

COUNTESS JULIE (Miss Julie)

CHARACTERS

COUNTESS JULIE, twenty-five years old

JEAN, a valet, thirty

KRISTIN, a cook, thirty-five

FARM SERVANTS

The action takes place on Saint John's night, the mid-summer festival surviving from pagan times.

SCENE.--A large kitchen. The ceiling and walls are partially covered by draperies and greens. The back wall slants upward from left side of scene. On back wall, left, are two shelves filled with copper kettles, iron casseroles and tin pans. The shelves are trimmed with fancy scalloped paper. To right of middle a large arched entrance with glass doors through which one sees a fountain with a statue of Cupid, syringa bushes in bloom and tall poplars. To left corner of scene a large stove with hood decorated with birch branches. To right, servants' dining table of white pine and a few chairs. On the end of table stands a Japanese jar filled with syringa blossoms. The floor is strewn with juniper branches.

Near stove, an ice-box, sink and dish-table. A large old-fashioned bell, hangs over the door, to left of door a speaking tube.

Kristin stands at stove engaged in cooking something. She wears a light cotton dress and kitchen apron. Jean comes in wearing livery; he carries a large pair of riding-boots with spurs, which he puts on floor.

JEAN. Tonight Miss Julie is crazy again, perfectly crazy.

KRISTIN. So--you're back at last.

JEAN. I went to the station with the Count and coming back I went in to the barn and danced and then I discovered Miss Julie there leading the dance with the gamekeeper. When she spied me, she rushed right toward me and asked me to waltz, and then she waltzed so--never in my life have I seen anything like it! Ah--she is crazy tonight.

KRISTIN. She has always been. But never so much as in the last fortnight, since her engagement was broken off.

JEAN. Yes, what about that gossip? He seemed like a fine fellow although he wasn't rich! Ach! they have so much nonsense about them. [Seats himself at table.] It's queer about Miss Julie though--to prefer staying here at home among these people, eh, to going away with her father to visit her relatives, eh?

KRISTIN. She's probably shamefaced about breaking off with her intended.

JEAN. No doubt! but he was a likely sort just the same. Do you know, Kristin, how it happened? I saw it, although I didn't let on.

KRISTIN. No--did you see it?

JEAN. Yes, indeed, I did. They were out in the stable yard one evening and she was "training" him as she called it. Do you know what happened? She made him leap over her riding whip, the way you teach a dog to jump. He jumped it twice and got a lash each time; but the third time he snatched the whip from her hand and broke it into pieces. And then he vanished!

KRISTIN. Was that the way it happened? No, you don't say so!

JEAN. Yes, that's the way the thing happened. But what have you got to give me that's good, Kristin?

KRISTIN. [She takes things from the pans on stove and serves them to him.] Oh, it's only a bit of kidney that I cut out of the veal steak for you.

JEAN [Smelling the food]. Splendid! My favorite delicacy. [Feeling of plate]. But you might have warmed the plate.

KRISTIN. You're fussier than the Count, when you get started. [Tweaks his hair.]

JEAN. Don't pull my hair! You know how sensitive I am.

KRISTIN. Oh--there, there! you know I was only loving you.

[Jean eats, and Kristin opens bottle of beer.]

JEAN. Beer on midsummer night--thank you, no! I have something better than that myself. [Takes bottle of wine from drawer of table.] Yellow seal, how's that? Now give me a glass--a wine glass you understand, of course, when one drinks the genuine.

KRISTIN. [Fetches a glass. Then goes to stove and puts on casserole.] Heaven help the woman who gets you for her husband. Such a fuss budget!

JEAN. Oh, talk! You ought to be glad to get such a fine fellow as I am. And I don't think it's done you any harm because I'm considered your intended. [Tastes wine.] Excellent, very excellent! Just a little too cold. [Warms glass with hands]. We bought this at Dijon. It stood at four francs a litre in the bulk; then of course there was the duty besides. What are you cooking now that smells so infernally?

KRISTIN. Oh, it's some devil's mess that Miss Julie must have for Diana.

JEAN. Take care of your words, Kristin. But why should you stand there cooking for that damned dog on a holiday evening? Is it sick, eh?

KRISTIN. Yes, it's sick. Diana sneaked out with the gatekeeper's mongrels and now something is wrong. Miss Julie can't stand that.

JEAN. Miss Julie has a great deal of pride about some things--but not enough about others! Just like her mother in her lifetime; she thrived best in the kitchen or the stable, but she must always drive tandem--never one horse! She would go about with soiled cuffs but she had to have the Count's crest on her cuff buttons. And as for Miss Julie, she doesn't take much care of her appearance either. I should say she isn't refined. Why just now out there she pulled the forester from Anna's side and asked him to dance with her. We wouldn't do things that way. But when the highborn wish to unbend they become vulgar. Splendid she is though! Magnificent! Ah, such shoulders and--

KRISTIN. Oh, don't exaggerate. I've heard what Clara says who dresses her sometimes, I have.

JEAN. Ha! Clara--you women are always jealous of each other. I who've been out riding with her--!!! And such a dancer!

KRISTIN. Come now, Jean, don't you want to dance with me when I'm through?

JEAN. Of course I want to.

KRISTIN. That is a promise?

JEAN. Promise! When I say I will do a thing I do it! Thanks for the supper--it was excellent.

[Pushes cork in the bottle with a bang. Miss Julie appears in doorway, speaking to someone outside.]

JULIE. I'll be back soon, but don't let things wait for me.

[Jean quickly puts bottle in table drawer and rises very respectfully.]

[Enter Miss Julie and goes to Kristin.]

JULIE. Is it done?

[Kristin indicating Jean's presence.]

JEAN [Gallantly]. Have you secrets between you?

JULIE. [Flipping handkerchief in his face]. Curious, are you?

JEAN. How sweet that violet perfume is!

JULIE [Coquettishly]. Impudence! Do you appreciate perfumes too? Dance--that you can do splendidly. [Jean looks towards the cooking store]. Don't look. Away with you.

JEAN [Inquisitive but polite]. Is it some troll's dish that you are both concocting for midsummer night? Something to pierce the future with and evoke the face of your intended?

JULIE [Sharply]. To see him one must have sharp eyes. [To Kristin]. Put it into a bottle and cork it tight. Come now, Jean and dance a

schottische with me.

[Jean hesitates.]

JEAN. I don't wish to be impolite to anyone but--this dance I promised to Kristin.

JULIE. Oh, she can have another--isn't that so, Kristin? Won't you lend Jean to me.

KRISTIN. It's not for me to say, if Miss Julie is so gracious it's not for me to say no. [To Jean]. Go you and be grateful for the honor.

JEAN. Well said--but not wishing any offense I wonder if it is prudent for Miss Julie to dance twice in succession with her servant, especially as people are never slow to find meaning in--

JULIE [Breaking out]. In what? What sort of meaning? What were you going to say?

JEAN [Taken aback]. Since Miss Julie does not understand I must speak plainly. It may look strange to prefer one of your--underlings--to others who covet the same honor--

JULIE. To prefer--what a thought! I, the lady of the house! I honor the people with my presence and now that I feel like dancing I want to have a partner who knows how to lead to avoid being ridiculous.

JEAN. As Miss Julie commands. I'm here to serve.

JULIE [Mildly]. You mustn't look upon that as a command. Tonight we are all in holiday spirits--full of gladness and rank is flung aside. So, give me your arm! Don't be alarmed, Kristin, I shall not take your sweetheart away from you.

[Jean offers arm. They exit.]

