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LA PECADORA

(DANIELA)

—

ANGEL GUIMERÁ

PUBLICATIONS OF
THE HISPANIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA
No. 107

LA PECADORA

(DANIELA)

A Play in Three Acts

BY

ANGEL GUIMERÁ

TRANSLATED BY

WALLACE GILLPATRICK



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
1916

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“DANIELA”

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

GUIMERÁ wrote "La Pecedora," as he did several of his finest plays, for Spain's distinguished leading actress, María Guerrero. The play was first produced at the Teatro Arbeu in Mexico City, the spring of 1902, with Sra. Guerrero as *Daniela*, and Fernando Diaz de Mendoza, her husband and leading man, as *Ramón*. It was well received by the critics and playgoers of the Mexican capital, who constitute a highly discriminating audience.

It was the privilege of the translator to be present on the opening night, with Mr. Guido Marburg, and with him to congratulate the star and Sr. Diaz de Mendoza on their success in the new Guimerá play.

Guimerá's permission was sought and obtained for an English translation; and thus "La Pecedora," like "Marta of the Lowlands" and "María Rosa," came to the American theatre by way of Mexico City.

W. G.



LA PECADORA
(DANIELA)

PERSONAGES

DANIELA.

MONSA, *a school-mistress.*

ANTONIA, *wife of Ramón.*

TOMASA, *a neighbor.*

PONA, *a neighbor.*

ANA, *child of Antonia and Ramón.*

HUGUETTE, *French vaudeville actress.*

JEANNE, *Daniela's French maid.*

RAMÓN, *husband of Antonia.*

JOAQUIN, *a physician.*

ANDRÉS, *village cobbler.*

RICHARD, *French comedian.*

MAX, *French singer.*

ALBERT, *French servant.*

VALERIO, *farm laborer.*

MIGUEL, *servant to Ramón.*

Action takes place in a small pueblo in Cataluña, Spain.

Time, present.

ACT I

SCENE: *Living-room in the house of well-to-do farmer, in small town of Cataluña. Door right. Two doors left. At back of stage, right, the inner door of entrance hall or court. At back of stage, left, the wall projects, and there is another door, with step leading up to it.*

TIME: *Morning.*

[*Discovered, RAMÓN, VALERIO and MIGUEL.*]

RAMÓN [*Gruffly*]

I might have known it! You 've done nothing. Did n't I tell you all must be ready by noon?

VALERIO

It will be, master. We 've been at work since long before daybreak.

RAMÓN

And you 've done nothing until to-day! Loafers! You most of all! [*Movement of protest from VALERIO*] What have you been doing all this time?

VALERIO

We 've been weedin'—and we put a brush fence around the tomatoes—and in the lower pasture . . .

RAMÓN

Did n't I tell you to clean the corral? What if the sheep had come last night?

VALERIO

They did n't come . . .

RAMÓN

But if they had come . . .

VALERIO

They have n't come yet.

RAMÓN

They are coming.

VALERIO

And the corral 's bein' cleaned.

RAMÓN

It 's being cleaned! Idiot! I don't know why I don't break your skull! [*To MIGUEL*] Come—move—help them!

MIGUEL

I 'm goin', master, but . . .

[*Looks at door, left*]

RAMÓN [*To VALERIO*]

Who has been here lately?

VALERIO

No one—that is—yes—the doctor. But there is nobody sick. We 're all well, thank God!

RAMÓN [*To MIGUEL*]

Well, what are you waiting for?

MIGUEL

I have n't had any breakfast yet.

RAMÓN

Nor I. When there is work to do, that comes first.

MIGUEL

Well, this workin' on an empty stomach . . .

[*Goes out, muttering*]

RAMÓN [*Chiding him*]

That will do . . .

ANA

[*She comes running from door, right*]

Father—Father!

RAMÓN

[*Allowing her to embrace him and still talking to VALERIO*]

Has Rivera been here for the wine?

VALERIO

Yes, master. Rivera came and took the wine.

RAMÓN

Why don't you say so?

VALERIO

Well, Rivera came, and he took the wine . . .

ANA [*Calling*]

Mother! [*Runs to door, right*] Mother—Father has come!

RAMÓN

Who saw it measured?

[*ANTONIA enters door, right, and approaches RAMÓN*]

ANA

[*Joyfully embracing RAMÓN again*]

Father—Father—

VALERIO

I did, master—

ANTONIA

Ramón, have you had a good journey?

RAMÓN

Yes. [*To VALERIO*] How many casks? Who kept count?

ANTONIA

[*Brushing him with her hand*]

Mercy! How dusty you are!

VALERIO

Ana kept count.

RAMÓN

Are you crazy? To trust a child! That is the way everything goes in this house when I am not here.

ANTONIA

Don't fly in a rage! I was here—

ANA [*Aggrieved*]

Well, I did keep count—for every measure—I made a mark on the paper—so—

ANTONIA [*Consoling her*]

So you did.

RAMÓN [*To ANTONIA*]

I've got a drove of sheep coming that will do you good to look at 'em . . .

ANTONIA

Oh, I hope they will turn out better than they did last year.

RAMÓN

I had my eyes open this time. I bought three hundred and forty-seven ewes.

ANTONIA

Come, change your clothes . . .

RAMÓN [*Absently*]

And the boy?

ANTONIA

He 's asleep. He cried so in the night . . .

RAMÓN

Give me the account of the wine.

ANTONIA

Valerio, give your master the account of the wine.

[*VALERIO makes signs he has n't the account*]

ANA

What did you bring me, Father?

RAMÓN [*To VALERIO*]

Well, where is the account? You see, I cannot be gone a day! You 're all alike! And then you say I 've a bad temper!

[*ANTONIA and VALERIO are opening drawers and boxes and searching for the paper. ANA is playing with a battered doll.*]

ANTONIA

Don't get angry, Ramón! We shall find it.

RAMÓN

Oh, you would make any one angry.

VALERIO

Master, it 's because it 's put away so safe, we don't find it. It will come to light! It will come to light!

RAMÓN

This fool makes my blood boil with his talk. [*In a rage*] Well, do you find it or not?

ANTONIA

Don't scream so! [*To ANA*] Daughter, do you remember where we put the paper?

ANA

What paper?

ANTONIA

Why, the paper with the account of the wine.

ANA

Here it is. [*Takes rumpled paper from her bosom*]

ANTONIA

Thank Heaven!

RAMÓN

Bring it here.

VALERIO

I remember now, I gave it to her myself, so it would n't be lost.

RAMÓN

Go to your work.

[VALERIO *sheepishly goes out door, up right*]

ANTONIA

[RAMÓN *examines account*] What a temper your father has!

ANA

Has n't he brought me anything, Mother? I guess he 's brought me something.

[ANTONIA *shrugs her shoulders*]

MONSA

[*Entering door at back*]

Good morning, Ramón! When did he come?

ANTONIA

A moment ago. [*To RAMÓN*] Ramón, there is something we must speak of at once.

RAMÓN

[*Scanning the account*]

This first. Twenty-seven casks! What? Nonsense! It can't be right! How can it be? You trust a child!

ANTONIA

I tell you it is right.

ANA

I put down just what they told me. Did n't I, Mother?

ANTONIA

Yes, you did.

[RAMÓN *still scanning the account*]

MONSA

Yes, dear, and you are always careful. [*To others*]
You know she is my little monitor in school.

RAMÓN

Pshaw! What do you know about it? Gives herself airs because she 's the school-mistress! And this one will be just like her.

ANTONIA

Ramón, you shall not treat Monsa so . . . and she is always so good to us. If one of the children is ill, she leaves everything . . .

MONSA

Never mind, Antonia. I don't care.

ANTONIA

And so harsh with this poor child who adores her father!

RAMÓN

You think I 've nothing to do but make pets of you! [*To himself*] Four days away—and everything upside down!

MONSA [*To ANTONIA*]

Let him alone.

[*They talk together*]

RAMÓN

They take no care of the farm . . . they can't even keep an account . . .

ANTONIA [*To MONSA*]

Such a disposition!

MONSA

Yes—but he is so good!

RAMÓN .

[*Calls gruffly, but in lower tone*]

Ana—Ana . . .

ANA [*Running to him*]

Father . . .

RAMÓN

[*He kisses her and mutters to himself*]

The women . . . the women . . . good for nothing . . . nothing . . .

[*Rises and goes out door at back, still muttering to himself*]

ANTONIA

[*Has entered door, right, and returned*]

He is still asleep . . .

MONSA

The angel . . .

ANTONIA

He 'll not be like his father. Ramón is so harsh with every one!

MONSA

But he loves you all, Antonia!

ANTONIA

True! He thinks too much of his business.

TOMASA

[*Entering, expectant*]

Antonia! What is this about Daniela?

MONSA

Poor Daniela!

ANTONIA

Who told you?

TOMASA

I heard Valerio telling Andrés.

ANTONIA

Andrés is a busybody, too.

TOMASA

Why do you say "too"?

ANTONIA [*To MONSA*]

You see what a chatterer Valerio is!

PONA [*Entering*]

Oh, we 're so busy at our house!

TOMASA

You should see us! We 're whitewashing!

PONA

But I must hear about Daniela.

ANTONIA [*Evasively*]

Yes, it seems she is still living. It is so long since we have known anything about her!

PONA

Valerio says you have heard from her.

ANDRÉS

[*Entering with an alpargata in his hand, on which he is stitching*]

What does Ramón say to this about Daniela?

ANTONIA

I have told him nothing yet. We don't know a great deal . . .

MONSA [*Sadly*]

We were such friends!

TOMASA

[*In an undertone, looking from door*]

I 'm watching for Ramón! He always says we 're meddling! [*To ANTONIA*] Well?

ANTONIA

I 'll tell you all we have heard. Last evening the doctor was here. It seems he has had a letter from a French physician, inquiring if the village is healthy, and saying he has a patient, who came from here, and who will return—perhaps.

ANDRÉS

Is that all?

ANTONIA

That is all.

ANDRÉS

Oh—well—how do we know it is Daniela?

PONA

It 's Daniela! Pts! [*Maliciously*] They don't want us to know.

[*Laughs*]

ANTONIA

Yes—yes— [*Impatiently*] the letter says it is Daniela.

ANDRÉS

That 's another matter.

TOMASA

I supposed she was dead and buried long ago.

PONA

[*Holding up her finger at TOMASA*]

Evil weeds!

TOMASA

That 's what my man says! Well—I 'm going!
We 're whitewashing!

ANTONIA

You knew her . . . as I don't belong here . . . she
was your friend, perhaps!

TOMASA [*Indignantly*]

Friend! No!

PONA

We knew her. She was older than we.

MONSA [*Ingenuously*]

Pona . . . no . . . you are older than Daniela.

TOMASA

How are we older? You are, of course.

MONSA [*Smiling*]

Oh, have it as you like.

ANTONIA

Ramón says that when she ran away she was four-
teen.

ANDRÉS

My wife says fourteen or fifteen.

TOMASA

Well . . . I must be going. She is about thirty-five.

PONA

She 's more.

MONSA

She is thirty.

PONA

With the life she has led . . . she must look a hundred!

ANDRÉS

Pshaw! Who knows? Why, in Paris—they—they patch up everything. They make women look like new.

ANTONIA

Ana, go to your brother. I thought I heard him.

[ANA leaves her doll and enters door, right; the cradle is heard, and ANA'S voice singing a lullaby]

TOMASA [To ANTONIA]

And if she comes here, what will you do?

ANTONIA

Ramón must decide that.

TOMASA

She 's his own cousin . . . in this house, she was the same as a daughter.

PONA

I shall not look at her. Shameless thing!

ANTONIA

But will she come? It seems impossible!

ANDRÉS [*Sententiously*]

Starving, probably!

TOMASA

I'd like to see her enter my house!

ANDRÉS

My wife will have nothing to say to her.

ANTONIA

I—well—I shall do as Ramón wishes.

TOMASA

And you, Monsa, what will you do?

MONSA *

If Daniela comes here, and no one will receive her,
I shall take her to my house.

ANDRÉS

You! A single woman!

MONSA

What of that?

PONA

To your house! And how would you take care of
her, pray? Who would pay for the medicines?

MONSA

I know I have nothing, but every one would help
me: the children's mothers . . .

TOMASA [*Interrupting*]

We help you support that woman?

PONA

I 'd sooner throw victuals to the dogs.

MONSA

Pona! Don't say that!

ANDRÉS

Do you know what would happen? They would take their children away from school if you had that bad woman in your house.

MONSA

But perhaps she is not bad—now! Perhaps she is dying.

ANTONIA

Yes, Andrés . . . she may be very different now.

[*ANDRÉS laughs*]

TOMASA

[*Mockingly to MONSA*]

Not bad . . . now! There! I 'm going! We 're whitewashing.

PONA

I suppose no one cares for her any longer.

MONSA

She shall never go hungry—there!

[*Others laugh save ANTONIA*]

ANTONIA

Why do you laugh at Monsa?

[*They go on laughing*]

MONSA [*Defiantly*]

I will go hungry for her if need be!

TOMASA

She was always like that! [*To MONSA*] That 's why you 're not married, but live alone, like the owls.

[*MONSA is weeping*]

PONA

[*Pretending to weep and mocking MONSA*]

Too-who! Too-who!

[*ANDRÉS laughs violently*]

MONSA [*Sobbing*]

I know . . . I 'm not as clever as you . . .

ANTONIA

Don't mind them, Monsa!

MONSA [*Still sobbing*]

I can't help it! I have done the best I could! . . .
And . . .

[*Goes on weeping*]

TOMASA [*Resignedly*]

She always takes everything so to heart!

ANDRÉS

That 's what my wife says.

PONA

As though we had no hearts!

[*Enter DON JOAQUIN, the physician, and M. ALBERT*]

JOAQUIN

Good morning!

ANTONIA

Good morning, Doctor!

JOAQUIN

What is the matter with Monsa? What has happened, child?

MONSA

Nothing . . . Doctor!

JOAQUIN [*To the others*]

Be careful what you say to Monsa! She is worth more than all of you put together— [*To ANDRÉS*] and your wife in the bargain.

ANDRÉS [*Bowing awkwardly*]

And my wife's husband!

JOAQUIN [*Brusquely*]

Oh, you . . . you are nothing! [*Caresses MONSA*]
My little nurse! What are these people thinking of?

MONSA [*Abashed*]

I 'm going, Doctor . . .

[*As she goes out, ANDRÉS, PONA, TOMASA surround her, gesticulating and apologizing, ANDRÉS being most demonstrative. MONSA signifies that she is not angry, and goes out drying her eyes. During this by-play, the dialogue of the others has continued as follows*]

JOAQUIN

Good-bye, Monsa! Good-bye! [*To ANTONIA*] Ramón has returned.

ANTONIA

Yes, this morning.

JOAQUIN

I must see him at once.

ANTONIA [*Calling*]

Ana! [*To JOAQUIN*] Will you and the gentleman take some refreshment?

[*JOAQUIN declines*]

ANA

[*Coming from room on right*]

Mother?

ANTONIA

Tell your father to come at once. The doctor is here and another gentleman.

JOAQUIN

And to hurry . . . for I have many calls to make.

[ANTONIA offers them chairs which they decline. The other people are still lingering about the door]

TOMASA [*To ANDRÉS*]

You 'll see! [*To JOAQUIN*] Doctor! [JOAQUIN does not reply] Doctor!

JOAQUIN [*Explosive tone*]

Well . . . what 's the matter?

TOMASA [*Taken aback*]

Nothing . . . nothing 's the matter!

PONA [*Insinuatingly*]

You see . . . we knew Daniela so well . . . we want to hear about . . .

JOAQUIN

Ah . . . yes! Well, I know nothing! Absolutely nothing!

[*Turns his back and lights a cigarette*]

ALBERT [*To the women*]

Ah . . . you know ze Mademoiselle Daniela?

PONA

Yes, sir—we know her!

TOMASA

And do you know her, too?

ALBERT

Oh—perfectly well!

