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Voice in the night, a drama in three acts

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1961

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Master of Arts

of the requirements for the degree of

Presented in partial fulfillment

B.A., Montana State University, 1960

Margaret I. Rieck

By

IN THREE ACTS

A DRAMA

VOICE IN THE NIGHT
This thesis has been approved by the Board of Examiners in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Bert Hansen
Chairman of the Board of Examiners

W. P. Clark
Dean of the Graduate School

Date 5/27/51
VOICE IN THE NIGHT

The Characters:

Mr. Spears, the 'Angel'
Mr. Brockman, the producer
Marcia Laymon, leading lady of Mourner's Mansion
James Shore, leading actor of Mourner's Mansion
John Harrow, director of Mourner's Mansion
Lorraine Courtenay, poetess and author of Mourner's Mansion
Mr. Courtenay, Lorraine's father
Countess Dorothy Reimann
Garth Wilson, brother of Lorraine's late fiance
Sheldon Spielman, the Hollywood agent
Mr. Barry, another producer
Rocky Radcliffe, pianist
Butler

Scene: The time is the present. The place is the terrace of Mr. Brockman's penthouse. Guests have assembled to celebrate the opening of Lorraine Courtenay's play, Mourner's Mansion. A balustrade, flanked by vivid green flora, sweeps from right front stage to left upstage. A French door at right upstage joins the living-room of the penthouse with the terrace. Beyond the immediate scene, the gaudy lights of New York's theatre section flicker in
nervous excited rhythms, as if to distract the audiences of the streets from the soft, serene light of stars in the night sky above and beyond...

Mr. Spears. I've finally launched a hit! After twenty years of being the fall-guy to some of New York's most highbrow flops, I've staked my money on the right play! I knew I'd do it sooner or later!

Brockman. Didn't I tell you so? In all my years of producing, I've never seen a New York audience act more like a London audience! Eighteen curtain calls! There are only three things that will bring the English to their feet cheering: the Royal family, a good steak, or a good play.

Marcia. John darling! You're the most wonderful director in the world! Wasn't the audience perfectly marvelous!

Harrow. I'm still amazed! Marcia, tonight you became a great actress.

Brockman. Electric, my dear!

Butler (to Brockman). Telegram, sir.

Brockman. Excuse me, please. (He reads the telegram, smiles, then puts it in his pocket.)

Spears. From now on, Marcia, you'll be the star of all my plays, and I'll back every one that Miss Britton writes, and as fast as she can write them!

Brockman. You're a good director, Harrow.
Harrow. I've never known a greater thrill as a director than I did tonight. I really don't see how any of the critics who were in that audience tonight could give us an unfavorable review. I'm worried about the fluff before the death scene, though.

Shore. Was it noticeable from out front, Brock?

Spears. What's that about a fluff?

Marcia. Oh, Mr. Spears, I saw you out of the corner of my eye - you were sitting...

Brockman. Oh, it was as natural as though it had been written in the script. In fact, I'm going to ask Lory to write it in. Incidentally, where is Lory?

Harrow. I object to having the script revised - it would destroy the continuity, the flow of the dialogue. You covered up all right tonight, Shore, but don't let it happen again. Yes, where is Lory?

Brockman. She should be here by now...

Marcia. Of course, she could be making a libation to her Muse. She's the spiritual type, you know.

Brockman. Well, her Muse has been very generous to her. She is ethereal, isn't she? It becomes her, Marcia; she's so different from the women of the theatre I've known - she moves apart from them, apart from us all, as though she were the embodiment of some mythical goddess - a goddess of sorrow and tears...
Marela. Brock! Come back to earth!

(Barry enters and crosses to group.)

Barry: Hasn't Miss Britton arrived yet? Brockman, you astute old rascal! I'll never forgive you for winning the chase for that play! Where is Miss Britton? I want her to write a play for my new Austrian star, Edda Hartmann. Edda is another Sarah Bernhardt - fiery, tempestuous, regal - the royal queen of tragedy of all Europe! A play by Miss Britton would bring out all the facets of Edda's genius; I want her to write a play for Edda's American debut.

Marcia (holding up her champagne glass). Beatrice Britton! The Sarah Bernhardt of the dramatists! Actors from all over the world will be competing for parts in her play now.

Shore. I think I'll get the lead in her next one.