[PANTOMIME.--Played as though the actress were really alone. Turns her back to the audience when necessary. Does not look out into the auditorium. Does not hurry as though fearing the audience might grow restless. Soft violin music from the distance, schottische time. Kristin hums with the music. She cleans the table; washes plate, wipes it and puts it in the china closet. Takes off her apron and then opens drawer of table and takes a small hand glass and strands it against a flower pot on table. Lights a candle and heats a hair pin with which she crimps her hair around her forehead. After that she goes to door at back and listens. Then she returns to table and sees the Countess' handkerchief, picks it up, smells of it, then smooths it out and folds it. Enter Jean.]

JEAN. She is crazy I tell you! To dance like that! And the people stand grinning at her behind the doors. What do you say to that, Kristin?

KRISTIN. Oh, didn't I say she's been acting queer lately? But isn't it my turn to dance now?

JEAN. You are not angry because I let myself be led by the forelock?

KRISTIN. No, not for such a little thing. That you know well enough. And I know my place too--

JEAN [Puts arm around her waist]. You're a pretty smart girl, Kristin, and you ought to make a good wife.

[Enter Miss Julie.]

JULIE [Disagreeably surprised, but with forced gaiety]. You're a charming cavalier to run away from your partner.

JEAN. On the contrary, Miss Julie, I have hastened to my neglected one as you see.

JULIE [Changing subject]. Do you know, you dance wonderfully well! But why are you in livery on a holiday night? Take it off immediately.

JEAN. Will you excuse me--my coat hangs there. [Goes R. and takes coat.]

JULIE. Does it embarrass you to change your coat in my presence? Go to your room then--or else stay and I'll turn my back.

JEAN. With your permission, Miss Julie.

[Exit Jean R. One sees his arm as he changes coat.]

JULIE [To Kristin]. Is Jean your sweetheart, that he is so devoted?

KRISTIN. Sweetheart? Yes, may it please you. Sweetheart--that's what they call it.

JULIE. Call it?

KRISTIN. Oh Miss Julie has herself had a sweetheart and--

JULIE. Yes, we were engaged--

KRISTIN. But it came to nothing.

[Enter Jean in black frock coat.]

JULIE. Tres gentil, Monsieur Jean, tres gentil.

JEAN. Vous voulez plaisanter, Mademoiselle.

JULIE. Et vous voulez parler francais? Where did you learn that?

JEAN. In Switzerland where I was butler in the largest hotel at Lucerne.

JULIE. Why, you look like a gentleman in your frock coat. Charmant! [Seats herself by table.]

JEAN. You flatter me!

JULIE. Flatter! [Picking him up on the word.]

JEAN. My natural modesty forbids me to believe that you could mean these pleasant things that you say to a--such its I am--and therefore I allowed myself to fancy that you overrate or, as it is called, flatter.

JULIE. Where did you learn to use words like that? Have you frequented the theatres much?

JEAN. I have frequented many places, I have!

JULIE. But you were born here in this neighborhood?

JEAN. My father was a deputy under the public prosecutor, and I saw Miss Julie as a child--although she didn't see me!

JULIE. No, really?

JEAN. Yes, I remember one time in particular. But I mustn't talk about that.

JULIE. Oh yes, do, when was it?

JEAN. No really--not now, another time perhaps.

JULIE. "Another time" is a good for nothing. Is it so dreadful then?

JEAN. Not dreadful--but it goes against the grain. [Turns and points to Kristin, who has fallen asleep in a chair near stove]. Look at her.

JULIE. She'll make a charming wife! Does she snore too?

JEAN. No, but she talks in her sleep.

JULIE [Cynically]. How do you know that she talks in her sleep?

JEAN [Boldly]. I have heard her.[Pause and they look at each other.]

JULIE. Why don't you sit down?

JEAN. I can't allow myself to do so in your presence.

JULIE. But if I command you?

JEAN. Then I obey.

JULIE. Sit down then. But wait--can't you get me something to drink first?

JEAN. I don't know what there is in the icebox. Nothing but beer, probably.

JULIE. Is beer nothing? My taste is so simple that I prefer it to wine.

[Jean takes out beer and serves it on plate.]

JEAN. Allow me.

JULIE. Won't you drink too?

JEAN. I am no friend to beer--but if Miss Julie commands.

JULIE [Gaily]. Commands! I should think as a polite cavalier you might join your lady.

JEAN. Looking at it in that way you are quite right. [Opens another bottle of beer and fills glass.]

JULIE. Give me a toast!

[Jean hesitates.]

JULIE [Mockingly]. Old as he is, I believe the man is bashful!

JEAN [On his knee with mock gallantry, raises glass]. A health to my lady of the house!

JULIE. Bravo! Now you must kiss my slipper. Then the thing is perfect.

[Jean hesitates and then seizes her foot and kisses it lightly.]

JULIE. Splendid! You should have been an actor.

JEAN [Rising]. But this mustn't go any further, Miss Julie. What if someone should come in and see us?

JULIE. What harm would that do?

JEAN. Simply that it would give them a chance to gossip. And if Miss Julie only knew how their tongues wagged just now--then--

JULIE. What did they say? Tell me. And sit down now.

JEAN [Sitting]. I don't wish to hurt you, but they used an expression--threw hints of a certain kind--but you are not a child, you can understand. When one sees a lady drinking alone with a man--let alone a servant--at night--then--

JULIE. Then what? And for that matter, we are not alone. Kristin is here.

JEAN. Sleeping! Yes.

JULIE. Then I shall wake her. [Rises]. Kristin, are you asleep?

KRISTIN. [In her sleep]. Bla--bla--bla--bla.

JULIE. Kristin! She certainly can sleep. [Goes to Kristin.]

KRISTIN. [In her sleep]. The Count's boots are polished--put on the coffee--soon--soon--soon. Oh--h-h-h--puh! [Breathes heavily. Julie takes her by the nose.]

JULIE. Won't you wake up?

JEAN [Sternly]. Don't disturb the sleeping.

JULIE [Sharply]. What?

JEAN. Anyone who has stood over the hot stove all day long is tired when night comes. One should respect the weary.

JULIE. That's a kind thought--and I honor it. [Offers her hand.] Thanks for the suggestion. Come out with me now and pick some syringas.

[Kristin has awakened and goes to her room, right, in a sort of sleep stupified way.]

JEAN. With Miss Julie?

JULIE. With me.

JEAN. But that wouldn't do--decidedly not.

JULIE. I don't understand you. Is it possible that you fancy that I--

JEAN. No--not I, but people.

JULIE. What? That I'm in love with my coachman?

JEAN. I am not presumptuous, but we have seen instances--and with the people nothing is sacred.

JULIE. I believe he is an aristocrat!

JEAN. Yes, I am.

JULIE. But I step down-- --

JEAN. Don't step down, Miss Julie. Listen to me--no one would believe that you stepped down of your own accord; people always say that one falls down.

JULIE. I think better of the people than you do. Come--and try them--come!

[Dares him with a look.]

JEAN. Do you know that you are wonderful?

JULIE. Perhaps. But you are too. Everything is wonderful for that matter. Life, people--everything. Everything is wreckage, that drifts over the water until it sinks, sinks. I have the same dream every now and then and at this moment I am reminded of it. I find

myself seated at the top of a high pillar and I see no possible way to get down. I grow dizzy when I look down, but down I must. But I'm not brave enough to throw myself; I cannot hold fast and I long to fall--but I don't fall. And yet I can find no rest or peace until I shall come down to earth; and if I came down to earth I would wish myself down in the ground. Have you ever felt like that?

JEAN. No, I dream that I'm lying in a dark wood under a tall tree and I would up--up to the top, where I can look far over the fair landscape, where the sun is shining. I climb--climb, to plunder the birds' nests up there where the golden eggs lie, but the tree trunk is so thick, so smooth, and the first limb is so high! But I know if I reached the first limb I should climb as though on a ladder, to the top. I haven't reached it yet, but I shall reach it, if only in the dream.

JULIE. Here I stand talking about dreams with you. Come now, just out in the park.

[She offers her arm and they start.]