[ANDRÉS and the women begin plying him with questions. Meantime RAMÓN'S gruff tones are heard without, berating someone]

PONA

Where is she living now?

ANDRÉS [*Cordially*]

We want to know all about her . . .

[*Stops as RAMÓN enters*]

RAMÓN

[*Entering and seeing the doctor*]

Don Joaquin!

JOAQUIN [*Bluff, yet friendly*]

Hello, Ramón! [*To ANTONIA*] Send them away!

[*ANTONIA takes leave of the women and ANDRÉS, in deprecatory manner yet firmly, and they go out, she seeing them as far as the door. RAMÓN looks inquiringly from JOAQUIN to ANTONIA*]

RAMÓN

Well?

JOAQUIN

I want a word with you, Ramón. [*To ALBERT*] We may as well be brief.

ALBERT [*Shrugging*]

As you wish.

JOAQUIN

This gentleman arrived yesterday from Paris. He brings a message from a cousin of yours.

RAMÓN

[Instantly moved but controlling his excitement]

You . . . you come from Daniela?

ALBERT

Yes, sir! The physician of the Mademoiselle Daniela write a letter to Monsieur ze doctor—but he have not reply.

[Looks amazed; much gesture]

JOAQUIN *[Justifying himself]*

I did not suppose the matter was imperative.

RAMÓN

A letter . . . from a physician? But I know nothing!

[Looks from one to the other, amazed]

ANTONIA

I tried to tell you about it when you came this morning . . . but you . . .

JOAQUIN

I will explain. I have received a letter from a colleague in Paris, famous in his line, informing me that a cousin of yours, who has been at the point of death,

is mending; and that she may possibly decide to come here for a change of air. [*To ALBERT*] He said "possibly."

ALBERT [*With effusion*]

Oh, oui! But ze Mademoiselle Daniela . . . when she have ze inspiration . . . you may consider she have do it.

RAMÓN [*To JOAQUIN*]

Go on! Go on!

JOAQUIN

Her physician requested information regarding the climate and the sanitary condition of the town. I think of writing him . . .

[*RAMÓN becomes very restive*]

ALBERT [*Earnestly*]

You have not write? [*JOAQUIN shakes his head slightly in the negative, showing surprise at his manner*] Ze letter will be useless . . . but perfectly useless . . .

RAMÓN

If you had consulted me I could have told you plainly . . .

JOAQUIN

But, man, you were not here . . .

ANTONIA

The doctor called yesterday to tell you . . .

JOAQUIN

I take it . . . this letter implies merely a consultation . . . nothing more. I think of replying [RAMÓN *with difficulty restrains himself*] that the sanitary condition of the town, from whatever standpoint, is excellent; and that the invalid may come here at any time.

[ALBERT *laughs and rubs his hands gleefully*]

RAMÓN [*Imperiously*]

No . . . no . . . permit me, Don Joaquin! I have nothing to say about the sanitary conditions, whether they are good, or whether they are not good. But I oppose, absolutely, this woman's coming to my house. [*To ALBERT*] You hear? Pardon my frankness! You may tell . . . Daniela . . . never to set foot here again: . . . that I would close the door on her if she were dying. I think I speak plainly!

[*Turns as though to end the interview; ALBERT remains wriggling and smiling in his chair, his hands in his pockets, his eyes on the doctor*]

ALBERT

Oh, oui! I have understand . . . perfectly well!

JOAQUIN [*Indignantly*]

Why, man, . . . it seems to me . . . [*Controls himself*] family matters, I suppose . . . I have no wish to interfere.

RAMÓN

[*His emotion increases*]

Family matters . . . no! For years Daniela has

not belonged to this family. I believed her dead . . . until some one . . . I 've forgotten who . . . saw her dancing, in a café-chantant, in . . . I don't know what city.

ALBERT [*Aroused*]

It will be very long ago . . . but very long ago.

RAMÓN

It was before I knew this one. [*Nodding toward ANTONIA*] We have been married twelve years.

ALBERT

Ah . . . but now it is very different: now ze Daniela never leave Paris, . . . only for ze tour in Belgium, Italy, Swaitzerland!

[*RAMÓN makes a contemptuous gesture*]

JOAQUIN

Well, as there is nothing more . . .

ALBERT

[*Insinuatingly to RAMÓN*]

Ze position is very different now . . .

RAMÓN [*Angrily*]

Listen! [*Restraining his anger*] Let them care for her who caused her illness! We are happy . . . without her . . . as she has been without us!

JOAQUIN [*To ALBERT*]

Come! . . . Come . . .

[*Goes toward the door*]

RAMÓN

Don Joaquin, if you were not who you are . . . I would say to you . . .

JOAQUIN

Say it, man . . . say it!

RAMÓN

That it is easy to be generous . . . forgiving . . . for others.

ANTONIA

Ramón!

[*There is a pause; JOAQUIN regards RAMÓN*]

JOAQUIN

What do you know? You have only peeped at the world through a knot-hole. People are not all alike, and I could tell you many things. Some come into the world feet first, and have nothing to do but walk. Some never learn how! But woe to those who, from their birth, are driven by heredity down the evil paths trod by their parents! There is a difference between man and man! You think men are like those sheep you buy and sell and dream of by night: that where one goes they all go; it is a waste of time to talk of other things to this man of affairs, who lives for busi-

ness. The corral! the pasture! the sheep! Who would think of bringing to his home a poor invalid? A useless burden . . . a trouble . . . for one who has prospered all these years! The farm is paying, eh? [*Pats him briskly on the shoulder*] What of it? Hard! Hard! We must get more land! We must make hay while the sun shines! TIME IS MONEY! [*As though announcing a newly discovered truth*] Good-bye! Good-bye!

[*Turns to go; ALBERT is silently convulsed*]

RAMÓN [*Fiercely*]

Wait, Don Joaquin! Don't go! If any one but you had said what you have said, it would have a bad ending! But with you, it is different! You know it!

ANTONIA

[*Trying to quiet him*]

Ramón!

JOAQUIN [*Turning*]

Let him talk! I want him to explain! That 's what I want!

RAMÓN

I have not wished . . . to talk of this . . . but if I must . . . [*Makes disdainful gesture*] [*To ALBERT*] This . . . woman . . . has told you, perhaps, that we are an unnatural family; that we abandoned her; and that now, finding herself alone . . . in want . . . misery . . .

ALBERT [*Deprecatingly*]

Oh, no . . . she have not tell me zat!

RAMÓN [*Not heeding*]

False! . . . False! . . . [*Endeavors to restrain his emotion*] Daniela was left . . . without father or mother . . . when she was seven years old. Her mother . . . a good woman but foolish . . . insisted on marrying a good-for-nothing half-Frenchman, half-Andaluz . . . no one knew where he came from. One night, when he was full of liquor, he beat her to death; and a few days later his body was found, frozen stiff, near the French line. They said he was drunk when he died. The child . . . of course . . . we brought her here! My father and mother treated her as their own. For six years . . . she was my sister. [*Becomes more agitated*] She was different from us: sometimes [*Remembering*] she would have fits of laughing and crying . . . for nothing . . . nothing . . . Once or twice my father struck her . . . I tried always to defend her . . . but he thought it was for her good . . . perhaps he was right . . . though at times he was too hard! [*His tone changes and becomes hard in turn*] But, as you will see, my father was right! One day . . . she was fourteen years old . . . some Frenchmen came through here, on a hunting trip. That night Daniela did not come home. We searched everywhere. She was gone. I was half-mad! I thought she had fallen from the rocks . . . that the river had swept her away! I tried to kill myself! Would you believe it? [*Laughs harshly*] She had been with us so long . . . I was used to her . . . and her strange ways . . .

I could n't live without her! For days I wandered from one town to another, asking every soul I met, until at last . . . some people told me . . . they had seen her . . . crossing the frontier . . . in a carriage with those Frenchmen . . . laughing . . . and singing! [*Holds out his hands, as if for judgment, to his listeners*] I would have given my life for her! She forgot me . . . and everything! But now she is sick, alone, despised . . . she would come back . . . to this house! [*Wildly*] No . . . let her die . . . away from here . . . and be buried . . . there! [*His emotion increases*] I have my wife . . . my children . . . I am happy . . . because I believe in God . . . and never did an injury . . . to any man . . . only good . . . good . . . to everyone! . . .

ANTONIA [*Greatly agitated*]

There! There! Don't talk any more about it! [*To the others*] You see how it excites him!

JOAQUIN

[*Shaking his head in reminiscence*]

Well! Well! It seems as though it all happened yesterday . . . and it is fifteen years!

ALBERT

[*Wholly unmoved, other than by amusement*]

But, gentlemen . . . we suffer . . . a great mistake. Monsieur . . . pardon . . . I have forget ze name . . . [*To the doctor*] think . . . ze Daniela is poor . . . shall be a . . . a . . . burden to him! Oh, no! Ze Daniela is rich . . . but very rich!

RAMÓN

Rich! Worse, then . . . worse! What do you take us for?

ALBERT

Oh, no . . . I have not take you for nossing!

RAMÓN

How did she come by her riches?

ALBERT [*Shrugging*]

As many people come by ze riches . . . as zey can!

JOAQUIN

[*Trying to get ALBERT away*]

Come . . . Come!

RAMÓN

[*Beside himself with amazed rage*]

And you defend her . . . after what I have told you . . . knowing the life she has led . . .

ALBERT [*With insouciance*]

But all zis you tell me ze Daniela have tell me many time . . . Who zink you zat I am?

JOAQUIN

Come . . . come . . .

RAMÓN [*Contemptuously*]

Yes . . . yes . . . Don Joaquin . . . do me the favor!

ALBERT

[*To* JOAQUIN, *indicating* RAMÓN]

You see . . . is very difficult!

JOAQUIN [*To* ALBERT]

Yes, but let us put things where they belong! I received a letter from a colleague in Paris about a patient; next you asked me to accompany you to this house, assuring me she was about to arrive. I have no further intervention in the affair.

ALBERT [*Shrugging*]

I wash my hands!

JOAQUIN

You do well to wash them!

[RAMÓN *is talking excitedly with* ANTONIA,
who tries to restrain him]

ALBERT

I am ze servant of Mademoiselle Daniela: she give me ze orders. I have make it; for zat am I here.

JOAQUIN

And for that I am done with you.

ALBERT [*Rising lazily*]

At your orders, . . . gentlemen! But I shall warn you . . . When you expect it not . . . [*Makes gesture indicating suddenness*] you have ze Daniela . . . here!

RAMÓN

Tell her not to come!

ALBERT [*Warming*]

But I have to tell you . . . when ze Daniela like to go zere . . . she go . . . so . . . [*Gesture indicating swiftness*] I have ze telegram which say she leave Paris . . . I am not surprised [*Looks over his shoulder expectantly*] is she here now!

RAMÓN

Here! Bah! [*Scornful gesture*] Good-bye, Doctor!

[*Turns away*]

JOAQUIN

Good-bye, Ramón!

[*Spoken kindly*]

ALBERT

[*Bowing ceremoniously*]

Your servant!

RAMÓN

May you find a better office!

[*Exit, right center*]

ALBERT [*Gaily*]

Merci! Merci!

ANTONIA [*Appealingly*]

Doctor! You know Ramón!

[*JOAQUIN looks at her reassuringly*]

ALBERT

[*Approaching* JOAQUIN, *who is near the door*]
You permit me . . . to return wiz you . . . is it
not?

JOAQUIN

I have no objection!

[*Excunt* JOAQUIN and ALBERT]

[ANTONIA *arranges chairs, sighs heavily, and enters room on right*]

[*Enter* MONSA, *up right, leading ANA by the hand, to whom she is teaching the words of a song*]

MONSA [*Singing softly*]

This is a miracle surely—a miracle sent from
Heaven.

ANA [*Singing*]

This is a miracle surely . . .

[*Stops and looks anxiously at* MONSA]

MONSA [*Singing*]

A miracle sent from Heaven!

ANA [*Singing*]

A miracle sent from Heaven—now I 'll sing it all—
[*Sings*] This is a miracle surely—a miracle sent from
Heaven.

[MONSA *smiles approvingly*]

ANA

Now, will you teach me another?

MONSA

Yes; but first you must learn the words. [*Recites*]
“Now they unchain the maiden,”—say it!

ANA

Now they chain the maiden . . .

MONSA

No,—they unchain her!

ANA

No, they unchain her . . .

MONSA [*Laughing*]

No! no! Listen: “Now they unchain the
maiden . . .”

ANA

Now they unchain the maiden . . .

MONSA

And chain the serving-maid . . .

ANA

And unchain the serving-maid . . .

MONSA [*Impatiently*]

No! no! They chain her!

ANA

Who?

MONSA

The serving-maid!

ANA

Oh, yes,—now I know! “And unchain the serving-maid!”

[*Looks anxiously at MONSA*]

MONSA [*Caressing her*]

There—there—perhaps they do—at last—but if you are not attentive, I shall not teach you any more songs!

ANA [*Reproachfully*]

Monsa!

MONSA [*Coaxingly*]

And you must not quarrel with Filomena!

ANA

But she says she is a better monitor than I am. I guess no one finds any fault when I am monitor!

MONSA

[*Laughing and holding up her finger*]

Yes—Filomena!

ANA

[*Looks at her doll, which lies on the table*]

“And unchain the serving-maid . . .” [*Offers doll to MONSA*] You take her!

MONSA [*Taking the doll*]

Poor dolly! Oh, how cold she will be without more clothing!

ANA

[*Takes the doll and folds her in her apron*]

She shall have more!

MONSA

We 'll make her a dress—eh?

ANA

Oh, yes—like a grown-up lady's—because she is a lady now—do you want the scissors? [*Offers them*]
With pockets, Monsa!

MONSA

[*Takes a piece of bright stuff from a bag at her side and spreads it on her lap*]

With two pockets!

[*Begins cutting*]

ANA

And then she must be married! Do you want her to get married? [MONSA *does not heed her*] Who will be her husband?

MONSA [*Smiling faintly*]

Oh—she must say that!

ANA

But she never says anything! She would marry any

one! [*Claps her hands and laughs excitedly*] Won't it be lovely? [*Coaxing*] Why don't you want me to bring her to school?

MONSA

Because you forget to study!

ANA [*Suddenly*]

Oh, I know who will be her husband—the cat!

MONSA

[*Laughing despite herself*]

Ana!

ANA

Only he is cross sometimes—he bites when I hug him!

MONSA [*Mechanically*]

Yes!

ANA

Are you going to get married too, Monsa?

MONSA

Look—these are the sleeves.

ANA

Oh, how beautiful! [*Reverting to her thought*]
Monsa!

MONSA

Now just two stitches more—you 'll see!

ANA

Monsa! Monsa!

MONSA [*Reluctantly*]

What?

ANA

Have n't you ever been married?

MONSA

Never!

ANA

Never?—Never?

MONSA

No!

ANA

Why not?

MONSA

There!

[*Patting the dress into shape*]

ANA

Why don't you get married? Why? Tell me!

MONSA [*Holding up dress*]

Is n't that beautiful?

[*VALERIO enters hurriedly; looks toward door on right and starts toward it; hesitates; turns, and disappears through door on left*]

ANA [*Taking the dress*]

Let me see! [*Petulantly*] I don't like the train!

MONSA

Oh, yes, it must have a train!

ANA

No, child! The first thing you know, she goes and rolls on the floor!

[*Tries to take the doll from MONSA*]

MONSA [*Holding on*]

Stop, Ana . . . you'll hurt her!

ANA

I don't want her to have a train!

MONSA

Let go . . . Ana!

ANA

I tell you she rolls on the floor!

[*VALERIO comes hastily from door on left, looking heated and confused*]

MONSA

Valerio, what is the matter?

VALERIO [*Exultingly*]

I just put a dollar in the bank! It was so big it would hardly go through!

ANA

A dollar? A whole dollar?

VALERIO

Yes . . . it was different from ours! A pretty lady gave it to me!

MONSA [*Still sewing*]

A lady! Who was she?

