who is guilty—not guilty?!) 

STROLLER

The culprit disappeared! you built the creation! (Calls over the plain: Do we become powerful?)

STROLLER

You move on in omnipotence. (Calls over the plain: Do we build here?!) 

STROLLER

Where the earth is!—Build the creation. You are confirmed—clever between chaos and work. Build the creation, which you are—in the rising in you, who you are! —Build the creation, which bleeds
through you--your finger's order will build a steep building, because you order yourselves! --Build the creation, which wants you--as you want it! Build the creation--that builds, that creates itself in you! --You are new from evening to morning a thousand times--build yourself new creations which forget you--as you fade away. No one is one--your desire aims next to you: there is the other, who is greater, as he takes from you. He owes you--as the third owes him--and the many owe the third. Out from all the debt toward all you cancel all debt: who measures--who gives more--and bargains about the value?! (He has vanished into the crowd.)

CRIES

Where is the leader?!

STROLLER

(Voice from the distance.) In the very center.

CRIES

(There.) Where is the leader?!

STROLLER

(From the distance in another direction.) Here as there!

CRIES

(There.) Where is the leader?!

STROLLER

(From the distance in another direction.) Where no one calls!

CRIES

( Everywhere.) Where is the leader?
STROLLER

(Voice in all directions.) In the creation in you, which you build.

CRIES

(In the whole plain.) We build upward.

STROLLER

(Big voice.) The sun thunders in the reflection of towers!

CRIES

Do we build grandly?

STROLLER

(Big voice.) Splendor runs round the ridge of the arching roofs!

CRIES

Do we build far?

STROLLER

(Big voice.) Your creation reaches wide.

CRIES

Where are the boundaries?!

STROLLER

(Big voice.) As far as the earth is round.

CRIES

What gives us guarantee?

STROLLER

(Big voice.) As I forgive in everything—you are already a part of me—and parted with me.
CRIES

(After a pause.) The earth rings!!

STROLLER

(Powerful voice--falling away.) Your blood rushes--for you are the earth!!

(Sun is full: White light flows over the plain, in which the crowd stands as in a melting mist.)
WORKS OF GEORG KAISER

A list of Georg Kaiser's plays in the order of publication:


Der Fall des Schülers Vehgesack. Ein kleine deutsche Komödie in fünf Akten. Weimar: [no publisher given], 1914.


Der Zentauros. Lustspiel in fünf Aufzügen. Berlin: S. Fischer Verlag, 1916. (Entitled Margarine as a stage manuscript. Published as Konstantin Strobel in its third edition.)


Der Protagonist. Einakter. Weimar: [no publisher given], 1920.


Noli me tangere. Stück in einem Vorspiel und zwei Teilen. Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1922.


Gats. Drei Akte. Potsdam: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1925.


Der mutige Seefahrer. Komödie in vier Akten. Potsdam: [no publisher given], 1926.


Der Silbersee. Ein Winternmärchen in drei Akten. Berlin: [no publisher given], 1933

Der Gärtner von Toulouse. Schauspiel in fünf Akten. Amsterdam: [no publisher given], 1938.

Der Schuss in die Öffentlichkeit. Vier Akte. Amsterdam: [no publisher given], 1939.

Rosamunde Floris. Schauspiel in drei Akten. Zürich--New York: [no publisher given], 1940.

Der Soldat Tanaka. Schauspiel in drei Akten. Zürich--New York: [no publisher given], 1940.

Alain und Elise. Schauspiel in drei Akten. Zürich--New York: [no publisher given], 1940.

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Letter from Felix Bloch Erben June 1, 1955.
VITA

William Harlan Shaw was born on April 3, 1922, near Tulia, Texas. He attended the public schools of Abilene, Texas, graduating from Abilene High School in 1939. He enrolled in Hardin-Simmons University in the fall of that year and took his B.A. degree in 1943. After serving three years in the U.S. Navy, he returned to Hardin-Simmons University and took his M.A. in 1949. The school year 1948-49 he attended L.S.U. He taught at Hardin-Simmons University 1949-50, and at Illinois State Normal University from 1950 to 1953. The years 1953-55 have been spent in pursuing additional graduate work at L.S.U. in preparation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
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Candidate: William Harlan Shaw

Major Field: Speech

Title of Thesis: German Expressionism 1915—1920: The Plays of Georg Kaiser

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

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