JEAN. We should sleep on nine midsummer flowers tonight and then our dreams would come true.

[She turns, Jean quickly holds a hand over his eye.]

JULIE. What is it, something in your eye?

JEAN. Oh, it is nothing--just a speck. It will be all right in a moment.

JULIE. It was some dust from my sleeve that brushed against you. Now sit down and let me look for it. [Pulls him into a chair, looks into his eye.] Now sit still, perfectly still. [Uses corner of her handkerchief in his eye. Strikes his hand.] So--will you mind? I believe you are trembling, strong man that you are. [Touching his arm.] And such arms!

JEAN [Warningly.] Miss Julie!

JULIE. Yes, Monsieur Jean!

JEAN. Attention. Je ne suis qu'un homme!

JULIE. Will you sit Still! So, now it is gone! Kiss my hand and thank me!

[Jean rises.]

JEAN. Miss Julie, listen to me. Kristin has gone to bed now--will you listen to me--

JULIE. Kiss my hand first.

JEAN. Listen to me--

JULIE. Kiss my hand first.

JEAN. Yes, but blame yourself.

JULIE. For what?

JEAN. For what? Are you a child at twenty-five? Don't you know that it is dangerous to play with fire?

JULIE. Not for me. I am insured!

JEAN. No, you are not. But even if you are, there is inflammable material in the neighborhood.

JULIE. Might that be you?

JEAN. Yes, not because it is I, but because I'm a young man--

JULIE [Scornfully]. With a grand opportunity--what inconceivable presumption! A Don Juan perhaps! Or a Joseph! On my soul, I believe he is a Joseph!

JEAN. You do?

JULIE. Almost.

[Jean rushes towards her and tries to take her in his arms to kiss her.]

JULIE [Gives him a box on the ear]. Shame on you.

JEAN. Are you in earnest, or fooling?

JULIE. In earnest.

JEAN. Then you were in earnest a moment ago, too. You play too seriously with what is dangerous. Now I'm tired of playing and beg to be excused that I may go on with my work. The Count must have his boots in time, and it is long past midnight. [Jean picks up boots.]

JULIE. Put those boots away.

JEAN. No, that is my work which it is my duty to do, but I was not hired to be your play thing and that I shall never be. I think too well of myself for that.

JULIE. You are proud.

JEAN. In some things--not in others.

JULIE. Were you ever in love?

JEAN. We do not use that word, but I have liked many girls. One time I was sick because I couldn't have the one I wanted--sick, you understand, like the princesses in the Arabian Nights who could not eat nor drink for love sickness.

JULIE. Who was she? [Jean is silent.] Who was she?

JEAN. That you could not make me tell.

JULIE. Not if I ask you as an equal, as a--friend? Who was she?

JEAN. It was you!

[Julie seats herself.]

JULIE. How extravagant!

JEAN. Yes, if you will, it was ridiculous. That was the story I hesitated to tell, but now I'm going to tell it. Do you know how people in high life look from the under world? No, of course you don't. They look like hawks and eagles whose backs one seldom sees, for they soar up above. I lived in a hovel provided by the state, with seven brothers and sisters and a pig; out on a barren stretch where nothing grew, not even a tree, but from the window I could see the Count's park walls with apple trees rising above them. That was the garden of paradise; and there stood many angry angels with flaming swords protecting it; but for all that I and other boys found the way to the tree of life--now you despise me.

JULIE. Oh, all boys steal apples.

JEAN. You say that, but you despise me all the same. No matter! One time I entered the garden of paradise--it was to weed the onion beds with my mother! Near the orchard stood a Turkish pavilion, shaded and overgrown with jessamine and honeysuckle. I didn't know what it was used for and I had never seen anything so beautiful. People passed in and out and one day--the door was left open. I sneaked in and beheld walls covered with pictures of kings and emperors and there were red-fringed curtains at the windows--now you understand what I mean--I--[Breaks off a spray of syringes and puts it to her nostrils.] I had never been in the castle and how my thoughts leaped--and there they returned ever after. Little by little the longing came over me to experience for once the pleasure of--enfin, I sneaked in and was bewildered. But then I heard someone coming--there was only one exit for the great folk, but for me there was another, and I had to choose that. [Julie who has taken the syringa lets it fall on table.] Once out I started to run, scrambled through a raspberry hedge, rushed over a strawberry bed and came to a stop on the rose terrace. For there I saw a figure in a white dress and white slippers and stockings--it was you! I hid under a heap of weeds, under, you understand, where the thistles pricked me, and lay on the damp, rank earth. I gazed at you walking among the roses. And I thought if it is true that the thief on the cross could enter heaven and dwell among the angels it was strange that a pauper child on God's earth could not go into the castle park and play with the Countess' daughter.

JULIE [Pensively]. Do you believe that all poor children would have such thoughts under those conditions?

JEAN [Hesitates, then in a positive voice]. That all poor children--yes, of course, of course!

JULIE. It must be a terrible misfortune to be poor.

JEAN [With deep pain and great chagrin]. Oh, Miss Julie, a dog may lie on the couch of a Countess, a horse may be caressed by a lady's hand, but a servant--yes, yes, sometimes there is stuff enough in a man, whatever he be, to swing himself up in the world, but how often does that happen! But to return to the story, do you know what I did? I ran down to the mill dam and threw myself in with my clothes on--and was pulled out and got a thrashing. But the following Sunday when all the family went to visit my grandmother I contrived to stay at home; I scrubbed myself well, put on my best dollies, such its they were, and went to church so that I might see you. I saw you. Then I went home with my mind made up to put, an cud to myself. But I wanted to do it beautifully and without pain. Then I happened to remember that elderberry blossoms are poisonous. I knew where there was a big elderberry bush in full bloom and I stripped it of its riches and made a bed of it in the oat-bin. Have you ever noticed how smooth and glossy oats are? As soft as a woman's arm.--Well, I got in and let down the cover, fell asleep, and when I awoke I was very ill, but didn't die--as you see. What I wanted--I don't know. You were unattainable, but through the vision of you I was made to realize how hopeless it was to rise above the conditions of my birth.

JULIE. You tell it well! Were you ever at school?

JEAN. A little, but I have read a good deal and gone to the theatres. And besides, I have always heard the talk of fine folks and from them I have learned most.

JULIE. Do you listen then to what we are saying?

JEAN. Yes, indeed, I do. And I have heard much when I've been on the coachbox. One time I heard Miss Julie and a lady--

JULIE. Oh, what was it you heard?

JEAN. Hm! that's not so easy to tell. But I was astonished and could not understand where you had heard such things. Well, perhaps at bottom there's not so much difference between people and--people.

JULIE. Oh, shame! We don't behave as you do when we are engaged.

JEAN. [Eyeing her]. Are you sure of that? It isn't worthwhile to play the innocent with me.

JULIE. I gave my love to a rascal.

JEAN. That's what they always say afterward.

JULIE. Always?

JEAN. Always, I believe, as I have heard the expression many times before under the same circumstances.

JULIE. What circumstances?

JEAN. Those we've been talking about. The last time I-- --

JULIE. Silence. I don't wish to hear any more.

JEAN. Well, then I beg to be excused so I may go to bed.

JULIE. Go to bed! On midsummer night?

JEAN. Yes, for dancing out there with that pack has not amused me.

JULIE. Then get the key for the boat and row me out over the lake. I want to see the sun rise.

JEAN. Is that prudent?

JULIE. One would think that, you were afraid of your reputation.

JEAN. Why not? I don't want to be made ridiculous. I am not willing to be driven out without references, now that I am going to settle down. And I feel I owe something to Kristin.

JULIE. Oh, so it's Kristin now--

JEAN. Yes, but you too. Take my advice, go up and go to bed.

JULIE. Shall I obey you?