VALERIO

How do I know? The master sent me to look and see if the sheep were coming. Well . . . I had just got outside the town . . . and I saw two ladies getting out of the coach . . .

MONSA [*Stops sewing*]

What coach?

VALERIO

That 's what I 'm telling you . . . it stopped . . . and two ladies got out. The prettiest one asked me where I was from. "From the farm of Ramón Anglada," I told her; and then she began to clap her hands and laugh. "From the farm of Ramón!" she said to the other one; "Do you hear? From the farm of Ramón!"

MONSA [*Tone of conviction*]

It is Daniela!

ANA

Who is Daniela?

[MONSA *rolls up her sewing*]

VALERIO

Ah! [*Derisively*] Daniela is poor! This lady gave

me a dollar . . . for nothing! [*Remembering*] Now I 'll go and see if the sheep are coming!

[*Exit hurriedly; ANA following*]

ANTONIA [*Entering door, right*]

What is the matter with Valerio?

MONSA

Antonia! Two ladies have just arrived in a carriage.

ANTONIA [*Dismayed*]

Do you suppose . . . ?

MONSA

It may be!

ANTONIA

[*Despairing, appeals to Heaven*]

Holy Virgin!

MONSA [*Doubting*]

But we are not sure she is coming!

ANTONIA

Yes . . . yes . . . she is coming! The gentleman said so!

MONSA

Oh, I 'm so glad!

ANTONIA [*Turns away sternly*]

God forbid! Ramón does not wish to see her . . . if she comes here . . . !

ANA [*Entering, up right*]

Mother! Mother! There are two ladies in the plaza!

MONSA [*Rising hurriedly*]

I will see!

ANTONIA [*Restraining her*]

No . . . Monsa! [*ANA starts to go to the door*]
Ana . . . come here!

[*ANA looks from the door and returns to her mother*]

ANA [*Gleefully*]

They are coming here!

MONSA

[*Looking from door; speaks excitedly*]

Yes . . . yes . . . it is Daniela! Oh . . . how lovely she is!

[*Starts again to go out; ANTONIA again restrains her*]

ANTONIA

Monsa! Don't go! If Ramón should come . . . !

MONSA

It will be better to tell the truth, Antonia, . . . that Ramón does not wish to see her.

ANTONIA

Oh, not before me . . . no!

MONSA [*Looking from door*]

Ramón has not seen her! Who would dare . . . ?

ANTONIA

Ramón would!

[*She draws MONSA toward right; ANA remains near the door*]

[*DANIELA appears in the door, half laughing, half crying, and enters the room, followed by JEANNE, her maid*]

DANIELA

Oh . . . I 'm not sure! Outside . . . it looked the same! But it 's so small! [*Excitedly*] Yes . . . it is! It is! There are the stairs! [*Laughs and claps her hands*] I fell down there once! [*The last to JEANNE; she pauses as though to remember*] Ramón's father . . . my uncle . . . would come down so slowly! [*Appropriate action*] Ramón in four leaps . . . [*Laughing*] and I on the banister! [*Pause*] Why . . . how easily I breathe here! On the train I was suffocated! [*Discovering ANA*] Oh, you darling! [*Sees MONSA and ANTONIA*] Ah! [*Bows slightly*]

MONSA [*Timidly*]

Good morning!

ANTONIA [*Iceily*]

Good morning!

DANIELA

[*Naïve, friendly, with assurance born of natural refinement*]

I wanted no one to show me the way! I left the

carriage outside the town, and said to myself, "Now, let 's see if you can find it!" And I came straight to it! I told you I should! [*To JEANNE*]

JEANNE [*Smiling*]

Yes! Yes!

DANIELA

But it seems smaller than it used! I thought this was such a big room! . . . And Ramón—where is he?

[*She is all expectation, excitement, like a child*]

ANTONIA

In a moment!

[*Talks aside with MONSA*]

DANIELA

[*Delightedly to JEANNE*]

You did n't fancy it would be like this! Here everything breathes of health!

[*Clasps her hands and looks about her ecstatically*]

ANTONIA

Ana, . . . tell your father to come.

[*ANA is lost in wonderment, and pays no heed to her mother*]

DANIELA

[*Calling impetuously, as though not to be denied*]

Ramón! Ramón! [*Clasps her heart as though it*

hurt her] Oh . . . I begin to remember . . . so many things . . . when we were children!

ANTONIA [*Greatly disturbed*]

I will call him.

[*Goes out door up right*]

DANIELA [*Wonderingly*]

I lived here . . . once! I wanted so to see it again!
[*Changes tone quickly. To ANA*] Come here! Come!

MONSA [*Urging her*]

Go . . . Ana!

[*ANA approaches*]

DANIELA

What a dear she is!

ANA [*Gravely*]

Yes 'm!

DANIELA [*Delighted*]

Oh! Who are you?

ANA [*With dignity*]

I am Ana.

DANIELA

[*To JEANNE, imitating the child's tone*]

Listen! This is Ana! She says she is . . . Ana!

MONSA

She is Ramón's daughter.

DANIELA [*Soberly*]

Ah! He married, then!

MONSA

Yes.

DANIELA

And you . . . are his wife?

MONSA

Oh, no! I am . . . [*Wistfully*] don't you remember? . . . Monsa!

DANIELA

Monsa? Monsa? [*Tries to recall her*] No! I have such a poor memory!

MONSA [*Sadly*]

You don't remember!

DANIELA [*Quickly*]

Oh . . . are you the girl who always wore such pretty frocks?

MONSA

Oh, no! I was poor . . . always! I am the one . . . who always loved you . . . don't you remember?

[*The question is lost on DANIELA, who discovers the battered doll ANA is trying to show her*]

DANIELA

Oh . . . mercy . . . what a dreadful creature! Take her away! I will buy you a beautiful new one

. . . Ana! [*Still accenting the child's dignified tone on the name "ANA"*] How strange it all seems! I laugh . . . and I can hardly keep from crying! I had forgotten everything . . . and now . . . Oh, why does n't Ramón come?

[*Clasps her throat as though suffocated. MONSA, alarmed, pushes a chair toward her. DANIELA sinks into the chair. JEANNE hastens to her*]

DANIELA

Jeanne . . . quick . . . give me that!

[*JEANNE takes scent-bottle from hand-bag and gives it to her*]

ANTONIA

[*Entering and addressing MONSA in frightened tone*]

He is coming.

MONSA

Did you tell him she is ill?

ANTONIA

Yes! It made no difference! He will send her away!

MONSA [*Indignantly*]

He shall not!

[*Starts toward door*]

RAMÓN

[*Calling harshly without*]

Antonia! Antonia!

ANTONIA [*Detaining MONSA*]

Wait!

DANIELA

[*To ANTONIA and MONSA*]

It is Ramón! Yes, . . . it is Ramón!

RAMÓN [*Entering*]

Antonia!

DANIELA

[*She has risen, and now runs toward him, with arms extended*]

Ramón! Ramón!

RAMÓN

No!

[*He wards her off so roughly that DANIELA is near falling, but is supported by MONSA, who hastens to her, and putting her arms about her, looks fiercely at RAMÓN*]

DANIELA [*Piteously*]

Ramón!

RAMÓN

[*Trembling with passion*]

She remembers us now . . . that no one wants her!

[*He stares wildly at her. He is amazed at her beauty*]

MONSA

[*To JEANNE, who assists her*]

Here! [*Indicating chair, to which they lead DA-*

NIELA. ANTONIA *approaches reluctantly*] He 's a monster! [*To DANIELA*] There! There!

[*She caresses her*]

DANIELA

[*She is weeping, and looks helplessly from one to another, addressing MONSA*]

Is it Ramón? [*MONSA nods assent*] No . . . no . . . Ramón was never cruel . . . Ramón loved me . . . he defended me . . . always . . . he would cry when they beat me . . . [*Weeps forlornly*] Ay, Jeanne, . . . better to die in Paris! If I had listened to you . . . you said no one would care for me! [*With energy*] Come! Come! Let us go! [*With desperation*] I do not want to die here! No! In the street! In the street! [*Rises quickly; the women restrain her*] Let me go!

[*Falls back, half lifeless, into the chair*]

ANTONIA [*Deeply moved*]

Speak to him . . . Monsa!

[*Indicating RAMÓN. MONSA, not heeding ANTONIA, tries to revive DANIELA. ANTONIA goes to RAMÓN and pleads with him*]

DANIELA

[*Reviving, to MONSA, who weeps*]

Oh . . . you are crying! Why?

MONSA [*Sobbing*]

For you, Daniela!

DANIELA

[*Takes MONSA's face in her hands*]

Let me look at you!

MONSA

Poor Daniela!

DANIELA

Why . . . now I know you . . . now I know you . . . you are the one . . . who always cried when I did . . . Monsa!

[*Puts her arms about her neck*]

ANA

[*Going to her father, greatly troubled*]

Father!

[*RAMÓN does not heed her*]

MONSA

Yes . . . yes . . . I am Monsa!

DANIELA [*Clinging to her*]

Monsa! Monsa!

ANA [*To RAMÓN*]

Father, I don't want her to go away. She said she would buy me a doll!

ANTONIA

Don't turn her out, Ramón!

[*RAMÓN turns his back on ANTONIA to hide from her his emotion*]

MONSA

[*She runs to RAMÓN and speaks vehemently. He has seated himself, with his arms over the table, and pays no attention*]

Listen, Ramón! Listen!

[*She kneels beside him and clasps him gently; ANTONIA and ANA draw near*]

ANA [*Anxiously*]

Will she go, Mother?

MONSA

Don't send her away! Speak to her . . . Ramón!

RAMÓN [*Fiercely*]

An outcast!

[*MONSA places her hand over his lips*]

MONSA

Hush!

RAMÓN [*Wildly*]

An outcast . . . yes! You don't know . . . the harm she has done me . . . nor she, either . . . no one knows!

[*DANIELA has risen, supported by JEANNE. ANTONIA goes to assist her*]

MONSA

But she is ill . . . [*RAMÓN makes impatient gesture*] Let her stay a few days . . . at least until tomorrow.

RAMÓN

You don't know what you are asking! [*Bitterly, in lower tone*] Better if she had died!

MONSA

Ramón . . . you have a good heart!

RAMÓN

Bah! . . . what do you know?

MONSA

Say something to her.

RAMÓN

No!

MONSA

By your love for your children, Ramón!

RAMÓN [*In horror*]

My children! You don't know what you are saying! [*Rising*] She shall not . . .

[*He stops, overcome, on finding himself face to face with DANIELA*]

DANIELA

[*Putting aside MONSA, who has interposed between them*]

No . . . no . . . ! I am going . . . I am going . . . ! [*Frees herself gently from MONSA*] I want to see him . . . Fourteen years! [*RAMÓN starts to speak,*

but she stops him] My fault . . . I know it . . . my fault! Am I defending myself? . . . Look at me! Look at me! [*RAMÓN turns toward her, against his will, and their eyes meet*] Oh . . . now I see the old Ramón . . . who quarrelled with me sometimes . . . but always loved me. I would call him . . . from away off, as he came from the mountain with his father . . . [*Calling*] Ramón! Ramón!

[*He has turned from her, but when she calls he starts involuntarily toward her*]

MONSA

[*Fearing his intention*]

No!

DANIELA [*With exaltation*]

And when he came . . . I would throw my arms about his neck . . . "Ramón! Here are some violets! I have brought you some berries, Ramón!" And in my haste to give them to him, I would crush them against his lips. And then . . . "I have found a nest of partridges, Ramón!" . . . Well . . . to the nest! The poor things would run and flutter toward the cliffs, and we after them . . . into the water . . . through the briars . . . to catch the stragglers . . . only to let them go again . . . [*Tenderly*] so they might live! [*She stops; her voice grows sad, tragic*] One day . . . I too ran toward the cliffs! I spread my wings . . . and flew . . . away . . . away . . . till I felt I was wounded. [*Clasps her heart*] And then . . . before I died . . . I wanted to come back . . . to the place where I had my nest . . . to this house!

[*She has lowered her voice, until on saying "my nest" she strikes her breast, with the intimate conviction that it is her right, but on saying "this house," she says it fearfully, as though in dread of being denied*]

RAMÓN

Yes . . . yes . . . but then you did n't care for my father . . . nor for me . . . nor for yourself! The first one that said "Come!" . . . you went with him!

[*Advances as though to strike her, but falters, and shows that he is yielding*]

DANIELA

You are right, Ramón! Don't strike me! I am going! You shall never see me again! Never! . . . You will be happy . . . as you have been . . .

MONSA

[*Putting her arm about her*]

Come, Daniela!

DANIELA [*To JEANNE*]

Jeanne . . . to the station . . . to Paris again . . . Ramón wishes it!

ANA

[*To ANTONIA, in a low voice*]

Mother . . . and the doll?

MONSA [*Going to RAMÓN*]

Ramón . . . [*She looks at him*] Ramón . . . you are crying!

[*Puts her hand on his shoulder*]

RAMÓN

[*In a low, tremulous voice*]

Let her stay . . . but Antonia is not to know . . .
I said it!

[MONSA runs to DANIELA]

ANTONIA [*Entreating* RAMÓN]

You will let her stay . . .

RAMÓN [*Avoiding her*]

I don't know . . . you . . . must do as you wish
. . . [*Fiercely*] but only until to-morrow!

DANIELA

[*To MONSA, who has told her*]

Oh, yes . . . yes . . . it would have killed me . . .

[*She looks timidly toward RAMÓN*]

MONSA [*Warningly*]

Don't speak to him . . . yet!

VALERIO [*Entering*]

The sheep are coming, master! You can see the
dust!

RAMÓN [*Savagely*]

Let them come! [*Passes his hand over his forehead
in a dazed way*] Antonia . . . I have not seen the boy!

ANTONIA [*Trying to smile*]

He is asleep . . .

[*She points to room on right, which they both enter*]

DANIELA [*She is seated*]

Oh . . . I 'm so happy! [*Calling*] Jeanne!

[*JEANNE enters, followed by TOMASA, presently ANDRÉS, and then by PONA and other neighbors, all curious to see the newcomer. JEANNE removes DANIELA'S hat*]

TOMASA [*To MONSA*]

Is that Daniela?

MONSA

Yes . . . but you must not annoy her . . . she is very tired!

ANDRÉS

She must be rich! There 's a cart outside full of trunks and boxes.

PONA [*Edging nearer*]

Good morning!

[*To DANIELA*]

DANIELA

[*She bows feebly to them, and turns to MONSA*]

I thought no one knew . . .

MONSA [*In an undertone*]

A gentleman from Paris said you were coming.

DANIELA

Oh . . . Albert! Where is Albert?

PONA [*To MONSA*]

If I can be of any use . . .

MONSA

No, thank you!

ALBERT [*Entering*]

Mon Dieu! At last . . . Madame!

DANIELA [*Petulantly*]

I sent you to prepare everything . . . you have done nothing . . . you were not even at the station when we arrived!

ALBERT

I think ze train . . .

TOMASA [*To DANIELA*]

If I can be of any assistance . . .

DANIELA

[*Not heeding her, addresses ALBERT*]

Oh . . . it is always the same . . .

ALBERT

But I have see ze doctor!

DANIELA [*Nervously*]

What doctor? I wish you to return to Paris . . . send away the servants . . . all of them . . . and close the house. Oh . . . and bring me "Petit" . . .

poor "Petit"! I have thought of him ever since I left Paris!

ANDRÉS

If you would care to take rooms in our house . . . it is very large . . . and . . .

TOMASA

We have just been whitewashing! Our walls are like snow!

[DANIELA, *not heeding them, takes a roll of bank-notes from her purse and gives them to ALBERT, to the amazement of the villagers*]

DANIELA

Pay everything! I shall remain here . . . for a while . . . [*She changes suddenly—it is a return of irresponsibility*] until I can build a chalet . . . here . . . in front. [*Her voice is weak, but she is smiling inconsequently. She grows excited*] Its name will be . . . "Villa Daniela"! [*She looks appealingly at the others: they are delighted*] To-morrow I will see an architect . . . it must be built soon . . . soon . . . [*Said with feverish haste*] . . . and when it is finished . . . there will be a grand fête . . .

