

[MARTHA stops her from sitting.]

MARTHA. Abby—haven't we something to do in the kitchen?

ABBY. Huh?

MARTHA. You know—the tea things.

ABBY. [Suddenly seeing MORTIMER and ELAINE, and catching on.]

Oh, yes! The tea things — [She backs toward kitchen.]

Well—you two just make yourselves at home. Just —

MARTHA.—make yourselves at home.

[They exit kitchen door, ABBY closing door.]

ELAINE. [Stepping to MORTIMER, ready to be kissed.] Well, can't you take a hint?

MORTIMER. [Complaining.] No . . . that was pretty obvious. A lack of inventiveness, I should say.

ELAINE. [Only slightly annoyed as she crosses to table, and puts handbag on it.] Yes—that's exactly what you'd say.

MORTIMER. [He is at desk, fishing various pieces of notepaper from his pockets, and separating dollar bills that are mixed in with papers.] Where do you want to go for dinner?

ELAINE. [Opening bag, looking in hand mirror.] I don't care. I'm not very hungry.

MORTIMER. Well, I just had breakfast. Suppose we wait until after the show?

ELAINE. But that'll make it pretty late, won't it?

MORTIMER. Not with the little stinker we're seeing tonight. From what I've heard about it we'll be at Blake's by ten o'clock.

ELAINE. [Crosses to U. S. C.] You ought to be fair to these plays.

MORTIMER. Are these plays fair to me?

ELAINE. I've never seen you walk out on a musical.

MORTIMER. That musical isn't opening tonight.

ELAINE. [Disappointed.] No?

MORTIMER. Darling, you'll have to learn the rules. With a musical there are always four changes of title and three postponements. They liked it in New Haven but it needs a lot of work.

ELAINE. Oh, I was hoping it was a musical

MORTIMER. You have such a light mind.

ELAINE. Not a bit. Musicals somehow have a humanizing effect on you. [He gives her a look.] After a serious play we join the proletariat in the subway and I listen to a lecture on the drama.

After a musical you bring me home in a taxi, [Turning away] and you make a few passes.

MORTIMER. [Crossing D. C.] Now wait a minute, darling, that's a very inaccurate piece of reporting.

ELAINE. [Leaning against D. S. end of table.] Oh, I will admit that after the Behrman play you told me I had authentic beauty—and that's a hell of a thing to say to a girl. It wasn't until after our first musical you told me I had nice legs. And I have too.

[MORTIMER stares at her legs a moment, then walks over and kisses her.]

MORTIMER. For a minister's daughter you know a lot about life. Where'd you learn it?

ELAINE. [Casually.] In the choir loft.

MORTIMER. I'll explain that to you some time, darling—the close connection between eroticism and religion.

ELAINE. Religion never gets as high as the choir loft. [Crosses below table, gathers up bag.] Which reminds me, I'd better tell Father please not to wait up for me tonight.

MORTIMER. [Almost to himself.] I've never been able to rationalize it.

ELAINE. What?

MORTIMER. My falling in love with a girl who lives in Brooklyn.

ELAINE. Falling in love? You're not scooping to the articulate, are you?

MORTIMER. [Ignoring this.] The only way I can regain my self respect is to keep you in New York.

ELAINE. [Few steps toward him.] Did you say keep?

MORTIMER. No, no. I've come to the conclusion that you're holding out for the legalities.

ELAINE. [Crossing to him as he backs away.] I can afford to be a good girl for quite a few years yet.

MORTIMER. [Stops and embraces her.] And I can't wait that long. Where could we be married in a hurry—say tonight?

ELAINE. I'm afraid Father will insist on officiating.

MORTIMER. [Turning away R. from her.] Oh, God! I'll bet your father could make even the marriage service sound pedestrian.

ELAINE. Are you by any chance writing a review of it?

MORTIMER. Forgive me, darling. It's an occupational disease. [She smiles at him lovingly and walks toward him. He meets her half-