JEAN. For once--for your own sake. I beg of you. Night is crawling along, sleepiness makes one irresponsible and the brain grows hot. Go to your room. In fact--if I hear rightly some of the people are coming for me. If they find us here--then you are lost.

[Chorus is heard approaching, singing.]

"There came two ladies out of the woods
Tridiridi-ralla tridiridi-ra.
One of them had wet her foot,
Tridiridi-ralla-la.

"They talked of a hundred dollars,
Tridiridi-ralla tridiridi-ra.
But neither had hardly a dollar,
Tridiridi-ralla-la.

"The mitten I'm going to send you,
Tridirichi-ralla tridiridi-ra.
For another I'm going to jilt you,
Tridiridi-ralla tridiridi-ra."

JULIE. I know the people and I love them and they respect me. Let them come, you shall see.

JEAN. No, Miss Julie, they don't love you. They take your food and spit upon your kindness, believe me. Listen to them, listen to what they're singing! No! Don't listen!

JULIE [Listening]. What are they singing?

JEAN. It's something suggestive, about you and me.

JULIE. Infamous! Oh horrible! And how cowardly!

JEAN. The pack is always cowardly. And in such a battle one can only run away.

JULIE. Run away? Where? We can't get out and we can't go to Kristin.

JEAN. Into my room then. Necessity knows no law. You can depend on me for I am your real, genuine, respectful friend.

JULIE. But think if they found you there.

JEAN. I will turn the key and if they try to break in I'll shoot. Come--come!

JULIE. [Meaningly]. You promise me--?

JEAN. I swear ...

[She exits R. Jean follows her.]

[BALLET.--The farm folk enter in holiday dress with flowers in their hats, a fiddler in the lead. They carry a keg of home-brewed beer and a smaller keg of gin, both decorated with greens which are placed on the table. They help themselves to glasses and drink. Then they sing and dance a country dance to the melody of "There came two ladies out of the woods." When that is over they go out, singing.]

[Enter Julie alone, sees the havoc the visitors have made, clasps her hands, takes out powder box and powders her face. Enter Jean exuberant.]

JEAN. There, you see, and you heard them. Do you think it's possible for us to remain here any longer?

JULIE. No, I don't. But what's to be done?

JEAN. Fly! Travel--far from here!

JULIE. Travel--yes--but where?

JEAN. To Switzerland--to the Italian lakes. You have never been there?

JULIE. No--is it beautiful there?

JEAN. Oh, an eternal summer! Oranges, trees, laurels--oh!

JULIE. But what shall we do there?

JEAN. I'll open a first-class hotel for first-class patrons.

JULIE. Hotel?

JEAN. That is life--you shall see! New faces constantly, different languages. Not a moment for boredom. Always something to do night and day--the bell ringing, the trains whistling, the omnibus coming

and going and all the time the gold pieces rolling into the till-- that is life!

JULIE. Yes, that is life. And I--?

JEAN. The mistress of the establishment--the ornament of the house. With your looks--and your manners--oh, it's a sure success! Colossal! You could sit like a queen in the office and set the slaves in action by touching an electric button. The guests line up before your throne and shyly lay their riches on your desk. You can't believe how people tremble when they get their bills--I can salt the bills and you can sweeten them with your most bewitching smile--ha, let us get away from here--[Takes a time table from his pocket] immediately--by the next train. We can be at Malmö at 6.30, Hamburg at 8.40 tomorrow morning, Frankfort the day after and at Como by the St. Gothard route in about--let me see, three days. Three days!

JULIE. All that is well enough, but Jean--you must give me courage. Take me in your arms and tell me that you love me.

JEAN [Hesitatingly]. I will--but I daren't--not again in this house. I love you of course--do you doubt that?

JULIE [Shyly and with womanliness]. You! Say thou to me! Between us there can be no more formality. Say thou.

JEAN. I can't--There must be formality between us--as long as we are in this house. There is the memory of the past--and there is the Count, your father. I have never known anyone else for whom I have such respect. I need only to see his gloves lying in a chair to feel my own insignificance. I have only to hear his bell to start like a nervous horse--and now as I see his boots standing there so stiff and proper I feel like bowing and scraping. [Gives boots a kick]. Superstitions and prejudices taught in childhood can't be uprooted in a moment. Let us go to a country that is it republic where they'll stand on their heads for my coachman's livery--on their heads shall they stand--but I shall not. I am not, born to bow and scrape, for there's stuff in me--character. If I only get hold of the first limb, you shall see me climb. I'm a coachman today, but next year I shall be a proprietor, in two years a gentleman of income; then for Roumania where I'll let them decorate me and can, mark you, can end a count!

JULIE. Beautiful, beautiful!

JEAN. Oh, in Roumania, one can buy a title cheap--and so you can be a countess just the same--my countess!

JULIE. What do I care for all that--which I now cast behind me. Say that you love me--else, what am I, without it?

JEAN. I'll say it a thousand times afterwards, but not here. Above all, let us have no sentimentality now or everything will fall through. We must look at this matter coldly like sensible people. [Takes out a cigar and lights it.] Now sit down there and I'll sit here and we'll take it over as if nothing had happened.

JULIE [Staggered]. Oh, my God, have you no feeling?

JEAN. I? No one living has more feeling than I but I can restrain myself.

JULIE. A moment ago you could kiss my slipper and now--

JEAN [Harshly]. That was--then. Now we have other things to think about.

JULIE. Don't speak harshly to me.

JEAN. Not harshly, but wisely. One folly has been committed--commit no more. The Count may be here at any moment, and before he comes, our fate must be settled. How do my plans for the future strike you? Do you approve of them?

JULIE. They seem acceptable enough. But one question. For such a great undertaking a large capital is necessary, have you that?

JEAN [Chewing his cigar]. I? To be sure. I have my regular occupation, my unusual experience, my knowledge of different languages--that is capital that counts, I should say.

JULIE. But with all that you could not buy a railway ticket.

JEAN. That's true, and for that reason I'm looking for a backer who can furnish the funds.

JULIE. How can that be done at a moment's notice?

JEAN. That is for you to say, if you wish to be my companion.

JULIE. I can't--as I have nothing myself.

[A pause.]

JEAN. Then the whole matter drops-- --

JULIE. And-- --

JEAN. Things remain as they are.

JULIE. Do you think I could remain under this roof after----Do you think I will allow the people to point at me in scorn, or that I can ever look my father in the face again? Never! Take me away from this humiliation and dishonor. Oh, what have I done! Oh, my God, what have I done! [Weeping.]

JEAN. So, you are beginning in that tune now. What have you done? The same as many before you.

JULIE. And now you despise me. I am falling! I am falling!

JEAN. Fall down to my level, I'll lift you up afterwards.

JULIE. What strange power drew me to you--the weak to the strong--the falling to the rising, or is this love! This--love! Do you know

what love is?

JEAN. I? Yes! Do you think it's the first time?

JULIE. What language, what thoughts.

JEAN. I am what life has made me. Don't be nervous and play the high and mighty, for now we are on the same level. Look here, my little girl, let me offer you a glass of something extra fine. [Opens drawer of table and takes out wine bottle, then fills two glasses that have been already used.]

JULIE. Where did you get that wine?

JEAN. From the cellar.

JULIE. My father's Burgundy.

JEAN. What's the matter, isn't that good enough for the son-in-law?

JULIE. And I drink beer--I!

JEAN. That only goes to prove that your taste is poorer than mine.

JULIE. Thief!

JEAN. Do you intend to tattle?

JULIE. Oh ho! Accomplice to a house thief. Was I intoxicated--have I been walking in my sleep this night--midsummer night, the night for innocent play--

JEAN. Innocent, eh!

JULIE [Pacing back and forth]. Is there a being on earth so miserable as I.

JEAN. Why are you, after such a conquest. Think of Kristin in there, don't you think she has feelings too?

JULIE. I thought so a little while ago, but I don't any more. A servant is a servant.