[*The people are enchanted. DANIELA stops as RAMÓN enters. MONSA goes toward him and cautions him by a look. ANTONIA enters*]

DANIELA

[*Rising and going slowly toward RAMÓN*]

We are not . . . enemies?

RAMÓN [*Deeply moved*]
No!

DANIELA
Friends . . . ?

[*Extends her hand*]

RAMÓN
[*Takes her hand but releases it quickly*]
Yes!

DANIELA
Good friends, Ramón! Good friends!

RAMÓN [*With decision*]

Yes! [*He points to ANTONIA as he introduces her*]
Antonia! My wife . . . the mother of this one [*indicating ANA*] and the boy.

[*Points to room on right*]

DANIELA

[*Her native sweetness and childlike unconsciousness are revealed. She turns to ANTONIA appealingly*]

We shall be good friends, too! [*To RAMÓN—she but half turns to him*] You will see!

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE is unchanged. On the right, a cradle with sleeping child. Time, late afternoon. ANTONIA is seated near the cradle sewing. Through the open door are heard the stone-cutters at work on DANIELA'S house.

[Enter MONSA, up right. She looks lovingly at the sleeping babe]

MONSA

Why do you put this angel to sleep so early? No wonder he wakes in the night!

ANTONIA [*Sadly*]

That is so.

MONSA

[*Still smiling at the child*]

Why, of course!

[*Pause*]

ANTONIA [*With a sigh*]

That is what Ramón used to say.

MONSA

You see! Ramón says so too!

ANTONIA

[*In monotonous voice*]

No . . . he used to say so. He does n't care now . . . for anything.

MONSA

Antonia! How can you? You know how occupied he is with the workmen . . . he attends to everything. Daniela is so anxious to have the house completed.

ANTONIA

Yes . . . yes . . . [*Absently*] Have you dismissed the children?

MONSA

Yes! Where is Ana? She was not in school this afternoon.

ANTONIA

With her father . . . and Daniela. She would go! I have talked until I am tired: it is no use. [*Fiercely*] This woman appropriates everything . . . and everybody!

[*The clink of chisels on the stone gradually ceases*]

MONSA

Listen! They have stopped work! [*With animation*] How fast the house is going up . . . such a short time, too . . . scarcely a month!

ANTONIA

[*The colorless tone should be preserved*]

Very fast . . . yes!

MONSA

There are so many workmen! [*Remembering her message*] Oh . . . as I came by . . . Daniela called

after me . . . to remind you, you were to take tea with them.

ANTONIA

Yes . . . a caprice of hers . . . we must have supper in the veranda . . . and watch the sunset! [*Indig- nantly*] And every supper is a feast!

MONSA

So much the better, Antonia! It shows she is getting well!

ANTONIA

[*In repressed, even tone*]

Do you still pity Daniela?

MONSA

I shall always pity her. Not alone because she is ill, but because she has been so foolish.

ANTONIA

You do not . . . pity me?

MONSA [*Surprised*]

Antonia! Why?

ANTONIA

Because I am the most unhappy woman in the world. Because Ramón is no longer the same. And she has changed him . . . she has taken him from me.

MONSA

Antonia! What are you saying?

ANTONIA

Yes . . . Monsa! Ramón is changed! I scarcely know him. He was always harsh . . . irritable . . . I don't mind that . . . it is his way. But now . . . he does n't speak to me . . . he does n't look at me . . . nor his children . . . his thoughts are all for that woman!

MONSA

It is not true, Antonia! Ramón's one thought is to see the house finished . . . that Daniela may occupy it.

ANTONIA

You are trying to deceive me, Monsa! You have seen it, too!

DANIELA [*Calling without*]

Antonia . . . Antonia . . . Hurry . . . Antonia!

[*A burst of laughter follows from DANIELA and ANA*]

MONSA

There . . . she is calling you . . . come! . . .

ANTONIA

No . . . I will not . . . I cannot pretend any longer! I will not disturb them!

MONSA

You are doing very wrong, Antonia!

ANTONIA [*Excitedly*]

Oh . . . I will not bear it! I will ask Ramón, in her presence, to send her away! If he refuses, I will

take my children and go to my father's house. [*Laughs bitterly*] To think that I begged for her to stay!

[*Weeps*]

MONSA

Antonia . . . listen . . . and you will see you are mistaken. Daniela is no hypocrite! If she loved Ramón she could not conceal it!

ANTONIA

Ah . . . I begin to understand you, too . . . Daniela is rich!

MONSA

Now . . . yes . . . I pity you! You must be unhappy, Antonia, to say this to me!

ANTONIA

So unhappy . . . I wish I might die to-night!

MONSA

[*Glancing toward the door*]

Hush!

[*The doctor enters smiling*]

JOAQUIN

Good evening!

ANTONIA [*Recovering*]

Good evening, Doctor!

JOAQUIN

I did n't find you at supper with the others . . . I said to myself . . . "Now you have saluted Daniela,

go pay your respects to the mistress of the house," . . .
and here I am!

[*Offers his hand*]

ANTONIA

Thank you, Doctor!

MONSA [*Anxiously*]

How do you find Daniela?

JOAQUIN [*Kindly*]

Better! She would be the happiest creature in the world, if we would all help her a little.

[*The last in lower and significant tone*]

MONSA

You mean she is really well, Doctor?

JOAQUIN

Not well—oh, no! Poor Daniela! We must all see to it that she is not annoyed in any way. She must be opposed in nothing. You hear, Antonia?

ANTONIA

Yes, Doctor, yes.

MONSA [*Alarmed*]

Her illness is not serious, Doctor?

JOAQUIN

Serious! Umph! [*Takes resolution to be frank*]
Daniela will never be well! Now—now! [*To MONSA,*

who shows distress] Wait a moment! [*Lowering voice*] The day after she arrived, I received another letter from her physician, saying that Daniela's illness, as I would see for myself, was necessarily fatal—more: that it was well advanced.

MONSA

Holy Virgin! What is it, Doctor?

JOAQUIN

What is it? Umph! Umph! [*Looks at MONSA keenly*] It is her heart—and when the heart is seriously affected . . .

MONSA

Oh, Doctor! Cure her! Cure her!

JOAQUIN [*Kindly*]

My child, do you know what you are asking? It is as though you said to me, "Make yourself young again, Doctor—make yourself young again!" [*His tone changes*] When they begin tugging at us [*Suitable action*] from the other world, it is vain to resist! [*Changing to matter-of-fact tone of the physician*] She must not be annoyed in any way—let me caution you again—you, above all, Antonia!

ANTONIA

Why above all, Doctor?

JOAQUIN

Tut, tut! No offense. The advice of her physician, [*Firmly*] and yours—nothing more!

ANTONIA [*Submissively*]

Very well, Doctor.

JOAQUIN

[*Caresses MONSA in taking leave of her*]

No need to caution you, Monsa! [*Absently, as he turns to go*] A saint! [*Looks at ANTONIA: his tone is bluff yet kind*] And you, too . . . but just now you 're a bit awry! [*In admonitory tone, holding up his finger at ANTONIA*] Careful . . . Antonia!

ANTONIA

Doctor . . . have you cautioned Ramón as you have me?

JOAQUIN

Yes. [*Quizzically*] Ramón asked me to talk to you . . . and even to scold you a little.

ANTONIA

[*Striving to control her indignation*]

Ramón asked you . . .

JOAQUIN [*Interrupting*]

We will pretend I have scolded you . . . and you have promised to be good.

ANTONIA

Yes, Doctor!

[JOAQUIN *nods again at MONSA as he goes*]

MONSA

Good-night, Doctor!

JOAQUIN [*To both*]

Good-night! Good-night!

[*Exit up right*]

ANTONIA

[*With suppressed rage*]

Do you hear? I don't believe she is ill . . . or anything!

MONSA

Antonia! Not ill?

ANTONIA

[*Increased excitement—sufficient repression*]

No . . . no . . . Ramón and the doctor are trying to drive me mad . . . to kill me . . . For Ramón to say of me what he has said . . . that I have a bad heart.

MONSA

But he did not say that!

ANTONIA

And that you are better than I . . . and that it is I must make Daniela happy!

MONSA

Antonia . . . listen to me . . .

ANTONIA

My husband demands it! That I shall be her servant . . . while they . . . before my very eyes . . . oh, it is infamous!

[DANIELA *laughs gaily without*; then DANIELA and ANA together]

MONSA [*Warningly*]

Antonia!

[*Indicates the approach of the others*]

ANTONIA

She shall not see me weeping . . . to laugh at me!

MONSA

Not a word, Antonia . . . for your own happiness!

ANTONIA

Oh, no! I am gay! I can laugh as well as she!
[*Laughs bitterly*] Why should I not laugh?

MONSA

Be careful!

[*In pleading tone*]

[ANTONIA *takes her sewing*. MONSA *begins knitting assiduously*. Enter DANIELA, *laughing*, and ANA, *who carries a large new doll*]

DANIELA

Why . . . we might be waiting for you still, Antonia!

ANTONIA

You take supper so early!

ANA [*Excitedly*]

Mother . . . we had such funny things to eat!

DANIELA

[*Caressing her and laughing*]

Funny things!

ANTONIA

Ana, come here! Why did you not go to school?

ANA

I have been with father.

DANIELA

It was my fault!

ANTONIA

[*To ANA, ignoring DANIELA*]

I wish you to stay here with me . . . do you understand? Your brother, and you, and I . . . here, alone.

ANA

[*Trying to free herself from ANTONIA'S grasp*]

You are hurting my dolly.

DANIELA

[*Trying to appear indifferent to ANTONIA'S rebuke*]

I have let Jeanne go!

[*To MONSA*]

MONSA

Oh . . . have you?

ANA

[*Taking DANIELA'S parasol, unheeded by her*]

Give it to me . . . I will put it in your room.

ANTONIA

Ana!

[*ANA runs into DANIELA'S room with the parasol, and returns reluctantly to her mother's side, showing plainly her wish to be near DANIELA*]

DANIELA

[*Still talking of JEANNE to MONSA*]

Yes, she has gone. [*Imitating JEANNE*] She passed the entire day . . . weeping . . . for Paris! I wish no one near me who weeps! I want to see every one happy! I want every one to love me . . . and no one to hate me! [*Pensively*] How strange, Monsa! I needed a different affection . . . different . . . [*She turns quickly and regards tenderly the sleeping child*] Oh . . . he is asleep! [*Rises and steals softly to the cradle*] How beautiful he is! Look! Look! What he is doing! He 's dreaming! He thinks he 's playing

with the baby-angels! Oh, what faces he 's making!
He 's opening his eyes!

[*Rocks the cradle and sings softly*]

ANTONIA

[*Who until now has been restrained by
MONSA'S warning signals*]

No!

[*Rises hastily and goes to the cradle*]

DANIELA

Yes . . . yes . . . be careful, Antonia!

[*Still rocking and singing*]

MONSA [*Beseeching*]

Antonia!

ANTONIA [*Trying to be calm*]

Let me . . . he does n't know you!

DANIELA

[*She turns reluctantly from the cradle. To
MONSA*]

How I love to put my hand under the pillow;
[*Dreamily*] it is so warm! [*Low tone*] See Antonia
. . . how I envy her . . . how I envy her . . . how
happy she is!

MONSA

[*Looking toward ANTONIA*]

Yes . . . very happy! [*Intimately*] It is beautiful
. . . to be a mother!

DANIELA [*Feigning*]

A mother! Pts! [*Defiantly*] How do I know!

[*Turns away to hide her pain*]

ANA [*Offering her doll*]

You put her to sleep!

[*DANIELA takes the doll mechanically*]

DANIELA

[*Spoken as though alone. She looks straight ahead of her*]

The years pass . . . and the heart grows old . . .
alone . . . always alone . . . without love . . . with
nothing really mine . . .

[*The doll slips from her hand to the floor*]

ANA

[*Catches up the doll indignantly*]

You will kill her . . . my poor baby' . . . did she
hurt you?

MONSA

[*Rousing herself from painful reverie*]

Oh, Daniela! Talk of something else! Your chalet
is almost finished!

DANIELA

[*Recovering her wonted manner*]

Oh, no; don't believe it! Those workmen scarcely
move! I wanted to christen it the day of the fête
. . . but . . . Pts!

[*Careless gesture; she gazes absently at the cradle*]

MONSA

Yes . . . it is almost here!

DANIELA

Oh . . . it is maddening! First one stone . . . and then another stone . . . ! How tiresome! And I always did everything—[*Rapid gesture*] so!

MONSA

But it is only a month since you came!

[*ANTONIA has returned to her sewing*]

DANIELA [*Delightedly*]

Yes . . . only a month! Do you not see how I have changed, Monsa? At times I can almost believe I have never been away. [*Pause. Reminiscent tone*] When I left Paris . . . when I first saw the fields . . . I was wild with joy! An hour later I regretted it, and wanted to return! [*Smiling in whimsical fashion*] I kept thinking of my poor "Petit"! How absurd! I could not keep him from my thoughts! Richard, Huguette, all of them tried to console me! [*Laughs inconsequently*]

MONSA

Who?

DANIELA

[*Laughing at MONSA's amazement*]

Oh . . . I forgot! Richard and Huguette and Max

. . . are my professional companions . . . they were on the same train. They promised that on their return they would visit me. [*Pause*] "Petit"! . . . Fancy! When I was ill, the poor little creature never left my side. I think I must have died without him! . . . Now Albert has written me he is lost . . . I scarcely ever think of him!

MONSA

Oh . . . what a pity!

ANTONIA [*In an even tone*]

You shed more tears for your dog, I warrant, . . . than you did for your home . . . when you ran away, I mean.

MONSA [*Distressed*]

Oh . . . !

DANIELA

[*Surprised and greatly agitated*]

I did weep . . . then . . . many times! [ANTONIA *laughs incredulously*] Many times!

[*The last with conviction*]

MONSA

Antonia!

DANIELA

[*In lower tone, as though forgetful of the others, as though remembering*]

I ran away . . . because Ramón's father beat me . . . [ANTONIA *makes incredulous signs*] because then . . . I was half mad! I know it!

[*Excitedly*]

ANTONIA

Only then?

DANIELA

You are right . . . I was mad. And I am not wholly cured! . . . I am not like the rest of you . . . to-day I think one thing . . . to-morrow another . . . [*Resolutely*] but I want to be different.

ANTONIA

You want to be . . .

MONSA

Antonia!

DANIELA

And I have changed . . . very much . . . though you may not believe it, Antonia . . . and I did weep . . . when I ran away . . . yes . . . yes . . . I wept . . . more than once . . . [*Pause; lowers voice; her emotion increases*] but I did not weep always . . . I began to forget . . . to laugh . . . I laughed at everything . . . and everybody . . . until at last . . . it seems impossible . . . for years . . . I never even remembered . . . this . . .

[*Covers face*]

MONSA

There, Daniela, . . . it is all passed. Now you must only think of getting well! [*Coaxingly*] How do you feel, Daniela?

DANIELA

I am well! I feel no pain! My physician has such absurd ideas . . . and Don Joaquin, too! [ANTONIA

rises and takes a napkin from the back of a chair
What are you going to do, Antonia? [*In a caressing voice*] Oh, let me . . . Antonia . . .

[*Dries her tears and is all smiles again*]

ANTONIA

[*Going toward cradle*]

No.

DANIELA [*Excitedly*]

Yes . . . yes . . . I know how . . . You will see . . . I 'll take him so [*Arranging her lap*] . . . Is n't this the way, Monsa?

[*ANTONIA is folding the napkin*]

MONSA

Yes, yes, Antonia, let Daniela have him.

DANIELA

[*Seating herself with her lap in readiness*]

Bring him here this moment . . . Give him to me, Antonia.

[*ANTONIA passes before DANIELA, going toward the cradle. DANIELA plucks at her skirt*]

ANTONIA

[*Trying to free herself*]

Oh!

