

ACT II

SCENE: *The same. Later that night.*

JONATHAN, with an after-dinner cigar, is occupying armchair L. of table, completely at his ease. ABBY and MARTHA, seated on window-seat, are giving him a nervous attention in the attitude of people who wish their guests would go home. EINSTEIN is relaxed and happy in chair R. of table. Dinner dishes have been cleared. There is a red cloth on table, with a saucer to serve as ash-tray for JONATHAN. The room is in order. All doors are closed, as are drapes over windows.

JONATHAN. Yes, Aunties, those five years in Chicago were amongst the busiest and happiest of my life.

EINSTEIN. And from Chicago we go to South Bend, Indiana. [*He shakes his head as though he wishes they hadn't.*]

[JONATHAN gives him a look.]

JONATHAN. They wouldn't be interested in our experience in Indiana.

ABBY. Well, Jonathan, you've led a very interesting life, I'm sure—but we really shouldn't have allowed you to talk so late. [*She starts to rise. JONATHAN seats her just by the tone of his voice.*]

JONATHAN. My meeting Dr. Einstein in London, I might say, changed the whole course of my life. You remember I had been in South Africa, in the diamond business—then Amsterdam, the diamond market. I wanted to go back to South Africa—and Dr. Einstein made it possible for me.

EINSTEIN. A good job, Chonny. [*To AUNTIES.*] When we take off the bandages—his face look so different, the nurse had to introduce me.

JONATHAN. I loved that face. I still carry the picture with me. [*He produces snapshot-size picture from inside coat pocket, looks at it a moment, then hands it to MARTHA. She looks at it and hands it to ABBY.*]

ABBY. This looks more the way you used to look, but still I wouldn't know you.

JONATHAN. I think we'll go back to that face, Doctor.

EINSTEIN. Yah, it's safe now.

ABBY. [*Rising.*] Well, I know you both want to get to—where you're going.

JONATHAN. [*Relaxing even more.*] My dear aunts—I'm so full of that delicious dinner I'm unable to move a muscle.

EINSTEIN. [*Relaxing too.*] Yah, it's nice here.

MARTHA. [*Rises.*] After all—it's very late and ———

[TEDDY enters on balcony wearing his solar topee, carrying a book, open, and another topee.]

TEDDY. [*Descending stairs.*] I found it! I found it!

JONATHAN. What did you find, Teddy?

TEDDY. The story of my life—my biography. [*He crosses above to L. of EINSTEIN.*] Here's the picture I was telling you about, General. [*He lays open book on table showing picture to EINSTEIN.*] Here we are, both of us. "President Roosevelt and General Goethals at Culebra Cut." That's me, General, and that's you.

[EINSTEIN looks at picture.]

EINSTEIN. My, how I've changed.

[TEDDY looks at EINSTEIN, a little puzzled, but makes adjustment.]

TEDDY. Well, you see that picture hasn't been taken yet. We haven't even started work on Culebra Cut. We're still digging locks. And now, General, we will both go to Panama and inspect the new lock.

[*Hands him topee.*]

ABBY. No, Teddy—not to Panama.

EINSTEIN. We go some other time. Panama's a long way off.

TEDDY. Nonsense, it's just down in the cellar.

JONATHAN. The cellar?

MARTHA. We let him dig the Panama Canal in the cellar.

TEDDY. [*Severely.*] General Goethals, as President of the United States, Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy and the man who gave you this job, I demand that you accompany me on the inspection of the new lock.

JONATHAN. Teddy! I think it's time you went to bed.

TEDDY. I beg your pardon! [*He crosses above to L. of JONATHAN, putting on his pince-nez as he crosses.*] Who are you?

JONATHAN. I'm Woodrow Wilson. Go to bed.

TEDDY. No—you're not Wilson. But your face is familiar. Let me see—— You're not anyone I know now. Perhaps later—— On my hunting trip to Africa—yes, you look like someone I might meet in the jungle.

[JONATHAN stiffens. ABBY crosses in front of TEDDY, getting between him and JONATHAN.]

ABBY. It's your brother, Jonathan, dear.

MARTHA. [*Rising.*] He's had his face changed.

TEDDY. So that's it—a nature faker!

ABBY. And perhaps you had better go to bed, Teddy—Jonathan and his friend have to go back to their hotel.

JONATHAN. [*Rising.*] General Goethals, [*To EINSTEIN.*] inspect the canal. [*He crosses to U. C.*]

EINSTEIN. [*Rising.*] All right, Mr. President. We go to Panama.

TEDDY. Bully! Bully! [*He crosses to cellar door, opens it.*] Follow me, General. [*EINSTEIN goes up to L. of TEDDY. TEDDY taps sola topee in EINSTEIN'S hand, then taps his own head.*] It's down south you know. [*He exits downstairs.*]

[EINSTEIN puts on topee, which is too large for him. Then turns in cellar doorway and speaks.]

EINSTEIN. Well—bon voyage. [*He exits, closing door.*]

JONATHAN. Aunt Abby, I must correct your misapprehension. You spoke of our hotel. We have no hotel. We came directly

here——
MARTHA. Well, there's a very nice little hotel just three blocks down the——

JONATHAN. [*Cutting her off.*] Aunt Martha, this is my home.

ABBY. But, Jonathan, you can't stay here. We need our rooms.

JONATHAN. You need them?

ABBY. Yes, for our lodgers.

JONATHAN. [*Alarmed.*] Are there lodgers in this house?

MARTHA. Well, not just now, but we plan to have some.

JONATHAN. [*Cutting her off again.*] Then my old room is still free.

ABBY. But, Jonathan, there's no place for Dr. Einstein.

JONATHAN. [*Crosses to below table, drops cigar ashes into saucer.*] He'll share the room with me.