JEAN. And a whore is a whore.

JULIE [Falls on her knees with clasped hands]. Oh, God in heaven, end my wretched life, save me from this mire into which I'm sinking--Oh save me, save me.

JEAN. I can't deny that it hurts me to see you like this.

JULIE. And you who wanted to die for me.

JEAN. In the oat-bin? Oh, that was only talk.

JULIE. That is to say--a lie!

JEAN [Beginning to show sleepiness]. Er--er almost. I believe I

read something of the sort in a newspaper about a chimney-sweep who made a death bed for himself of syringa blossoms in a wood-bin-- [laughs] because they were going to arrest him for non-support of his children.

JULIE. So you are such a--

JEAN. What better could I have hit on! One must always be romantic to capture a woman.

JULIE. Wretch! Now you have seen the eagle's back, and I suppose I am to be the first limb--

JEAN. And the limb is rotten--

JULIE [Without seeming to hear]. And I am to be the hotel's signboard--

JEAN. And I the hotel--

JULIE. And sit behind the desk and allure guests and overcharge them--

JEAN. Oh, that'll be my business.

JULIE. That a soul can be so degraded!

JEAN. Look to your own soul.

JULIE. Lackey! Servant! Stand up when I speak.

JEAN. Don't you dare to moralize to me. Lackey, eh! Do you think you have shown yourself finer than any maid-servant tonight?

JULIE [Crushed]. That is right, strike me, trample on me, I deserve nothing better. I have done wrong, but help me now. Help me out of this if there is any possible way.

JEAN [Softens somewhat]. I don't care to shirk my share of the blame, but do you think any one of my position would ever have dared to raise his eyes to you if you yourself had not invited it? Even now I am astonished--

JULIE. And proud.

JEAN. Why not? Although I must confess that the conquest was too easy to be exciting.

JULIE. Go on, strike me again--

JEAN [Rising]. No, forgive me, rather, for what I said. I do not strike the unarmed, least of all, a woman. But I can't deny that from a certain point of view it gives me satisfaction to know that it is the glitter of brass, not gold, that dazzles us from below, and that the eagle's back is grey like the rest of him. On the other hand, I'm sorry to have to realize that all that I have looked up to is not worth while, and it pains me to see you fallen lower than your cook as it pains me to see autumn blossoms whipped

to pieces by the cold rain and transformed into--dirt!

JULIE. You speak as though you were already my superior.

JEAN. And so I am! For I can make you a countess and you could never make me a count.

JULIE. But I am born of a count, that you can never be.

JEAN. That is true, but I can be the father of counts--if--

JULIE. But you are a thief--that I am not.

JEAN. There are worse things than that, and for that matter when I serve in a house I regard myself as a member of the family, a child of the house as it were. And one doesn't consider it theft if children snoop a berry from full bushes. [With renewed passion]. Miss Julie, you are a glorious woman--too good for such as I. You have been the victim of an infatuation and you want to disguise this fault by fancying that you love me. But you do not--unless perhaps my outer self attracts you. And then your love is no better than mine. But I cannot be satisfied with that, and your real love I can never awaken.

JULIE. Are you sure of that?

JEAN. You mean that we could get along with such an arrangement? There's no doubt about my loving you--you are beautiful, you are elegant--[Goes to her and takes her hand] accomplished, lovable when you wish to be, and the flame that you awaken in man does not die easily. [Puts arm around her.] You are like hot wine with strong spices, and your lips--

[Tries to kiss her. Julie pulls herself away slowly.]

JULIE. Leave me--I'm not to be won this way.

JEAN. How then? Not with caresses and beautiful words? Not by thoughts for the future, to save humiliation? How then?

JULIE. How? I don't know. I don't know! I shrink from you as I would from a rat. But I cannot escape from you.

JEAN. Escape with me.

JULIE. Escape? Yes, we must escape.--But I'm so tired. Give me a glass of wine. [Jean fills a glass with wine, Julie looks at her watch.] We must talk it over first for we have still a little time left.

[She empties the glass and puts it out for more.]

JEAN. Don't drink too much. It will go to your head.

JULIE. What harm will that do?

JEAN. What harm? It's foolish to get intoxicated. But what did you want to say?

JULIE. We must go away, but we must talk first. That is, I must speak, for until now you have done all the talking. You have told me about your life--now I will tell you about mine, then we will know each other through and through before we start on our wandering together.

JEAN. One moment, pardon. Think well whether you won't regret having told your life's secrets.

JULIE. Aren't you my friend?

JEAN. Yes. Sometimes. But don't depend on me.

JULIE. You only say that. And for that matter I have no secrets. You see, my mother was not of noble birth. She was brought up with ideas of equality, woman's freedom and all that. She had very decided opinions against matrimony, and when my father courted her she declared that she would never be his wife--but she did so for all that. I came into the world against my mother's wishes, I discovered, and was brought up like a child of nature by my mother, and taught everything that a boy must know as well; I was to be an example of a woman being as good as a man--I was made to go about in boy's clothes and take care of the horses and harness and saddle and hunt, and all such things; in fact, all over the estate women servants were taught to do men's work, with the result that the property came near being ruined--and so we became the laughing stock of the countryside. At last my father must have awakened from his bewitched condition, for he revolted, and ran things according to his ideas. My mother became ill--what it was I don't know, but she often had cramps and acted queerly--sometimes hiding in the attic or the orchard, and would even be gone all night at times. Then came the big fire which of course you have heard about. The house, the stables--everything was burned, under circumstances that pointed strongly to an incendiary, for the misfortune happened the day after the quarterly insurance was due and the premiums sent in by father were strangely delayed by his messenger so that they arrived too late. [She fills a wine glass and drinks.]

JEAN. Don't drink any more.

JULIE. Oh, what does it matter? My father was utterly at a loss to know where to get money to rebuild with. Then my mother suggested that he try to borrow from a man who had been her friend in her youth--a brick manufacturer here in the neighborhood. My father made the loan, but wasn't allowed to pay any interest, which surprised him. Then the house was rebuilt. [Julie drinks again.] Do you know who burned the house?

JEAN. Her ladyship, your mother?

JULIE. Do you know who the brick manufacturer was?

JEAN. Your mother's lover?

JULIE. Do you know whose money it was?

JEAN. Just a moment, that I don't know.

JULIE. It was my mother's.

JEAN. The Count's--that is to say, unless there was a contract.

JULIE. There was no contract. My mother had some money which she had not wished to have in my father's keeping and therefore, she had entrusted it to her friend's care.

JEAN. Who kept it.

JULIE. Quite right--he held on to it. All this came to my father's knowledge. He couldn't proceed against him, wasn't allowed to pay his wife's friend, and couldn't prove that it was his wife's money. That was my mother's revenge for his taking the reins of the establishment into his own hands. At that time he was ready to shoot himself. Gossip had it that he had tried and failed. Well, he lived it down--and my mother paid full penalty for her misdeed. Those were five terrible years for me, as you can fancy. I sympathized with my father, but I took my mother's part, for I didn't know the true circumstances. Through her I learned to distrust and hate men, and I swore to her never to be a man's slave.

JEAN. But you became engaged to the Lieutenant Governor.

JULIE. Just to make him my slave.

JEAN. But that he didn't care to be.

JULIE. He wanted to be, fast enough, but I grew tired of him.

JEAN. Yes--I noticed that--in the stable-yard!

JULIE. What do you mean?

JEAN. I saw how he broke the engagement.

JULIE. That's a lie. It was I who broke it. Did he say he broke it--the wretch!

JEAN. I don't believe that he was a wretch. You hate men, Miss Julie.

JULIE. Most of them. Sometimes one is weak--

JEAN. You hate me?

JULIE. Excessively. I could see you shot--

JEAN. Like a mad dog?

JULIE. Exactly!