DANIELA [*Coaxingly*]

Antonia, let me have him! I want him to go to sleep in my arms.

[*Puts her arms about ANTONIA*]

ANTONIA

No, I said! Let me go!

DANIELA [*Petulantly*]

Why not? [*Rises suddenly in great glee*] I will have him . . . You 'll see . . .

[*Runs toward the cradle*]

ANTONIA

No! Let him alone!

DANIELA

[*She is beside the cradle, laughing tenderly*]

I 'm going to take him . . .

ANTONIA [*Interposing*]

Go away! This child has a father and a mother. Look for one who has neither . . . You should know plenty.

DANIELA

[*She sinks into a chair, and clasps her heart as though wounded*]

Oh . . . Antonia!

MONSA [*Running to her*]

Daniela! Daniela!

DANIELA

She is right . . . but I, in her place, would not be so cruel.

ANTONIA [*Calling*]

Ana! [ANA *turns her back*] Ana! [*Beckoning*]
Take the cradle. Help me carry it into the other
room. [ANA *lays her doll across the foot of the cradle*]
Take it by the rockers . . . hurry. [ANA *is still re-*
garding DANIELA] Do you hear me? Hurry! Hurry!

[*They carry the cradle through door on right,*
ANTONIA *walking backward and eying DA-*
NIELA *malignantly*]

DANIELA [*Looking after them*]

My heart goes after that cradle!

MONSA [*Caressing her*]

Poor Daniela!

DANIELA [*Bitterly*]

Too late! It's too late!

MONSA

No, Daniela!

DANIELA

[*Reverting to what has just passed*]

But why does she treat me so? Why? I will ask
her.

MONSA [*Detaining her*]

No . . . let her alone!

DANIELA

What have I ever done to her? She will not even
let me take the child . . . Nor go near it. [*Pause*]
And Ramón is so kind!

MONSA

Daniela . . . listen . . .

DANIELA

And you . . . why do you love me?

MONSA

Because I always loved you . . . and because . . .
I am that way!

DANIELA [*Pause*]

Yes . . . and I am different. [*Reverting to her first
idea*] But this woman will kill me! She hates me . . .
She hates me! What harm have I done her in loving
the child? [*Changing tone*] Tell me . . . have you
never had a lover?

MONSA

You mean . . . a sweetheart.

DANIELA

Yes . . . yes . . . a sweetheart.

MONSA

One.

DANIELA

Tell me . . . tell me . . . although I think I know.
He promised to marry you . . . and then . . . he went
away.

MONSA [*Smiling sadly*]

Oh, no . . . no! [*DANIELA looks incredulous*] I
tell you, no!

DANIELA

They are none of them to be trusted. They don't know how to love . . . Do you hear? They don't know how! [*Pause*] Where does this one live now?

MONSA

In another town.

DANIELA

Why were you not married?

MONSA

We were to have been married; he did love me . . . I'm sure of that . . . but he had loved some one else before he knew me; he had wronged her . . . [*Fiercely*] I made him marry her!

DANIELA [*Amazed*]

And you . . .

MONSA

I was alone before I knew him . . . I have remained alone. Now I teach the children. I earn little, but it is enough; I live with nothing . . . like the birds . . . only I need a fire, and sometimes there is not enough to buy wood . . . [*She smiles*] And then in the school, when it is cold, the children cluster around me—close, close—and with their kisses and their embraces they drive away the cold.

DANIELA

And what does he say to you when you meet?

MONSA [*Resignedly*]

"Adios, Manuel!" I say . . . "Adios, Monsa!" he replies . . . nothing more.

DANIELA

Why do you not marry some one else?

MONSA

Oh, no . . . no. I have loved no one but him.

DANIELA [*Wonderingly*]

No one but him! No one but him! [*Her head sinks on her breast. After a pause she turns impulsively to MONSA and kisses her forehead*] Monsa! . . . We are the same age . . . and it is as though I kissed a child. [*She pases, and looks toward ANTONIA'S room*] How you have made me suffer!

MONSA

I, Daniela?

DANIELA

Antonia first! You now, more than Antonia! Dear Monsa! [*In sudden desperation*] Oh, I will go away! [*MONSA makes appealing gesture*] If you knew . . .

MONSA

Daniela . . . What are you saying?

DANIELA

I should never have come here.

MONSA

Daniela . . .

DANIELA

I will go back . . . to Paris. Here every one hates me . . . despises me! There . . . I shall still be young . . . I am not ugly . . . [*Wildly excited*] I will go! I will go!

MONSA

And the chalet?

DANIELA

I had forgotten it! [*Absently*] It will soon be finished . . . the balcony . . . is almost finished . . .

[*Enter RAMÓN, followed by VALERIO, who carries several rolls of architect's drawings and some small books*]

RAMÓN

[*Matter-of-fact tone; business-like manner*]

The balustrade will be here to-morrow.

DANIELA [*With enthusiasm*]

For the central balcony?

RAMÓN

[*Takes letter from his pocket*]

A letter from the marble-cutter.

DANIELA

Will it be in place to-morrow?

RAMÓN

To-morrow . . . yes . . . if you wish.

DANIELA

And we may go on the balcony at once? [RAMÓN *nods assent*] You and I first, Ramón . . . you and I first!

[*Laughs delightedly*]

RAMÓN [*Dryly*]

A good idea . . . yes! [*To VALERIO*] Leave them there.

[*Takes some of the objects from VALERIO and places them on the table. VALERIO follows his example, and goes out, right centre*]

DANIELA

I shall not go, Monsa!

[*Laughs in madcap fashion*]

RAMÓN

[*Unrolling plans with his back to DANIELA and MONSA*]

We have many things to talk of, Daniela; that 's why I 've brought the plans. [*Turns brusquely*] Monsa, you here still?

MONSA

[*Her eyes meet RAMÓN's for an instant; it is a psychic moment; MONSA, with clearer insight,*

sees what RAMÓN has not yet owned to himself; she turns and smiles tenderly at DANIELA, who she knows has not seen]

Adios! Adios!

[Sweetly]

DANIELA

Adios! Adios!

[Gaily]

[MONSA goes out, up right]

RAMÓN

[Turning over plans, with his back to DANIELA; his tone is brusque]

Come here! I want your opinion on several things.

DANIELA *[Gaily]*

As many as you wish. You are so good, Ramón!

RAMÓN

[He unrolls plan showing front elevation]

Look!

DANIELA

I'm looking.

RAMÓN

Don Felipe says . . . do you want the tower to finish like this . . . or like this?

[Unrolls other plan]

DANIELA

[Looks at first drawing, with accustomed excitability]

Higher! Very much higher!

RAMÓN [*Repressing her*]

There . . . there . . . [*Shows drawing number two*]
How do you like this one?

DANIELA

[*Measuring tower with her fingers, by comparison with façade*]

Let me see! Let me see! [*Takes hold of drawing*]
Hold it straight! [*The drawing slips from RAMÓN'S grasp and rolls up tight; DANIELA strikes him with it and laughs; RAMÓN is serious; he still holds open the first plan, whose tower DANIELA now measures, as before*] Higher! Higher! What is Don Felipe thinking of?

RAMÓN

I have told him you wanted it higher. He says that as it is drawn, it will be nearly as high as the tower of the church.

DANIELA [*Quite unconscious*]

That means it will not be as high as the tower of the church! I will not accept it! I will not accept it! I want it high, Ramón . . . fancy . . . on bright nights . . . so slender . . . and white . . . with its golden tiles . . .

RAMÓN

[*Unimpressed, rolling up the plans*]

Well, that is settled . . . it shall be as you wish . . . and they who don't like it may put up with it!

DANIELA

What?

RAMÓN

It seems the whole world must interfere in what does not concern it.

DANIELA

In what is the whole world interfering?

RAMÓN

Nothing!

DANIELA

Yes . . . yes . . . I wish you to tell me.

RAMÓN [*After a pause*]

The curate says he cannot consent that the tower of your house shall put the tower of the church to shame.

DANIELA

Cannot consent! Is he the ruler of space, pray?

RAMÓN

We have discussed it repeatedly. He is interfering in what does not concern him . . . he has said so much . . . that if he were not who he is . . . were it not for the respect I owe him . . .

DANIELA

You were talking of me.

RAMÓN

Of you . . . and others.

DANIELA

I disturb him, too! And you defended me! Don't do it, Ramón . . . don't defend me . . . I 'm not worth it!

RAMÓN [*Greatly annoyed*]

Well . . . well . . . we 'll say no more about it. [*Takes roll of bills and a memorandum from his trousers pocket*] I have been paying bills . . . here is the account . . . and there is all this money left.

DANIELA

You will be needing it.

RAMÓN [*Earnestly*]

No . . . no . . .

[*Extends the bills to DANIELA*]

DANIELA

Has the curate forbidden that, too?

RAMÓN

[*He betrays his feeling*]

I wish you had not a cent !

DANIELA

[*She takes the bills from his hand*]

Poor Ramón! You . . . yes . . . you love me!

[*She does not suspect how*]

RAMÓN

[*Startled and greatly shaken*]

Yes . . . yes . . .

[*He regards her strangely and walks apart*]

DANIELA

[*Tenderly, as to a brother*]

The same Ramón! Just as you used to be! You have been a sort of porcupine all your life . . . I wonder you have n't quills all over you! When we were little . . . and I would put my arms around your neck . . . you would hang your head . . . and look so fierce . . . just as you do now, Ramón . . . oh, how frightened I am!

RAMÓN [*Hoarsely*]

And you dare remind me of it! [*Lower*] And now I only frighten you!

DANIELA

[*Still unconscious, smiling gaily*]

But always friends, Ramón!

RAMÓN [*Dryly*]

Yes!

DANIELA

Always friends . . . if you wish it, Ramón! [*Lowering voice*] And if you are never cruel . . . as you were that day!

RAMÓN

[*Interrupting vehemently*]

You promise . . . you swear . . . never to leave me again?

DANIELA

With all my heart . . . I promise . . . I will never leave here again.

[*Said naturally and reassuringly*]

RAMÓN [*Great emotion*]

Thank you, Daniela, . . . thank you! I . . . [*he pauses, fearing to go on*] Thank you!

[*His manner is wild*]

DANIELA [*Dimly perceiving it*]

What . . .

RAMÓN

Nothing!

DANIELA [*Curious*]

That is not what you . . .

RAMÓN

No! No! I cannot say it!

DANIELA

Not say it? Is it something sad, Ramón? [*Places her hand affectionately on his shoulder*] I want you to tell me.

RAMÓN

No! No! I could not tell . . . when we were children . . . ! Less now! [*Gathers up drawings with trembling hands*] I must go!

DANIELA

[*She is annoyed, but dismisses this enigma as she has others; she takes a lace mantilla (white) from chair, and casts it over her hair, moving indifferently toward the door*]

I am going to visit Monsa.

RAMÓN

[*He puts down the plans*]

Wait a moment! [*Fingers the plans nervously*] I will be looking over the plans, and meantime we can be talking!

DANIELA [*Annoyed*]

Of what?

RAMÓN

Bah! Anything you like! [*Seats himself*] Don't go! [*DANIELA starts to go out*] I don't wish you to go!

[*Said imperiously*]

DANIELA [*Hesitating*]

But if we have nothing more to talk of . . .

RAMÓN [*Violently*]

Don't go, I tell you! . . . When you go out, at this

hour, I 'm afraid you 'll not come back! [*Frenzied*]
Don't go!

[*It is growing dark*]

DANIELA

[*She regards him intently, and with characteristic suddenness understands*]

Ramón! [*He rises and begins pacing the room. DANIELA watches him with, for her, unusual intentness*]
Listen! [*Endeavors to detain him*] I want to ask you something! [*He stops*] When I ran away . . . from this house . . . did you . . . [*With resolution*] did you . . . love me?

RAMÓN [*Wildly*]

Love you? Did I love you? Why do you ask?

DANIELA

I don't know why . . . because . . . I should be sorry . . . if it were so . . . and I did not know it!

[*It grows slowly darker*]

RAMÓN

Why would you be sorry?

DANIELA

For . . . nothing!

[*She wishes to end the talk*]

RAMÓN

I thought . . .

DANIELA

You were wrong! [*She is fortified by the purity of her sorrow*] I should be sorry . . . yes . . . I should be sorry . . . for, had you loved me . . . who knows? . . . I should have loved you, perhaps . . . I should have been kept here by your love . . . I might have been your wife . . . the children would have been mine . . . now she will not even let me love them!

[*She is weeping*]

RAMÓN

[*Dominated by his passion*]

I will tell you . . . yes, Daniela . . . I loved you . . . I loved you . . . I tried to follow you . . . to bring you back . . . or kill you . . . I don't know . . . I don't know . . . my heart followed after every train that went toward France. But I had no money . . . and to get money I played . . . played and lost. I was so wild to play again . . . I forced open my father's desk . . . and stole . . . and played again . . . and lost . . . and stole . . . again. I went on . . . playing . . . losing . . . stealing . . . for you, Daniela . . . for you! . . . Till one night . . . my father came upon me . . . robbing him! . . . Do you know what he did? He placed the key in my hand and said, "Why do you take it so, when all is yours?" and went away weeping. . . . I left the key . . . where it belonged. My eyes were opened at last! I cursed you! I cursed you!

DANIELA [*Terrified, made dull*]

Ramón . . . you never told me . . .

RAMÓN

I did n't know how . . . I never told myself!

DANIELA

[*She smiles in heart-broken fashion*]

You loved me . . . and kept it secret! Who would believe it? [*Bitterly*] Others, who never loved me, have sworn it a thousand times! . . . You . . . waited fourteen years to tell me!

[*Laughs forlornly*]

RAMÓN

[*He has no sense of tragi-comedy; he misunderstands her laughter, and is enraged by it*]

I did well not to tell you. You never deserved it!

[*Starts to go out, greatly agitated*]

DANIELA

Why?

RAMÓN [*Ferociously*]

You are laughing at me!

DANIELA

Laughing! [*Piteously*] Do you not pity me, even when I laugh?

RAMÓN

Pity you? No! You have never felt pity for anything or anybody. [*She continues smiling*] You were always the same! Pity is wasted on you! Go . . .

go . . . where you like! . . . If you had married me . . . you would have left me . . . to throw yourself away . . . to be what you have been . . . and what you are . . . you do well to laugh at me!

[DANIELA *has dried her tears; she rises, goes to the table, and begins slowly to tear the plans; her action is deliberate, with no appearance of anger*]

DANIELA

You are right! I see it now. It is too late for me to live tranquilly: water may not be turned from its course; here I am only a trouble . . . for every one. I should never have done what I did . . . but now it is impossible to turn back . . . impossible . . . impossible . . .

RAMÓN [*Amazed*]

What are you doing? You are destroying the plans!

DANIELA

The curate was right. The material for the house . . . all that I own here . . . you will give to him. Let them throw down what they have built, and with the stone from my house . . . build what they like . . . I wanted to rise . . . high . . . high . . . but as I cannot . . . why, back into the dust again! I have crept there once . . . there I must go on!

RAMÓN

Daniela . . .

DANIELA

I have not found here what I sought, . . . and I have brought misfortune; but I wish to share it with no one.

[*It grows darker*]

RAMÓN

Daniela . . . do you believe . . . because I said what I did . . . that I hate you?

DANIELA

Yes . . . I wish to believe it always . . . hate . . . anger . . . abomination!

RAMÓN

No, I do not hate you, Daniela! I . . .

DANIELA [*Passionately*]

Yes . . . yes . . . you hate me! Not another word, Ramón!

RAMÓN

[*The dialogue here becomes simultaneous*]

I do not hate you . . . no . . . I am not changed, Daniela . . . my heart burns when you speak to me!

DANIELA [*Covering her ears*]

I will not listen . . .

RAMÓN

Daniela, for you . . .

DANIELA

I will not listen! No, Ramón! Ramón!

[*They lower their voices*]

RAMÓN

You must listen! I don't want you to go! [DANIELA looks furtively toward the door; RAMÓN grasps her arm] You will stay here . . . and you will promise me again never to . . .