ABBY. No, Jonathan, I'm afraid you can't stay here.

[JONATHAN is below table. He grinds cigar out in saucer, then starts toward AUNTS. They back around above table to C., MARTHA first. JONATHAN turns back and crosses below table to ABBY at C.]

JONATHAN. Dr. Einstein and I need a place to sleep. You remembered, this afternoon, that as a boy I could be disagreeable. It wouldn't be very pleasant for any of us if——

MARTHA. [*R. C., and frightened.*] Perhaps we'd better let them stay here tonight——

ABBY. Well, just overnight, Jonathan.

JONATHAN. That's settled. Now, if you'll get my room ready——
MARTHA. [*Starting upstairs, ABBY following.*] It only needs airing out.

ABBY. We keep it ready to show our lodgers. I think you and Dr. Einstein will find it comfortable.

[JONATHAN follows them to 1st landing and leans on newel-post. AUNTS are on balcony.]

JONATHAN. You have a most distinguished guest in Dr. Einstein. I'm afraid you don't appreciate his skill. But you will. In a few weeks you'll see me looking like a very different Jonathan.

MARTHA. He can't operate on you here.

JONATHAN. [*Ignoring.*] When Dr. Einstein and I get organized—when we resume practice—— Oh, I forgot to tell you. We're turning Grandfather's laboratory into an operating room. We expect to be quite busy.

ABBY. Jonathan, we will not let you turn this house into a hospital.

JONATHAN. [*Laughing.*] A hospital—heavens no! It will be a beauty parlor.

[EINSTEIN enters excitedly from cellar.]

EINSTEIN. Hey, Chonny, down in the cellar—— [*He sees AUNTS and stops.*]

JONATHAN. Dr. Einstein—my dear aunts have invited us to live with them.

EINSTEIN. Oh, you fixed it?

ABBY. Well, you're sleeping here tonight.

JONATHAN. Please get our room ready immediately.

MARTHA. Well——
ABBY. For tonight.

[*They exit through arch. JONATHAN comes to foot of stairs.*]

EINSTEIN. Choney, when I go down in the cellar, what do you think I find?

JONATHAN. What?

EINSTEIN. The Panama Canal.

JONATHAN. [*Disgusted, crossing to C.*] The Panama Canal.

EINSTEIN. It just fits Mr. Spenalzo. It's a hole Teddy dug. Six feet long and four feet wide.

JONATHAN. [*Gets the idea. Opens cellar door and looks down.*]

Down there!

EINSTEIN. You'd think they knew we were bringing Mr. Spenalzo along. That's hospitality.

JONATHAN. [*Closing cellar door.*] Rather a good joke on my aunts—their living in a house with a body buried in the cellar.

EINSTEIN. How do we get him in?

JONATHAN. [*Drops D. S.*] Yes. We can't just walk him through the door. [*He sees window in L. wall.*] We'll drive the car up between the house and the cemetery—then when they've gone to bed, we'll bring Mr. Spenalzo in through the window.

EINSTEIN. [*Taking out bottle flask.*] Bed! Just think, we've got a bed tonight! [*He starts swigging.*]

JONATHAN. [*Grabbing his arm.*] Easy, Doctor. Remember you're operating tomorrow. And this time you'd better be sober.

EINSTEIN. I fix you up beautiful.

JONATHAN. And if you don't—— [*Gives EINSTEIN shove to door.*]

ABBY. [*She and MARTHA enter on balcony.*] Jonathan! Your room is ready.

JONATHAN. Then you can go to bed. We're moving the car up behind the house.

MARTHA. It's all right where it is—until morning.

JONATHAN. [*EINSTEIN has opened door.*] I don't want to leave it in the street—that might be against the law. [*He exits.*]

[*EINSTEIN follows him out, closing door. ABBY and MARTHA start downstairs and reach below table.*]

MARTHA. Abby, what are we going to do?

ABBY. Well, we're not going to let them stay more than one night in this house for one thing. What would the neighbors think? People coming in here with one face and going out with another.

[*She has reached table D. S. MARTHA is at her R.*]

MARTHA. What are we going to do about Mr. Hoskins?

ABBY. [*Crosses to window-seat. MARTHA follows.*] Oh, Mr. Hoskins. It can't be very comfortable for him in there. And he's been so patient, the poor dear. Well, I think Teddy had better get Mr. Hoskins downstairs right away.

MARTHA. [*Admiring.*] Abby—I will not invite Jonathan to the funeral services.

ABBY. Oh, no. We'll wait until they've gone to bed and then come down and hold the services.

[*TEDDY enters from cellar, gets book from table and starts R. ABBY stops him at C.*]

TEDDY. General Goethals was very pleased. He says the Canal is just the right size.

ABBY. [*Crosses to C.*] Teddy! Teddy, there's been another Yellow Fever victim.

TEDDY. [*Takes off pince-nez.*] Dear me—this will be a shock to the General.

MARTHA. [*Stepping R.*] Then we mustn't tell him about it.

TEDDY. [*Crosses below ABBY to MARTHA.*] But it's his department.

ABBY. No, we mustn't tell him, Teddy. It would just spoil his visit. TEDDY. I'm sorry, Aunt Abby. It's out of my hands—he'll have to be told. Army regulations, you know.

ABBY. No, Teddy, we *must* keep it a secret.

MARTHA. Yes!

TEDDY. [*He loves them.*] A state secret?

ABBY. Yes, a state secret.

MARTHA. Promise?

TEDDY. [*What a silly request.*] You have the word of the President of the United States. [*Crosses his heart.*] Cross my heart and hope to die. [*He splits.*] Now let's see—[*Puts pince-nez on, then puts arms around both AUNTS.*] how are we going to keep it a secret? ABBY. Well, Teddy, you go back down in the cellar and when I