JEAN. But there is nothing here to shoot with. What shall we do then?

JULIE [Rousing herself]. We must get away from here--travel.

JEAN. And torture each other to death?

JULIE. No--to enjoy, a few days, a week--as long as we can. And then to die.

JEAN. Die! How silly. I think it's better to start the hotel.

JULIE [Not heeding him]. By the Lake of Como where the sun is always shining, where the laurel is green at Christmas and the oranges glow.

JEAN. The Lake of Como is it rain hole, I never saw any oranges there except on fruit stands. But it's a good resort, and there are many villas to rent to loving couples. That's a very paying industry. You know why? They take leases for half a year at least, but they usually leave in three weeks.

JULIE [Naively]. Why after three weeks?

JEAN. Why? They quarrel of course, but the rent must be paid all the same. Then you re-let, and so one after another they come and go, for there is plenty of love, although it doesn't last long.

JULIE. Then you don't want to die with me?

JEAN. I don't want to die at all, both because I enjoy living and because I regard suicide as a crime to Him who has given us life.

JULIE. Then you believe in God?

JEAN. Yes. Of course I do, and I go to church every other Sunday-- But I'm tired of all this and I'm going to bed.

JULIE. Do you think I would allow myself to be satisfied with such an ending? Do you know what a man owes to a woman he hits-- --

JEAN [Takes out a silver coin and throws it on the table]. Allow me, I don't want to owe anything to anyone.

JULIE [Pretending not to notice the insult]. Do you know what the law demands?

JEAN. I know that the law demands nothing of a woman who seduces a man.

JULIE [Again not heeding him]. Do you see any way out of it but to travel?--wed--and separate?

JEAN. And if I protest against this misalliance?

JULIE. Misalliance!

JEAN. Yes, for me. For you see I have a finer ancestry than you, for I have no fire-bug in my family.

JULIE. How do you know?

JEAN. You can't prove the contrary. We have no family record except that which the police keep. But your pedigree I have read in a book on the drawing room table. Do you know who the founder of your family was? It was a miller whose wife found favor with the king during the Danish War. Such ancestry I have not.

JULIE. This is my reward for opening my heart to anyone so unworthy, with whom I have talked about my family honor.

JEAN. Dishonor--yes, I said it. I told you not to drink because then one talks too freely and one should never talk.

JULIE. Oh, how I repent all this. If at least you loved me!

JEAN. For the last time--what do you mean? Shall I weep, shall I jump over your riding whip, shall I kiss you, lure you to Lake Como for three weeks, and then--what do you want anyway? This is getting tiresome. But that's the way it always is when you get mixed up in women's affairs. Miss Julie, I see that you are unhappy, I know that you suffer, but I can't understand you. Among my kind there is no nonsense of this sort; we love as we play when work gives us time. We haven't the whole day and night for it like you.

JULIE. You must be good to me and speak to me as though I were a human being.

JEAN. Be one yourself. You spit on me and expect me to stand it.

JULIE. Help me, help me. Only tell me what to do--show me a way out of this!

JEAN. In heaven's name, if I only knew myself.

JULIE. I have been raving, I have been mad, but is there no means of deliverance?

JEAN. Stay here at home and say nothing. No one knows.

JULIE. Impossible. These people know it, and Kristin.

JEAN. They don't know it and could never suspect such a thing.

JULIE [Hesitating]. But--it might happen again.

JEAN. That is true.

JULIE. And the consequences?

JEAN [Frightened]. Consequences--where were my wits not to have thought of that! There is only one thing to do. Get away from here immediately. I can't go with you or they will suspect. You must go alone--away from here--anywhere.

JULIE. Alone? Where? I cannot.

JEAN. You must--and before the Count returns. If you stay, we know how it will be. If one has taken a false step it's likely to happen again as the harm has already been done, and one grows more and

more daring until at last all is discovered. Write the Count afterward and confess all--except that it was I. That he could never guess, and I don't think he'll be so anxious to know who it was, anyway.

JULIE. I will go if you'll go with me.

JEAN. Are you raving again? Miss Julie running away with her coachman? All the papers would be full of it and that the Count could never live through.

JULIE. I can't go--I can't stay. Help me, I'm so tired--so weary. Command me, set me in motion--I can't think any more,--can't act--

JEAN. See now, what creatures you aristocrats are! Why do you bristle up and stick up your noses as though you were the lords of creation. Very well--I will command you! Go up and dress yourself and see to it that you have travelling money and then come down. [She hesitates.] Go immediately.

[She still hesitates. He takes her hand and leads her to door.]

JULIE. Speak gently to me, Jean.

JEAN. A command always sounds harsh. Feel it yourself now.

[Exit Julie.]

[Jean draws a sigh of relief, seats himself by the table, takes out a notebook and pencil and counts aloud now and then until, Kristin comes in, dressed for church.]

KRISTIN. My heavens, how it looks here. What's been going on?

JEAN. Oh, Miss Julie dragged in the people. Have you been sleeping so soundly that you didn't hear anything?

KRISTIN. I've slept like a log.

JEAN. And already dressed for church!

KRISTIN. Ye-es, [Sleepily] didn't you promise to go to early service with me?

JEAN. Yes, quite so, and there you have my stock and front. All right.

[He seats himself. Kristin putting on his stock.]

JEAN [Sleepily]. What is the text today?

KRISTIN. St. John's Day! It is of course about the beheading of John the Baptist.

JEAN. I'm afraid it will be terribly long drawn out--that. Hey, you're choking me. I'm so sleepy, so sleepy.

KRISTIN. What have you been doing up all night? You are actually

green in the face.

JEAN. I have been sitting here talking to Miss Julie.

KRISTIN. Oh you don't know your place.

[Pause.]

JEAN. Listen, Kristin.

KRISTIN. Well?

JEAN. It's queer about her when you think it over.

KRISTIN. What is queer?

JEAN. The whole thing.

[Pause. Kristin looks at half empty glasses on table.]

KRISTIN. Have you been drinking together, too?

JEAN. Yes!

KRISTIN. For shame. Look me in the eye.

JEAN. Yes.

KRISTIN. Is it possible? Is it possible?

JEAN [After reflecting]. Yes, it is.

KRISTIN. Ugh! That I would never have believed. For shame, for shame!

JEAN. You are not jealous of her?

KRISTIN. No, not of her. But if it had been Clara or Sophie--then I would have scratched your eyes out. So that is what has happened--how I can't understand! No, that wasn't very nice!

JEAN. Are you mad at her?

KRISTIN. No, but with you. That was bad of you, very bad. Poor girl. Do you know what--I don't want to be here in this house any longer where one cannot respect one's betters.

JEAN. Why should one respect them?

KRISTIN. Yes, you can say that, you are so smart. But I don't want to serve people who behave so. It reflects on oneself, I think.

JEAN. Yes, but it's a comfort that they're not a bit better than we.

KRISTIN. No, I don't, think so, for if they are not better there's no use in our trying to better ourselves in this world. And to think of the Count! Think of him who has had so much sorrow all his

days? No, I don't want to stay in this house any longer! And to think of it being with such as you! If it had been the Lieutenant--

JEAN. What's that?

KRISTIN. Yes! He was good enough, to be sure, but there's a difference between people just the same. No, this I can never forget. Miss Julie who was always so proud and indifferent to men! One never would believe that she would give herself--and to one like you! She who was ready to have Diana shot because she would run after the gatekeeper's mongrels. Yes, I say it--and here I won't stay any longer and on the twenty-fourth of October I go my way.

JEAN. And then?

KRISTIN. Well, as we've come to talk about it, it's high time you looked around for something else, since we're going to get married.

JEAN. Well, what'll I look for? A married man couldn't get a place like this.