DANIELA [*Sadly*]

Not now, Ramón . . . not now!

RAMÓN

Why?

DANIELA

Poor Ramón! You would curse me again!

RAMÓN

No! It is fate, Daniela!

[*It has grown quite dark; faint light now comes from ANTONIA'S room*]

DANIELA

Hush! [*Points to the light, which grows brighter*]
Look!

ANTONIA

[*Entering with small Roman lamp*]

Good-evening!

DANIELA [*Faintly*]

Good-evening . . . Antonia!

ANTONIA [*Pausing*]

I disturb you?

RAMÓN [*Roughly*]

Leave the light there.

ANTONIA

[*She places the lamp on the table and addresses
RAMÓN*]

Have you forgotten? To-morrow is the fair at Val-
clara [*Vahl-clah'ra*].

RAMÓN

I know.

ANTONIA

Are you not going? You wrote your brother Gui-
llermas he might expect you.

RAMÓN

I shall not go; I have nothing to go for.

ANTONIA

I asked because for some time I have intended to go
home for a visit, and if you are not going to Val-
clara . . .

RAMÓN

Well . . .

ANTONIA

You know, Father is ailing . . .

RAMÓN

Do as you like. Who will take care of the boy?

[*As he speaks he looks unconsciously at DANIELA*]

ANTONIA

I shall take the children with me.

RAMÓN

By no means! The children shall not move from here. [*Restraining himself*] They would only be a trouble to you.

ANTONIA

My children a trouble to me! You never said that before, Ramón!

RAMÓN

I say it now. We 'll talk no more about it. The children remain here.

DANIELA

[*Interrupting ANTONIA, who is about to speak*]

Antonia, I wish to tell you something . . . alone . . .

ANTONIA

Anything you have to say to me you may say to Ramón as well.

RAMÓN

To me? No. Nor to her, neither. We want no secrets here, Daniela . . . you understand?

DANIELA [*Resolutely*]

Listen, Antonia: I ask you not to go.

[RAMÓN strikes the table with his clenched fist]

ANTONIA

Oh, no! I shall not go and leave my children. A mother does not abandon her children. A father may, perhaps . . . but a mother . . . no!

RAMÓN

How a father? I care more for our children than you do!

DANIELA

Ramón!

RAMÓN

She says I do not care for my children! Oh, I am sick of this! I want no sullen faces here! This house has become a hell!

ANTONIA

I am the mother of your children, . . . and no one else.

[*Looks defiantly at DANIELA*]

DANIELA

Antonia . . . listen . . . Antonia! [ANTONIA is wiping her eyes] I have decided I shall go. [RAMÓN starts to speak; DANIELA stops him by a look] I shall go. [To ANTONIA] Don't hate me, Antonia, . . . you have no reason.

RAMÓN

No, Daniela . . . no . . . I . . .

[*His eyes meet ANTONIA'S and he is silent*]

ANTONIA

You! What? What? Dare to say it! . . . You will not say it . . . no . . . but there is no need! You have not deceived me . . . nor this one, either. I know her.

[*Laughs angrily*]

RAMÓN

Be quiet!

DANIELA

No . . . let her speak!

ANTONIA

But she has deceived you! She is making a fool of you!

RAMÓN

Antonia!

DANIELA [*To ANTONIA*]

And have you nothing to thank me for? You think me incapable of being honest?

ANTONIA

I have nothing to thank you for . . . yet! I shall have when you go!

DANIELA

I am going.

RAMÓN

[*Furiously, to ANTONIA*]

Go to your room!

ANTONIA [*Defying him*]

Let her go first!

RAMÓN

[*Points to door, right*]

Go to your room, I say!

ANTONIA

Beat me! Kill me! I have suffered enough!

RAMÓN [*Menacing her*]

Silence!

[*Points to room*]

DANIELA

No, Ramón!

ANTONIA [*Vindictively*]

You defend me? Oh, go . . . go . . . !

DANIELA

Yes . . . yes . . . I tell you . . . I am going . . .

[*DANIELA starts to go out*]

ANTONIA

She cannot live without followers . . . and as she does not find them elsewhere, she comes here . . .

DANIELA

[*To RAMÓN, who tries to detain her*]

Let me go . . . let me go . . . or I . . .

[*She turns swiftly and takes a step toward ANTONIA*]

ANTONIA [*Laughs derisively*]

She threatens me . . . me . . .

[*VALERIO enters hurriedly*]

VALERIO

There 's a lady and two gentlemen outside, asking for Mademoiselle Daniela.

RAMÓN

Be off with you!

VALERIO [*Insistent*]

They are coming in.

[*Voices are heard without*]

ANTONIA

[*She looks with apprehension toward the door*]

They shall not take my children from me!

[*She hastens in door on right*]

MAX [*Without*]

Daniela . . . where is Daniela?

HUGUETTE [*Without*]

Daniela . . . Daniela . . .

DANIELA [*To VALERIO*]

I know them . . . they are my friends. Ask them to come in.

[*Exit VALERIO*]

MAX [*Entering gaily*]

Daniela . . . is here.

HUGUETTE

[*Entering effusively*]

Now she belongs to us!

DANIELA

Oh . . . how glad I am . . . Huguette . . . [*Embraces her lightly; does not kiss her*] . . . Richard, too! [*As RICHARD enters pompously*]

RICHARD

[*Air of ponderous gravity*]

At your service, Madame!

[*All talk with enthusiasm*]

DANIELA

[*She gives RICHARD her hand delightedly*]

Tight . . . tight . . . I 'm so delighted . . .

HUGUETTE

Ah . . . you did n't believe we would come to visit you . . . eh? *Que brune!* What a splendid color!

DANIELA [*Laughs nervously*]

Yes . . . yes . . . I am very well!

[RAMÓN meantime has taken in the situation, while pretending to rearrange the drawings; he divines their intention to persuade DANIELA to return with them to Paris; rises with determination and goes out, up right]

MAX

Listen, Daniela . . . crowded houses at every performance in Barcelona and Valencia! In Madrid . . . [*With affectation*] nightly ovations! Unparalleled triumphs! . . . [*Resuming careless tone*] And now . . . country air and quiet for the rest of the summer!

[*Laughs contentedly*]

DANIELA

[*Looking affectionately from one to the other*]

You . . . yes . . . you love me!

MAX [*Pluming himself*]

How do you find me? Voice magnificent as always . . . eh?

[*Sings a cadenza with tremendous force*]

DANIELA

Bravo!

[*Laughs with abandon*]

HUGUETTE

He has been singing divinely!

MAX

We came by the mail-train, Daniela; we have four hours before the express is due.

DANIELA

[Laughing and still drying her eyes surreptitiously]

Oh . . . you don't know how happy you have made me! *[Stamps impatiently, being unable to restrain her tears]* Yes . . . I am happy . . . happy . . . and if I must die . . . bah!

[Snaps her fingers contemptuously and laughs; she is intoxicated by her own volatile spirit. The others exchange looks of amazement]

MAX

Daniela . . . you are nervous . . . extremely nervous . . . *[Shaking his finger]* and if we have come at a bad time . . .

DANIELA

On the contrary! The best possible time . . . I need your advice . . . you will advise me . . .

MAX

But we don't know anything yet . . . eh, Richard?

RICHARD *[Pompously]*

Speak, Madame . . . you shall be heard!

DANIELA

[*Hesitatingly, yet speaking rapidly*]

You find me in great trouble . . . I scarcely know how to explain . . .

MAX [*Confidentially*]

Money all gone?

HUGUETTE

[*Delighted anticipation*]

You are in love . . .

DANIELA

No! No! [*Pause*] I came here in search of health . . . repose . . . and I have brought misfortune on this house. They do not understand me . . . they are determined to see in me only . . . what I do not want to be!

HUGUETTE

Hypocrites! And they no doubt are worse!

MAX

Now I can advise you! Come with us to Paris. The felicities of . . . rural life . . . are not for us! If you no longer possessed la Beauté du Diable . . . [*He kisses his hand*] if you were old . . . ugly . . . I should say, . . . "Remain here . . . if it pleases you!" . . . But no! You are young . . . beautiful . . . and rich, in the bargain! Seek some marquis . . . of those who have no fondness for ancient history . . . and marry him!

HUGUETTE

Oh, no! One should marry only for love! There can be no happiness without love! [*Cooing*] Life was made for love!

RICHARD [*Sardonic*] .

Oh . . . love!

[*Rattles his pipe on the table*]

DANIELA

You don't understand . . .

MAX

Let Richard speak! Come . . . what would you do if you were in Daniela's place?

RICHARD

I . . . ? [*Puffs stolidly at pipe*] I . . . ?

MAX

Yes, man . . . you!

RICHARD

Let her explain! She has not explained herself yet! [*Oddly*] Besides . . . explanations are useless! [*He turns to the others, and points with one finger down at the table; his tone is abrupt, assured*] Take roulette! You place your money on the red . . . the wheel begins turning . . . [*Circular motion*] until it stops . . . you don't know whether you have won or lost! [*Indicates DANIELA, without looking at her*] It's the same with her! The wheel has not stopped yet! Fate

. . . must decide . . . whether she will die in church
. . . on her knees . . . enveloped in her mantilla
[*mahn-teel'ya*] . . . beating her breast in contrition
. . . or burst . . . from too much dancing in the
theatre!

DANIELA

It is not true . . . I do think . . . I do reflect . . .

RICHARD

Yes . . . while the wheel is turning!

[*RAMÓN passes door up right, and peers in at
DANIELA*]

DANIELA

[*She sees him, and speaks in low tone to the
others*]

I have decided . . . I shall return with you to Paris.

RICHARD

The red wins! [*Lower*] The wheel has stopped!

[*He goes on smoking without change of coun-
tenance; the others laugh and talk excitedly*]

HUGUETTE

Yes . . . yes . . . ah, Paris! Paris!

MAX

I will find you an impresario.

DANIELA [*Proudly*]

I can have as many as I wish! When they know I have arrived . . . you will see!

[RAMÓN *appears in door up right*]

RICHARD [*Phlegmatically*]

Bravo! [*The others applaud with laughter*] And now . . . I will tell you . . . a truth. Shall I? [*To the others*] [DANIELA *laughs apprehensively; the others cry, "Yes . . . yes!"* He looks at DANIELA *gravely*] You are leaving here . . . to escape falling in love.

HUGUETTE [*Incredulously*]

She in love!

MAX [*Incredulously*]

Daniela . . . in love!

DANIELA [*Annoyed*]

It is not true!

[*The others continue laughing; RAMÓN enters the room, followed by VALERIO*]

RAMÓN [*To VALERIO*]

You may go to bed. I will lock up.

VALERIO

Good night, Master.

[*Enters door on left, closes it, and bolts it audibly. RAMÓN goes to the table, and observes the situation under pretext of exam-*

ining the plans; the others draw away and go on talking; DANIELA watches him covertly, and becomes each moment more nervous and excited; as he gets the drift of the conversation, RAMÓN seats himself and goes on looking over the papers]

MAX

[To RICHARD in an undertone]

Impossible!

RICHARD *[In an undertone]*

I am an old bird.

HUGUETTE *[To DANIELA]*

Tell me about it.

DANIELA

But it is not true! To convince you . . . *[She leads them as far as possible away from RAMÓN]* I will go with you to Paris, to-night.

[The others show great delight]

MAX

To-night, Daniela?

[DANIELA signifies assent, and cautions them to speak lower]

HUGUETTE

Really, Daniela?

[DANIELA cautions them again]

RICHARD [*Maliciously*]

But why . . . if it is not a secret?

[RAMÓN *fidgets in his chair but controls himself*]

DANIELA

I will explain later. [*She glances at RAMÓN. In a low voice*] Have you a carriage? [MAX *nods assent*]
Is it waiting?

MAX

Yes. The express passes at midnight.

[DANIELA and MAX *talk in a low voice*]

HUGUETTE

[*She approaches RICHARD, who is pacing to and fro, covertly watching RAMÓN*]

What would I not give to see the lover!

RICHARD [*Undertone*]

You wish to see him? Behold him!

[*Indicates RAMÓN*]

HUGUETTE

[*Laughs incredulously*]

He! Richard!

DANIELA

[*In low tone to MAX*]

I will say that I am going with you to the train.

MAX

A good idea!

[RICHARD and HUGUETTE have continued talking and laughing in a low tone as they regard RAMÓN]

RICHARD

You will see! [*They walk toward RAMÓN, appearing not to notice him*] Yes . . . of course . . .

HUGUETTE

It 's very evident!

RICHARD

Daniela is wise in returning with us to Paris.

RAMÓN

[*Strikes table with his fist*]

It 's a lie!

[*All start in amazement*]

RICHARD

Pardon me! Have I offended?

DANIELA

What is it? What has happened?

RAMÓN

[*Endeavoring to restrain himself*]

Nothing . . . nothing . . . I thought . . . I was looking at this. [*Pointing to plans*] We must decide this at once!

[*He is greatly excited*]

DANIELA

[*With much agitation*]

There is no hurry . . . I cannot attend to it now . . .

RAMÓN

I will wait . . .

DANIELA [*To the others*]

I will walk with you to the carriage. [*To RAMÓN*]
We can talk of that when I return.

RAMÓN [*Rising*]

I will go with you. The night is dark . . . it is well to take precautions.

[*Takes a revolver from table drawer and puts it in his pocket*]

HUGUETTE [*In alarm*]

A revolver!

DANIELA

There is no need for weapons! Wait for me here . . . I am not afraid.

RAMÓN

Wait for you here? No! As for this . . . [*Takes revolver from his pocket and returns it to the drawer*]
My hands will suffice. They have lifted you many times before you learned to fly. [*To HUGUETTE*] And you, Madame, have no fear! I shall not harm you, nor these gentlemen.

[*DANIELA sinks helplessly into a chair*]

MAX [*Jocosely*]

Oh, no! Besides, we are two against one.

HUGUETTE [*Laughing*]

Max! Max turned bravo!

RAMÓN [*Scornfully*]

Oh, you are anæmics . . . you live in the stifling air of the theatre. Here we breathe the air from the mountains. The wolves are afraid to face us! You kill one another . . . and die . . . in jest. A drum . . . is the roar of the cannon! The curtain falls, and the dead men rise and shake the dust from their clothes.

RICHARD [*Delighted*]

I like this fellow . . . I like him!

HUGUETTE

[*Laughing, yet terrified*]

He frightens me! Come, let us go!

RAMÓN

For my part, whenever you please! [*Takes a lantern*] I will light you. [*Commanding tone*] And you, Daniela, will not move from here. [*DANIELA rises from her chair*] The night is cold. [*She is about to reply; he interrupts her*] I tell you the night is very cold.

RICHARD

[*Restrains DANIELA by a look*]

But it is early yet! Better to wait here than at the station!

[*Seats himself*]

DANIELA

No! No! It is useless to pretend longer! This comedy has gone far enough; it is ended.

RAMÓN

What is it that is ended?

DANIELA

Everything! You know I cannot remain here! [*To the others*] Come, Huguette!

[*They do not move*]

RAMÓN [*Excitedly*]

But do you hear this woman? By heaven, with you she has learned to act! [*To DANIELA*] But you shall not go . . . I promise you . . . you shall not go!

[*Goes swiftly to door, right, and turns the key*]

DANIELA

Ramón! You know I cannot remain . . . that I must go.

RAMÓN [*Beside himself*]

A lie! This is all a farce and a lie! You are going because you have deceived me; you told me you were

changed; but now, seeing these people, you are become what you were before.

DANIELA

No, Ramón, . . . no . . .

RAMÓN

You have lived in the mire . . . and when the mire comes near you, you cast yourself into it again. Confess it . . . confess it . . . and I will let you go . . .

DANIELA

[With a frightened glance toward ANTONIA'S room]

Yes . . . yes . . . I confess it . . . I long for my old life . . . for my companions! I am what I was . . . and what I wish to be. I want to live . . . and die . . . with my own . . . with you! *[She turns to the others and throws herself into their arms]* Yes . . . yes . . . take me away . . . take me with you!
[HUGUETTE and MAX support her]

MAX *[To RICHARD]*

Come!