KRISTIN. No, of course not. But you could take a gatekeeper's job or look for it watchman's place in some factory. The government's plums are few, but they are sure. And then the wife and children get a pension--

JEAN [With a grimace]. That's all very fine--all that, but it's not exactly in my line to think about dying for my wife and children just now. I must confess that I have slightly different aspirations.

KRISTIN. Aspirations? Aspirations--anyway you have obligations. Think of those, you.

JEAN. Don't irritate me with talk about my obligations. I know my own business. [He listens.] We'll have plenty of time for all this some other day. Go and get ready and we'll be off to church.

KRISTIN [Listening]. Who's that walking upstairs?

JEAN. I don't know--unless it's Clara.

KRISTIN [Starting to go]. It could never be the Count who has come home without anyone hearing him?

JEAN [Frightened]. The Count! I can't believe that. He would have rung the bell.

KRISTIN. God help us! Never have I been mixed up in anything like this!

[Exit Kristin. The sun has risen and lights up the scene. Presently the sunshine comes in through windows at an angle. Jean goes to door and motions. Enter Julie, dressed for travelling, carrying a small bird cage covered with a cloth, which she places on a chair.]

JULIE. I am ready!

JEAN. Hush, Kristin is stirring!

[Julie frightened and nervous throughout following scene.]

JULIE. Does she suspect anything?

JEAN. She knows nothing. But, good heavens, how you look!

JULIE. Why?

JEAN. You are pale as a ghost.

JULIE [Sighs]. Am I? Oh, the sun is rising, the sun!

JEAN. And now the troll's spell is broken.

JULIE. The trolls have indeed been at work this night. But, Jean, listen--come with me, I have money enough.

JEAN. Plenty?

JULIE. Enough to start with. Go with me for I can't go alone--today, midsummer day. Think of the stuffy train, packed in with the crowds of people staring at one; the long stops at the stations when one would be speeding away. No, I cannot, I cannot! And then the memories, childhood's memories of midsummer day--the church decorated with birch branches and syringa blossoms; the festive dinner table with relations and friends, afternoon in the park, music, dancing, flowers and games--oh, one may fly, fly, but anguish and remorse follow in the pack wagon.

JEAN. I'll go with you--if we leave instantly--before it's too late.

JULIE. Go and dress then. [She takes up bird cage.]

JEAN. But no baggage! That would betray us.

JULIE. Nothing but what we can take in the coupé.

[Jean has picked up his hat.]

JEAN. What have you there?

JULIE. It's only my canary. I cannot, will not, leave it behind.

JEAN. So we are to lug a bird cage with us. Are you crazy? Let go of it.

JULIE. It is all I take from home. The only living creature that cares for me. Don't be hard--let me take it with me.

JEAN. Let go the cage and don't talk so loud. Kristin will hear us.

JULIE. No, I will not leave it to strange hands. I would rather see it dead.

JEAN. Give me the creature. I'll fix it.

JULIE. Yes, but don't hurt it. Don't--no, I cannot.

JEAN. Let go. I can.

JULIE [Takes the canary from cage]. Oh, my little siren. Must your mistress part with you?

JEAN. Be so good as not to make a scene. Your welfare, your life, is at stake. So--quickly. [Snatches bird from her and goes to chopping block and takes up meat chopper]. You should have learned how to chop off a chicken's head instead of shooting with a revolver. [He chops off the bird's head]. Then you wouldn't swoon at a drop of blood.

JULIE [Shrieks]. Kill me, too. Kill me! You who can butcher an innocent bird without a tremble. Oh, how I shrink from you. I curse the moment I first saw you. I curse the moment I was conceived in my mother's womb.

JEAN. Come now! What good is your cursing, let's be off.

JULIE [Looks toward chopping block as though obsessed by thought of the slain bird]. No, I cannot. I must see-- --hush, a carriage is passing. Don't you think I can stand the sight of blood? You think I am weak. Oh, I should like to see your blood flowing--to see your brain on the chopping block, all your sex swimming in a sea of blood. I believe I could drink out of your skull, bathe my feet in your breast and eat your heart cooked whole. You think I am weak; you believe that I love you because my life has mingled with yours; you think that I would carry your offspring under my heart, and nourish it with my blood--give birth to your child and take your name! Hear, you, what are you called, what is your family name? But I'm sure you have none. I should be "Mrs. Gate-Keeper," perhaps, or "Madame Dumpheap." You dog with my collar on, you lackey with my father's hallmark on your buttons. I play rival to my cook--oh--oh--oh! You believe that I am cowardly and want to run away. No, now I shall stay. The thunder may roll. My father will return--and find his desk broken into--his money gone! Then he will ring--that bell. A scuffle with his servant--then sends for the police--and then I tell all--everything! Oh, it will be beautiful to have it all over with--if only that were the end! And my father--he'll have a shock and die, and then that will be the end. Then they will place his swords across the coffin--and the Count's line is extinct. The serf's line will continue in an orphanage, win honors in the gutter and end in prison.

JEAN. Now it is the king's blood talking. Splendid, Miss Julie! Only keep the miller in his sack.

[Enter Kristin with prayer-book in hand.]

JULIE [Hastening to Kristin and falls in her arms as though seeking protection]. Help me, Kristin, help me against this man.

KRISTIN [Cold and unmoved]. What kind of performance is this for a holy day morning? What does this mean--this noise and fuss?

JULIE. Kristin, you are a woman,--and my friend. Beware of this wretch.

JEAN [A little embarrassed and surprised]. While the ladies are arguing I'll go and shave myself.

[Jean goes, R.]

JULIE. You must understand me--you must listen to me.

KRISTIN. No--I can't understand all this bosh. Where may you be going in your traveling dress?--and he had his hat on! Hey?

JULIE. Listen to me, Kristin, listen to me and I'll tell you everything.

KRISTIN. I don't want to know anything--

JULIE. You must listen to me--

KRISTIN. What about? Is it that foolishness with Jean? That doesn't concern me at all. That I won't be mixed up with, but if you're trying to lure him to run away with you then we must put a stop to it.

JULIE [Nervously]. Try to be calm now Kristin, and listen to me. I can't stay here and Jean can't stay here. That being true, we must leave-- --Kristin.

KRISTIN. Hm, hm!

JULIE [Brightening up]. But I have an idea--what if we three should go--away--to foreign parts. To Switzerland and set up a hotel together--I have money you see--and Jean and I would back the whole thing, you could run the kitchen. Won't that be fine? Say yes, now--and come with us--there everything would be arranged--say yes! [Throws her arms around Kristin and coaxes her].

KRISTIN [Cold and reflecting]. Hm--hm!

JULIE [Presto tempo]. You leave never been out and traveled, Kristin. You shall look about you in the world. You can't believe how pleasant traveling on a train is--new faces continually, new countries--and we'll go to Hamburg--and passing through we'll see the zoological gardens--that you will like--then we'll go to the theatre and hear the opera--and when we reach Munich there will be the museum--there are Rubins and Raphaels and all the big painters that you know--you have heard of Munich--where King Ludwig lived--the King, you know, who went mad. Then we'll see his palace--a palace like those in the Sagas--and from there it isn't far to Switzerland--and the Alps, the Alps mind you with snow in mid-summer. And there oranges grow and laurel--green all the year round if--[Jean is seen in the doorway R. stropping his razor on the strop which he holds between his teeth and left hand. He listens and nods his head favorably now and then. Julie continues, tempo prestissimo] And there we'll take a hotel and I'll sit taking the cash while Jean greets the guests--goes out and markets writes letters--that will be life, you may believe--then the train

whistles--then the omnibus comes--then a bell rings upstairs, then in the restaurant--and then I make out the bills--and I can salt them--you can't think how people tremble when they receive their bill--and you--you can sit like a lady--of course you won't have to stand over the stove--you can dress finely and neatly when you show yourself to the people--and you with your appearance--Oh, I'm not flattering, you can catch a husband some fine day--a rich Englishman perhaps--they are so easy to--[Slowing up] to catch-- --Then we'll be rich--and then we'll build a villa by Lake Como--to be sure it rains sometimes--but [becoming languid] the sun must shine too sometimes-- -- --although it seems dark-- -- --and if not--we can at least travel homeward--and come back--here--or some other place.

KRISTIN. Listen now. Does Miss Julie believe in all this?

[Julie going to pieces.]

JULIE. Do I believe in it?

KRISTIN. Yes.

JULIE [Tired]. I don't know. I don't believe in anything any more. [Sinks down on bench, and takes head in her hand on table.] In nothing--nothing!

KRISTIN [Turns to R. and looks toward Jean]. So--you intended to run away?

JEAN [Rather shamefaced comes forward and puts razor on table]. Run away? That's putting it rather strong. You heard Miss Julie's project, I think it might be carried out.

KRISTIN. Now listen to that! Was it meant that I should be her cook--

JEAN [Sharply]. Be so good as to use proper language when you speak of your mistress.

KRISTIN. Mistress?

JEAN. Yes.

KRISTIN. No--hear! Listen to him!

JEAN. Yes, you listen--you need to, and talk less. Miss Julie is your mistress and for the same reason that you do not respect her now you should not respect yourself.

KRISTIN. I have always had so much respect for myself--

JEAN. That you never had any left for others!

KRISTIN. I have never lowered my position. Let any one say, if they can, that the Count's cook has had anything to do with the riding master or the swineherd. Let them come and say it!

JEAN. Yes, you happened to get a fine fellow. That was your good luck.

KRISTIN. Yes, a fine fellow--who sells the Count's oats from his stable.

JEAN. Is it for you to say anything--you who get a commission on all the groceries and a bribe from the butcher?

KRISTIN. What's that?

JEAN. And you can't have respect for your master and mistress any longer--you, you!

KRISTIN [Glad to change the subject]. Are you coming to church with me? You need a good sermon for your actions.

JEAN. No, I'm not going to church today. You can go alone--and confess your doings.

KRISTIN. Yes, that I shall do, and I shall return with so much forgiveness that there will be enough for you too. The Savior suffered and died on the cross for all our sins, and when we go to Him in faith and a repentant spirit he takes our sins on Himself.

JULIE. Do you believe that, Kristin?

KRISTIN. That is my life's belief, as true as I stand here. And that was my childhood's belief that I have kept since my youth, Miss Julie. And where sin overflows, there mercy overflows also.

JULIE. Oh, if I only had your faith. Oh, if--

KRISTIN. Yes, but you see that is not given without God's particular grace, and that is not allotted to all, that!

JULIE. Who are the chosen?

KRISTIN. That is the great secret of the Kingdom of Grace, and the Lord has no respect for persons. But there the last shall be first.

JULIE. But then has he respect for the last--the lowliest person?

KRISTIN [Continuing]. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. That's the way it is, Miss Julie. However--now I am going--alone. And on any way I shall stop in and tell the stable boy not to let any horses go out in case any one wants to get away before the Count comes home. Good bye.

[Exit Kristin.]

JEAN. Such a devil. And all this on account of your confounded canary!

JULIE [Tired]. Oh, don't speak of the canary--do you see any way out--any end to this?

JEAN [Thinking]. No.

JULIE. What would you do in my place?

JEAN. In your place--wait. As a noble lady, as a woman--fallen--I don't know. Yes, now I know.

JULIE [She takes up razor from table and makes gestures saying] This?

JEAN. Yes. But I should not do it, mark you, for there is a difference between us.

JULIE. Because you are a man and I am a woman? What other difference is there?

JEAN. That very difference--of man and woman.

JULIE [Razor in hand]. I want to do it--but I can't. My father couldn't either that time when he should have done it.

JEAN. No, he was right, not to do it--he had to avenge himself first.

JULIE. And now my mother revenges herself again through me.

JEAN. Haven't you loved your father, Miss Julie?

JULIE. Yes, deeply. But I have probably hated him too, I must have--without being aware of it. And it is due to my father's training that I have learned to scorn my own sex. Between them both they have made me half man, half woman. Whose is the fault for what has happened--my father's? My mother's? My own? I haven't anything of my own. I haven't a thought which was not nay father's--not a passion that wasn't my mother's. And last of all from my betrothed the idea that all people are equal. For that I now call him a wretch. How can it be my own fault then? Throw the burden on Jesus as Kristin did? No, I am too proud, too intelligent, thanks to my father's teaching.-- --And that a rich man cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven--that is a lie, and Kristin, who has money in the savings bank--she surely cannot enter there. Whose is the fault? What does it concern us whose fault it is? It is I who must bear the burden and the consequences.

JEAN. Yes, but-- --

[Two sharp rings on bell are heard. Julie starts to her feet. Jean changes his coat.]

JEAN. The Count--has returned. Think if Kristin has-- [Goes up to speaking tube and listens.]

JULIE. Now he has seen the desk!

JEAN [Speaking in the tube]. It is Jean, Excellency. [Listens]. Yes, Excellency. [Listens] .Yes, Excellency,--right away--immediately, Excellency. Yes--in half an hour.

JULIE [In great agitation]. What did he say? In Heaven's name, what did he say?

JEAN. He wants his boots and coffee in a half hour.

JULIE. In half an hour then. Oh, I'm so tired--I'm incapable of feeling, not able to be sorry, not able to go, not able to stay, not able to live--not able to die. Help me now. Command me--I will obey like a dog. Do me this last service save my honor. Save his name. You know what I have the will to do--but cannot do. You will it and command me to execute your will.

JEAN. I don't know why--but now I can't either.--I don't understand myself. It is absolutely as though this coat does it--but I can't command you now. And since the Count spoke to me-- --I can't account for it--but oh, it is that damned servant in my back--I believe if the Count came in here now and told me to cut my throat I would do it on the spot.

JULIE. Make believe you are he--and I you. You could act so well a little while ago when you knelt at my feet. Then you were a nobleman--or haven't you ever been at the theatre and seen the hypnotist--[Jean nods] He says to his subject "Take the broom," and he takes it; he says, "Sweep," and he sweeps.

JEAN. Then the subject must be asleep!

JULIE [Ecstatically]. I sleep already. The whole room is like smoke before me--and you are like a tall black stove, like a man clad in black clothes with a high hat; and your eyes gleam like the hot coals when the fire is dying; and your face a white spot like fallen ashes. [The sunshine is coming in through the windows and falls on Jean. Julie rubs her hands as though warming them before a fire]. It is so warm and good--and so bright and quiet!

JEAN [Takes razor and puts it in her hand]. There is the broom, go now while it's bright--out to the hay loft--and--[He whispers in her ear.]

JULIE [Rousing herself]. Thanks. And now I go to rest. But tell me this--the foremost may receive the gift of Grace? Say it, even if you don't believe it.

JEAN. The foremost? No, I can't say that. But wait, Miss Julie--you are no longer among the foremost since you are of the lowliest.

JULIE. That's true, I am the lowliest--the lowliest of the lowly. Oh, now I can't go. Tell me once more that I must go.

JEAN. No, now I cannot either--I cannot.

JULIE. And the first shall be last-- -- --

JEAN. Don't think. You take my strength from me, too, so that I become cowardly.--What-- --I thought I heard the bell!-- -- No! To be afraid of the sound of is bell! But it's not the bell--it's someone behind the bell, the hand that sets the lull in motion--and something else that sets the land in motion. But stop your cars, stop your ears. Then he will only ring louder and keep on ringing until it's answered--and then it is too late! Then come the police

and then--[Two loud rings on bell are heard, Jean falls in a heap for a moment, but straightens up immediately.] It is horrible! But there is no other way. Go!

[Countess Julie goes out resolutely.]

CURTAIN.