[RICHARD remains seated]

RAMÓN *[Savagely]*

Good! Good! You are not acting now . . . *[Bitterly]* And I hoped . . .

DANIELA

[*Laughing wildly and weeping*]

That I would be infamous . . . more infamous even than I am!

RAMÓN

No . . . no . . . That you were changed . . . transformed . . .

DANIELA

Changed! Transformed! [*To the others*] Do you know how he would have transformed me? By making me . . .

RAMÓN [*Interrupting her*]

Stop . . . stop! . . .

[*The others mock him*]

DANIELA

This is how he would honor me . . . regenerate me . . .

RICHARD [*Dryly*]

The rude virtue of rural regions!

[*Laughs with feigned indignation*]

RAMÓN [*Wildly*]

What do you know of the struggle of my soul?

MAX [*To HUGUETTE*]

Beautiful theory of regeneration!

RAMÓN

It is a curse . . . sent upon my soul . . . this woman has brought it!

RICHARD [*Burlesque*]

His great heart . . . broke.

OMNES

Ha! Ha! Ha!

DANIELA

[*Rises in a passion of anger*]

You laugh at him!

[*The others try to control their laughter*]

RAMÓN

See them . . . see them . . . how they are laughing!

[*Moves toward them in a threatening manner*]

DANIELA

[*She places herself before him and faces the others*]

Don't laugh at him!

RAMÓN

[*Endeavors to rush upon them*]

I will kill them!

DANIELA

No . . . Ramón, I command you!

[*The others are retreating slowly toward the door*]

RICHARD

Curtain! Curtain!

DANIELA

Go!

MAX [*Laughing*]

But, Daniela . . .

HUGUETTE

Are you not coming . . . Daniela?

[*Laughs*]

DANIELA

Oh, go . . . go . . . you are all alike.

RICHARD

[*Who is the last to go out, makes a ceremonious bow*]

We are all one, Madame.

[*He includes DANIELA. MAX and HUGUETTE are heard laughing immoderately without. DANIELA closes the door; exhausted, breathing with difficulty, she leans heavily on the table; laughter is still heard in the distance*]

DANIELA

You see . . . you have made me . . . pity you . . . it was what you wanted . . . you have made me pity you . . .

RAMÓN

[*Endeavors to take her in his arms*]

Daniela!

DANIELA

[*She shrinks from him, and endeavors to gain her room, supporting herself with the aid of the table and chairs*]

No . . . Ramón . . . no . . .

RAMÓN [*Pursuing her*]

Daniela! Daniela!

DANIELA

Not another word . . . Ramón . . . you have shortened my life . . . do not kill me! . . .

RAMÓN

No, Daniela . . . no . . .

DANIELA

Let me die . . . if I must . . . don't kill me, Ramón!

RAMÓN

[*He takes her in his arms to keep her from falling*]

Daniela!

DANIELA

No . . . no . . . no! . . .

[*Endeavors to push him from her, but is unable to stand alone. RAMÓN still supports her; as they approach door, up left, he kisses her*]

DANIELA [*Resisting*]

No! No! [*She frees herself and runs toward door on right*] Antonia . . . Antonia . . . [*As she reaches the door she sinks on her knees, unlocks it, pushes it open, and leans against the wall*] I want to die . . . alone . . . alone! . . .

[*A dim light shines from ANTONIA'S room: there is the sound of the cradle, and ANTONIA'S voice singing a cradle-song*]

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE is unchanged. The door to DANIELA'S room is closed; the door to ANTONIA'S room is open; the cradle, which stands as in second act, is unoccupied.

TIME: Morning. The day is cheerless, cold; light gray sky; the room is deserted.

[Enter ANTONIA, from door, right; she carries a small scarf.]

ANTONIA [Calling]

Ana! Ana! [Enter ANA, reluctantly, door, left; she is eating a biscuit] Come, child, hurry! You must put on your scarf! It is cold!

ANA [Hanging back]

No . . . mother!

ANTONIA

Yes . . . come . . . [ANA approaches slowly] Will you be quiet? [ANA fidgets as ANTONIA adjusts the scarf] There! Kiss me!

ANA

[She kisses her mother and turns to the cradle]
Now, one for baby . . .

[She stops in surprise, finding the cradle vacant]

ANTONIA

He is at your aunt's house. [*ANA looks at her mother inquiringly*] Come . . . come . . . you will be late to school!

ANA [*Running out*]

Adios!

ANTONIA

Adios!

[*She arranges room*]

TOMASA

[*Entering with basket on her arm and an umbrella*]

It must be getting late! Good morning, Antonia!

ANTONIA [*Wearily*]

Good morning, Tomasa!

TOMASA

I am on my way to town. I stopped to see if you wanted me to bring you anything.

ANTONIA

No; I need nothing. I was in town only yesterday.

TOMASA [*Not heeding*]

You buy so much . . . now you have Daniela with you! I suppose she pays her own way, though . . . of course!

[*She looks searchingly at ANTONIA*]

ANTONIA

I don't know. Ramón attends to such matters.

TOMASA

My child! It 's enough to frighten a body . . . the table you set now! [*Shaking her head*] Do you know if Daniela wants anything?

ANTONIA

She may! She is not up yet!

TOMASA

I 'll wait! She has so many notions! I dare say she will want something!

ANTONIA

As you like.

ANDRÉS [*Entering*]

Do you know where Ramón is?

ANTONIA

At the new house, I think.

ANDRÉS

I don't want to see him . . . I just finished breakfast . . . and so . . .

TOMASA [*Interrupting*]

You thought you 'd run in! Talk about women gadding . . .

ANDRÉS

It 's too dark to work . . . it 's beginning to rain.

TOMASA

Well . . . I 've got to go to town!

ANDRÉS

Even the masons have stopped work.

TOMASA [*To ANTONIA*]

You had visitors yesterday! Theatre folks, eh?

ANTONIA

I believe so.

TOMASA

[*Laughing expectantly*]

What did they say? What did they say?

ANTONIA

Nothing!

PONA

[*Enters with small basket of cherries*]

Good morning! Your wife is calling you, Andrés!
Mercy! I am wet through!

ANDRÉS

Is she at the door?

PONA

Yes . . . yelling at the top of her voice!

ANDRÉS

Let her yell! Don't tell her I was here.

TOMASA [*Quizzically*]

And why not?

ANDRÉS

The poor thing is jealous!

[*Leers idiotically in the direction of DANIELA'S room. The women ridicule him*]

PONA

[*Calling attention to her cherries*]

Look . . . from my garden! I just picked them . . . the rain would ruin them . . . yes. [*To ANTONIA*] Do you suppose Daniela would buy them?

ANTONIA

When she comes you can ask her.

PONA

Not up yet? Paris ways, I suppose!

ANDRÉS

I've heard they turn night into day there! [*To PONA, slyly*] See if she's still at the door!

[*PONA looks from door up right*]

TOMASA

Well . . . I've got to go to town!

ANTONIA

Call Daniela if you wish to.

TOMASA [*Resignedly*]

No . . . no . . . I 'll wait. Well . . . well . . . theatre folks, eh?

[ANTONIA *turns aside to avoid her*]

PONA

[*Returning, to ANDRÉS*]

She 's sitting in the door, sewing.

ANDRÉS

[*He carries an alpargata, which he has laid down and recently taken up, preparatory to going; he now deposits it again*]

I have n't said anything! [*Undertone*] I wish she 'd sew her tongue up . . . or tie a knot in it!

TOMASA [*To ANTONIA*]

Do you suppose Daniela will get well?

ANTONIA [*Losing patience*]

Oh . . . how should I know?

PONA

She 's building a new house!

TOMASA

Shows she likes the neighborhood!

PONA

Oh . . . I 've so much to do!

ANDRÉS

If you are going . . . do me a favor!

PONA

What is it?

ANDRÉS

Stop and talk to her a minute . . . and stand in front of her . . . so I can slip out . . .

[The women laugh boisterously]

ANTONIA

[She has entered door, right, prior to last speech, and now returns]

What is the matter?

PONA

Nothing! He 's afraid of his wife . . . that 's all!
[In malicious undertone] They say she beats him with a strap.

[TOMASA and PONA laugh immoderately]

ANDRÉS

Well, don't I beat her, too?

PONA

I will call Daniela! *[To ANTONIA]* Shall I?

ANTONIA [*Wearily*]

Call her.

PONA

[*She goes to DANIELA'S door and knocks softly*]

Daniela! [*Knocks again*] Daniela! I 've brought you some cherries! [*Returns, center*] Now, she 'll get up!

TOMASA

What time is it?

ANDRÉS

It must be eight o'clock.

PONA

Eight! It 's nearer half-past eight! [*Returns again to door and knocks*] Daniela! Daniela! [*Returns, center*] And I 've got so much sewing to do! It seems as though my boys don't do anything but wear out trousers!

ANDRÉS

Mine are all girls . . . thank Heaven!

PONA [*Amazed*]

Well . . . that is something to be thankful for!

TOMASA

[*She has gone to DANIELA'S door and is listening*]

I don't hear anything! Guess she 's sleepin' yet! Daniela! [*Calling*] Do you need anything from

town? Do you want me to bring you anything from town? It 's Tomasa!

[Signifies by signs that she hears no response]

ANDRÉS

Heavy sleeper . . . ain't she?

TOMASA *[Listening]*

Can't hear a sound!

PONA *[Joining TOMASA]*

I 'll make her hear! *[Places lips at keyhole]* Daniela! Daniela! *[Raps sharply on the door]* Daniela!

TOMASA

If that does n't wake her!

ANDRÉS

[Listening intently near door]

Hush!

PONA

[Applying ear to keyhole again]

I don't hear anything!

ANTONIA

[She has busied herself about the room and now shows some interest]

You hear nothing!

PONA

Can anything have happened?

[Beats on the door with both hands]

ANDRÉS

Perhaps she is up . . . perhaps she 's gone out.

TOMASA *[Relieved]*

Perhaps she has!

ANTONIA

But she always rises late.

PONA

Monsa will know where she is!

[Exit up right]

TOMASA *[Calling after her]*

Come right back!

ANDRÉS *[Skeptical]*

Pshaw! She 's at the house . . . with Ramón.

TOMASA

I 'll go and see!

[Starts to go out and meets PONA returning]

PONA *[Entering]*

Monsa has not seen her go by.

ANDRÉS

Monsa can't see everything.

MONSA [*Entering anxiously*]

Daniela has not left the house this morning.

TOMASA

She ain't in her room.

MONSA

She must be in her room. [*Goes to door and listens; calls*] Daniela! [*Listens again*]

PONA [*To others*]

Do you suppose . . .

ANTONIA

[*She watches MONSA apprehensively*]

Hush . . .

MONSA

[*She endeavors to look through the keyhole*]

The room is dark . . . if she were up the shutters would be open.

PONA

But if she were in there she would answer.

ANDRÉS

Perhaps she 's foolin' us.

MONSA [*Calling*]

Daniela! Daniela! [*Inserts one finger in key-hole*]
The key is inside! [*Pushes the massive door with both hands*] It is locked! Daniela is in there!

ANTONIA

Holy Virgin!

PONA

How shall we get it open?

MONSA [*Helplessly*]

Oh, bring something . . . quick . . . quick . . .

ANTONIA

Call Ramón . . .

TOMASA

I 'll call him . . .

[*Starts to go out*]

MONSA [*Calling wildly*]

Daniela . . .

RAMÓN [*Entering up right*]

What has happened?

TOMASA

You must get that door open. Daniela is in there and she don't answer.

MONSA

I keep calling her . . . and she does n't answer.

RAMÓN

[*ANTONIA shrinks away as he enters*]

You don't call loud enough.

MONSA

Yes . . . yes . . . the door is locked inside . . .

RAMÓN

[*He hastens to the door while MONSA is speaking*]

Daniela!

[*He endeavors to open the door, and finding it locked, places his shoulder against it to force it*]

MONSA

Oh . . . be quick!

TOMASA [*To ANTONIA*]

Poor Daniela!

[*ANTONIA does not heed. RAMÓN, by a supreme effort, forces the door*]

MONSA [*Entering hurriedly*]

Daniela!

ANTONIA

[*To the other women, who press forward*]

Let me . . . first!

[*She goes into the room; the other women follow; RAMÓN starts to enter, but lacks courage; he approaches the door repeatedly, but hesitates each time; the confused murmur of women's voices is heard within*]

ANDRÉS [*To RAMÓN*]

Poor thing . . . poor thing . . .

RAMÓN [*Listening intently*]

Listen!

Daniela! MONSA [*Within*]

Raise her head. ANTONIA [*Within*]

Daniela! TOMASA [*Within*]

Oh, God! RAMÓN [*In anguish*]

Daniela, . . . do you know me . . . it 's Monsa! MONSA [*Within*]

[RAMÓN starts to enter the room, but is deterred by ANTONIA, who appears in the door]

Oh, Ramón! ANTONIA [*Entering*]

What is it? RAMÓN

ANTONIA [*Much agitated*]

She is alive. She has opened her eyes! [*Takes a step toward him appealingly*] I came to tell you . . . [RAMÓN turns away from her to conceal his suffering] I think I saw the doctor pass this morning.

RAMÓN [*To ANDRÉS*]

Send Valerio to look for him . . . tell him to run . . . run . . .

[*Exit ANDRÉS up right*]

PONA [*Entering*]

Monsa says . . . have you something for her to smell?

ANTONIA

There . . . in my room . . . on the table.

[PONA goes in door right; ANTONIA returns to DANIELA'S room; RAMÓN starts to follow, but is intercepted by MONSA, who appears in the door and eyes him uncompromisingly; RAMÓN starts back guiltily, and sinking into a chair, covers his face with his hands]

MONSA

[Calling and looking over her shoulder into DANIELA'S room]

Pona . . . do you find it?

PONA

[Appearing with a bottle of cologne]

It was not on the table . . .

MONSA [Taking it]

Give it to me!

[Reënters room]

PONA [To RAMÓN]

And here we were . . . talkin' away . . . never dreamin' . . .

[RAMÓN takes another chair farther removed from her]

MONSA [Caressingly within]

Daniela . . . do you know me . . . Monsa? And here is Antonia . . . she loves you, Daniela.

[RAMÓN groans and buries his face in his hands]

TOMASA [*Entering*]

She 's comin' to!

PONA [*Entering*]

Oh . . . I never was so scared in my life! I 'm tremblin' like a leaf!

TOMASA

You must take somethin' . . . right off . . . and Antonia too . . . and all of us! [*Clasps her hands midway between her heart and stomach, and rolls her eyes despairingly*] Oh . . . what a turn she did give us!

VALERIO

[*Entering out of breath*]

The doctor is comin'.

RAMÓN

Thank God!

TOMASA

Tell him to hurry, Valerio!

PONA

I 'll tell Monsa.

[*Enters room*]

TOMASA [*Following*]

Sh—h—h! Be careful!

[*Enter the doctor*]

RAMÓN [*Agitated voice*]

Don Joaquin . . . Daniela is dying!

JOAQUIN

So soon? I did n't expect it!

[*Shakes his head*]

RAMÓN [*Pointing to room*]

Don Joaquin!

TOMASA [*From the door*]

Oh . . . Doctor!

JOAQUIN [*Impassive*]

Let us see! Let us see!

[*Enters room*]

PONA [*Within*]

She 's easier now!

ANDRÉS

[*To TOMASA, who comes from the room*]

How is she?

TOMASA

She 's better! Wants to get up!

PONA [*Entering*]

No need of a doctor now!

ANDRÉS

Never does come till it 's all over!

TOMASA

Umph! Of course he 'll say he did it all!

PONA

Why, if I had n't come with the cherries . . .

TOMASA

If I had n't called Ramón . . .

ANDRÉS

If I had n't helped him open the door . . .

TOMASA

[*To RAMÓN, who is pacing the room*]

How did it start, anyway? Has some one been botherin' her?

RAMÓN

Oh . . . will you be quiet?

TOMASA

No . . . I 'll not . . .

[*Appeals to the others with business*]

PONA

Why, if we . . .

ANDRÉS [*Interrupting*]

I tell you if I . . .

[*RAMÓN, after hesitating, starts again to enter the room; and is again intercepted by MONSA, not with apparent intention*]

MONSA [*Entering*]

She is talking with the doctor . . . as though she were confessing something . . .

[RAMÓN *turns away*]

PONA

Do you think she is better?

MONSA

Yes . . . she is better.

TOMASA

That 's what I said!

MONSA

Tomasa, will you look in at the children a moment? I left them alone . . .

TOMASA

Don't worry! I 'll see to them!

[MONSA *returns to room*]

ANDRÉS [*To TOMASA*]

If my wife is still in the door, take her with you.

[TOMASA *makes a grimace and goes out up right*]

RAMÓN

[*To JOAQUIN, who enters from room*]

Well?

JOAQUIN

[*Glancing toward PONA and ANDRÉS*]

She 's better!

RAMÓN

Is she in danger?

JOAQUIN

No. [RAMÓN *starts to question further*] I tell you, no!

RAMÓN

Thank you, Don Joaquin . . . thank you! You don't know . . .

JOAQUIN [*To stop him*]

There . . . there . . . [*To the others*] You had better go now . . . Daniela must have quiet. [*To RAMÓN*] No one must come in here. There is too much noise.

RAMÓN

No one shall come in.

PONA [*Dryly*]

If we can be of further assistance . . .

RAMÓN

Thank you . . . thank you . . .

ANDRÉS [*To DON JOAQUIN*]

I suppose I can stay . . .

JOAQUIN [*Abruptly*]

No!

ANDRÉS

Pona . . . wait a minute!

[ANDRÉS motions for PONA to walk on his right, thus shielding him from his wife's eyes as he makes his exit; this is done slyly, without exaggeration on the part of the actor]

JOAQUIN [To RAMÓN]

Why do you not go in . . . ?

RAMÓN [Hurriedly]

No . . . no . . . I have no right . . .

JOAQUIN [Evenly]

Ramón . . . this woman is worth more than you . . .

RAMÓN

It is true . . . Don Joaquin . . .

JOAQUIN

She has more dignity. It was she . . . would not dishonor this house. Deny it!

RAMÓN

You are right . . . you are right . . .

JOAQUIN [*Measured tone*]

You have persecuted her. You have made impossible the repose she so sorely needed. You and your wife . . . between you . . . have killed her.

RAMÓN [*Aghast*]

Don Joaquin . . .

JOAQUIN

Nothing can save her.

[*Enter MONSA and ANTONIA from next room*]

MONSA [*In low, anxious tone*]

She will recover, Doctor?

JOAQUIN

[*Shaking his head slightly*]

Nothing short of a miracle . . .

[*ANTONIA looks aghast at RAMÓN, who avoids her gaze*]

MONSA [*Piteously*]

Oh, Doctor . . .

JOAQUIN

[*Kindly, decisively*]

My dear . . . I cannot perform miracles.

MONSA [*Hopefully*]

She is sleeping, Doctor.

JOAQUIN

Good! Ah . . . if things could be done over . . .

RAMÓN

What would you do, Don Joaquin?

JOAQUIN [*With asperity*]

What would I do? I would tell Daniela's physician I could not consent, under any circumstances, to her coming here; that it would be fatal . . . fatal! [*Looks at RAMÓN and ANTONIA as if to challenge denial*] That here . . . [*Turns away*] they would persecute her . . . until they killed her!

ANTONIA [*With contrition*]

Doctor . . . I thought . . .

JOAQUIN

You! You have not had an atom of compassion!

MONSA

Oh, Doctor!

JOAQUIN [*To MONSA*]

You, poor child, have been the only one to pity her; you alone have had charity.

ANTONIA [*Weeping*]

My husband despised me . . . [*Bitterly*] I am Ramón's wife . . . and she . . .

JOAQUIN

And she! What harm has she done you? She has respected you, Antonia. Another in her place would not have returned good for evil, perhaps.

[*ANTONIA is overcome*]

MONSA

Shall we let her sleep as long as she will, Doctor?

JOAQUIN

Leave her in peace! While she is sleeping, they cannot torment her.

ANTONIA

I will never be unkind again . . . I promise you, Doctor . . .

JOAQUIN [*Regarding RAMÓN*]

I will come back. [*To MONSA*] Let her take the powders, if she will; do not insist.

MONSA

You will not be long, Doctor . . .

JOAQUIN

No one is to come in . . . no one is to annoy her . . .

ANTONIA

We will close the door . . .

[*Meaning entrance*]

RAMÓN

[*He follows the doctor, who starts to go out*]

Is there no remedy, Doctor? If there is, cost what it may . . .

[*DANIELA appears in the door of her chamber, unseen by the others, and supports herself against the door-frame; she hears what follows*]

JOAQUIN [*Gruffly*]

None!

RAMÓN

Could you not call a consultation . . . I mean . . .
if you approve . . . ?

JOAQUIN [*Contemptuously*]

Consultation! Umph!

MONSA

If she wishes to sit up, Doctor . . .

JOAQUIN

[*Without looking round*]

Let her! [*Raises his hand, palm outward toward
DANIELA'S room, without turning*] It can make no
difference now.

RAMÓN [*Desperate*]

Is there no way?

JOAQUIN

She 's dead . . . already . . . I tell you . . . she 's
dead!

[*Looks fiercely at RAMÓN and goes out; the
latter follows him out. DANIELA has ad-
vanced a few steps into the room*]

ANTONIA

[*She turns and sees her*]

Daniela!

MONSA [*Flying to her*]

Why did you get up?

DANIELA [*Piteously*]

Because I want light . . . air . . . because I want to live . . .

[*Sinks into a chair; MONSA hastens to close door leading without*]

MONSA

[*Returning to DANIELA*]

You are better already . . . it was nothing, Daniela.

DANIELA

[*Looking covertly, anxiously for some one*]

No . . . no . . . it was nothing . . .

MONSA

What is it? What do you want?

DANIELA [*Plaintively*]

I want . . .

[*Her eyes meet ANTONIA'S; she covers*]

MONSA [*Hovering about her*]

Are you easy . . . so?

DANIELA

Yes . . . [*Pause*] I passed such a dreadful night!

MONSA

Why did n't you call?

DANIELA [*Dejectedly*]

No . . . no . . . [*Glances toward ANTONIA*]
Hush! [*Louder*] I heard you . . . at the door . . .
I heard you calling . . . but I could not answer. It
will be so when I am dying . . . perhaps . . .

MONSA [*Caresses her*]

You 're not going to die . . . Daniela.

DANIELA [*Desperate*]

Yes . . . I am condemned . . . nothing can save me
. . . I cannot harm any one now. [*She rises feebly,*
MONSA *supporting her; ANTONIA stands tearful,*
fearing to approach] You have the children's love,
Monsa . . . [*She endeavors to stroke MONSA'S cheek*]
. . . You have a tiny bit of the heart of each . . . to-
gether they make a big heart!

ANTONIA

[*She approaches; her tone is pleading*]

Daniela . . .

DANIELA

[*Without looking at her*]

Go . . . go to your children . . .

ANTONIA

I was wrong, Daniela . . . Ramón was unkind to
me . . . I thought . . .

DANIELA

[*Turning on her fiercely*]

Oh . . . I envy you! You will remain here . . .

surrounded by joys! For me . . . nothing! [*Piteously*]
So much love is wasted . . . and I dying of thirst!

ANTONIA

Daniela . . .

MONSA [*Softly to ANTONIA*]

Leave her . . .

DANIELA

Yes, go . . . go . . . [*Vaguely, half aside*] . . . but
I know a way . . . [*Laughs*] Yes . . . I too will be
happy . . .

[*Shrinks fearfully before ANTONIA'S wondering
look*]

MONSA [*To ANTONIA*]

You had better go. I will quiet her, and then you
can return.

[*ANTONIA sadly acquiesces, and goes out door
right, which she closes softly*]

DANIELA [*To herself*]

It is my turn to be happy now . . . it is my turn . . .

MONSA [*Returning*]

How do you feel, Daniela?

DANIELA [*Not heeding*]

The house shall be yours, Monsa . . . for your
school . . .

MONSA

No . . . Daniela!

DANIELA

Everything I have . . . yours and the children's!
You will help them to become—what I have not known
how to be! [MONSA *is weeping*; DANIELA *looks about*
her craftily] Antonia . . . has she gone?

MONSA

Yes.

DANIELA

[*She looks at MONSA with the uncompromising*
eyes of the dying]

Ramón!

MONSA [*Soothingly*]

What is it, Daniela?

DANIELA

Ramón!

MONSA [*Beseechingly*]

Daniela!

DANIELA [*Unmoved*]

Ramón!

MONSA [*Dismayed*]

Holy Virgin!

DANIELA

[*Evenly, insistently*]

Ramón . . . Ramón . . . I want Ramón!

RAMÓN

[*Partially opening door up right*]

Daniela!

[*His tone is doubtful; he is not sure he has heard aright*]

DANIELA [*To MONSA*]

Oh . . . he heard me!

RAMÓN

[*Entering and going to her*]

Yes . . . Daniela!

DANIELA [*To MONSA*]

He is my Ramón . . . the Ramón of little Daniela!

RAMÓN

Yes . . . the same Ramón! . . . [*She tries vainly to lift her arms to his neck*] You are better, Daniela! [*As to a child*] The tower is almost finished!

DANIELA

Yes . . . yes . . . but now I am in great haste . . . in great . . . [*She is suffocating*] . . . haste . . . [*MONSA offers her wine*] . . . No . . . no . . . [*Looks from RAMÓN to MONSA and smiles mysteriously*] I want to talk with Ramón . . . I have so much to tell him . . . about my journey . . . Go, Monsa . . . I will call you . . . [*She embraces MONSA feebly; MONSA hesitates*] . . . Go . . . Monsa . . .

MONSA

[*With intention, to RAMÓN*]

If I am needed . . .

RAMÓN

I will call you.

[*Greatly agitated, he follows MONSA to door up right; she goes out*]

DANIELA

[*She fears he is going*]

Ramón! . . .

[*She gives a glad little cry as he returns quickly*]

RAMÓN

What is it, Daniela?

DANIELA

[*She regards him fixedly*]

You have never been away . . . from here . . .
Ramón?

RAMÓN

No . . .

DANIELA

Do you want me to live? . . . Take me . . . far
away . . .

RAMÓN [*With passion*]

Yes . . . Daniela . . . I have dreamed it so many
times . . .

DANIELA [*In delirium*]

The abyss is calling, Ramón . . . Can you hear it?
The deeper it is . . . the louder it calls . . . We will
go . . . I want to live . . .

RAMÓN

You shall live . . . you shall!

[DANIELA places her hand over his lips; she is not deceived]

DANIELA

Hush! . . . hush! . . . [Transition] Ramón . . . you love me . . . you want me to live . . . We will run away . . . together . . . [Looks fearfully behind her] . . . from Death . . .

RAMÓN

[Imbued with the idea of flight]

Yes . . . yes . . . [He looks stealthily about him; then calls in a low, sharp voice] Valerio!

VALERIO

[Appears instantly in door up right, evidently on the alert; in low, responsive voice]

Master!

RAMÓN

The mare . . . in the light wagon . . .

VALERIO

Yes, master . . .

[Vanishes]

[DANIELA has risen and managed to reach her chamber]

RAMÓN [Sharp whisper]

Daniela . . .

[*She comes from her chamber, carrying a rich white lace mantilla, which she vainly tries to place over her hair*]

DANIELA

Come . . . I need nothing more . . .

RAMÓN

[*Hastening to meet her*]

I will help you, Daniela . . .

[*He lifts her hands while she adjusts the lace*]

DANIELA [*Suffocating*]

Wait a moment . . .

[*She sinks into a chair*]

RAMÓN [*Greatly alarmed*]

What is it, Daniela?

DANIELA

Nothing . . . the happiness!

RAMÓN

[*Breathing heavily, he looks toward ANTONIA'S room*]

Yes . . . the happiness!

DANIELA

Quick . . . Ramón . . . I wish to leave everything behind . . .

RAMÓN

[*He has heard his doom*]

Everything!

DANIELA

[*The mantilla has fallen away; she is unable to lift her arms to replace it*]

Help me . . . Ramón . . . I can . . . I can . . .
but help me . . .

RAMÓN

[*He has gone to the door, not hearing her, and is peering out*]

Come . . . Daniela . . .

DANIELA

[*She is unable to rise*]

Yes . . . I am going . . .

RAMÓN [*Without turning*]

Daniela . . .

DANIELA

Yes . . . yes . . .

RAMÓN [*Turning*]

Come . . .

DANIELA

Oh . . . I cannot . . . Take me, Ramón . . . [*He takes her hurriedly up and bears her toward the door, her garments trailing*] . . . I want to live . . .

[*As he nears the door, ANTONIA enters from door right*]

ANTONIA [*Calling wildly*]

Ana! . . . Ana! . . . [*The child enters directly be-*

hind her mother] . . . they are taking your father
. . . from you . . .

[*Pushes the child toward RAMÓN*]

ANA

[*Terrified, she runs to RAMÓN*]

Father! Father!

[*ANA clings to RAMÓN, who stops, with DANIELA in his arms, and stands motionless, with his face partially turned to ANTONIA*]

DANIELA

[*Freeing herself, she makes toward the door*]

I will go . . . [RAMÓN turns to her swiftly] . . .
alone . . .

MONSA [*Entering, alarmed*]

Where are you going, Daniela?

DANIELA

To seek warmth of the Mother who never abandons her children! [*Shuddering*] Oh . . . I'm so cold!

MONSA

[*Supporting her, to RAMÓN*]

The doctor!

DANIELA

No . . . [*Appealing to Heaven*] Mercy! Mercy!

MONSA [*Tenderly*]

Yes . . . yes . . .

DANIELA [*Wildly*]

Let me go . . . to the street . . . to the street . . .

ANA

[*Who has clung to her father, flies to DANIELA with equal determination to cling to all she regards as hers*]

No . . . no . . . Daniela . . .

DANIELA

[*She sinks into a chair, with her arms about ANA*]

Oh . . . she will save us all!

[*She inclines her head over that of the child, and feebly points to ANTONIA; she then pushes ANA gently from her, with purpose. ANA goes to ANTONIA, takes her hand, and leads her to RAMÓN, who is seated; ANTONIA sinks to the floor, and hides her face against his knee, clasping him with one arm; ANA has returned to DANIELA and put her arms around her*]

ANA

You will stay here, always . . . Daniela?

DANIELA

[*Endeavoring to caress her*]

Yes . . . always! . . . Oh, I 'm so cold! [ANA holds her tighter. *The scene lightens*] Monsa . . . tell them to throw down the tower . . .

MONSA

No . . .

[*The stone-cutters are heard without*]

DANIELA

[*Discovering the vacant cradle*]

The baby!

[*She tries to rise; MONSA aids her; on reaching the cradle, she sinks to her knees and frees herself from MONSA, regarding the cradle lovingly; MONSA makes an imperceptible motion, with arms extended, as though to un-deceive her*]

RAMÓN [*Restraining her*]

No!

DANIELA [*Singing softly*]

La Madre de Dios . . . [MONSA is weeping] . . .
Dios . . . Dios . . . Dios . . . [She rests her cheek
against the cradle, which inclines with the contact, al-
lowing her to sink nearer the floor] . . . Dios . . .
Dios . . .

[*She has a moment of suffocation and falls,
with her face to the audience, dead.*]

[RAMÓN, his face covered with one hand, has
placed his arm about ANTONIA, who has not
moved from her first attitude of contrition;
MONSA is kneeling; the cradle, released, con-
tinues rocking until the curtain falls; the
stone-cutters' chisels are heard without; last,
the bell of the approaching viaticum]

SLOW CURTAIN

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