Barry. No, no - there's room for only one star in Edda's plays. I already have the leading man in mind - he's an unknown, been doing summer stock in Connecticut. He and Edda would make a perfect team.

Spears. You know, I wonder if Miss Britton can repeat her performance! It just occurred to me! I wonder if she can write another play as great as Mourner's Mansion? Most of the women in this business are 'one-timers' - now I don't mean to say women can't write as well as men or as fluently, but you never see a woman produce more than one piece of great writing - if they can, they don't - for some mysterious reason... I wonder why? Take Margaret Mitchell, for
example - great book, Gone With The Wind, but it was the only thing she ever did! The only book she ever wrote!

Shore: Of course, there’s Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters, Amy Lowell, Emily Dickinson, Edna St. Vincent Millay...

Marcia (nodding toward Shore). Jim is a scholar, you know. He goes about, memorizing the table of contents of all the anthologies.

Harrow. George Sand...

Shore. G.B. Stern...

Harrow. Yes, their fame wasn't based on just one work!

Brockman. True, but I can't help but feel that Mourn¬er's Mansion will be Lory's sole contribution - her solo flight into the atmosphere of true art.

Marcia. Well, I'll wager it will be her last, too. And don't forget the actor's role in interpreting a good play! The best play written might just as well not have been written if there aren't actors who can put it across!

Brockman. A good play can give much pleasure to the reader, Marcia. There are many plays that have never been produced, simply because they wouldn't be financially suc¬cessful!

Spears. That's not so - I've produced them all.

Shore. Well, I'll bet that Lory will prove you all wrong, and that she will write another hit!

Barry. Well, I hope so. I need a good play for
Edda!

Shore. Why shouldn't she write another one? She's lived among writers all her life—her father's a poet, she's travelled extensively, she's an acute observer, and she has greater sensitivity than any person I've ever known! It'd be perfectly natural for her to write a hundred more good plays!

Brockman. Not that many good plays have been written! You know, there's so much of Lory, herself, in that play, I doubt that she has any more to give.

Butler. Telegram, sir. (Brockman reads it, smiles, then puts it in his pocket.)

Shore. Writers don't have to experience everything they write about!

Marcia. An uncanny observation, Jim!

Spears. Well, we'll wait and see...but no woman has ever done it before...(remembering the list of prolific writers that Shore has named earlier)... for the theatre, I mean.

Shore. Don't belittle Lady Gregory!

Marcia (fawningly). Oh...Mr. Barry, is this Austrian star you spoke of, your Edda Hartmann, very beautiful?

(Lory and her father enter, and the rest of the group cluster about them.)

Brockman. Lory! What ever became of you? It's been
an hour since we all left the theatre — what happened, my dear?

Lory. Brock, can you imagine! Reporters from all the papers asking me, "What are your views on the future of the theatre? "Do you prefer pajamas to nightgowns?" "Who is your favorite movie star?" "Do you think television will have any effect on... television?" And then, there were the autograph fiends! Why does anybody want the signature of someone he doesn't even know? I've heard about fans pulling buttons and bows from the suits or dresses of matinee idols, but I never dreamed that I would be a victim!

Am I a success, now, Brock? See what's happened to me?

(She holds up the bottom of her voluminous skirt to reveal a tear near the hemline.) One of the signature collectors nearly collected part of my skirt!

Marcia. Oh, your new Dior! Well, there must be at least twenty yards in that skirt — don't begrudge the idolators one little yard of it, Lory, you'll never miss it!

Harrow. Serves you right, Lory, for not patronizing our American designers!

Lory. It's the very first French dress I've ever owned, John! I must go home and change, Brock...

Brockman. Oh, no, Lory, you'll not leave now; everybody's been waiting for you, my dear — to pay homage to a new name in the theatre — Beatrice Britton! Come with me, Lory, the maid can mend your dress. (He takes hold of her
arm.)

Barry. Oh, Miss Britton, I'd like to have a talk with you about my new Austrian star, Edda Hartmann... I'd like you to write a play for her.

Harrow. Well, Lory, you're Broadway's favorite daughter tonight! But the gods that rule this street are mighty fickle; don't put too much faith in them.

Lory. There's only one God I put my faith in, John.

Brock. You can all talk to Lory after she gets mended; come on, my dear.

Lory. Oh, Jim, would you please look after father till I get back? (Brockman whisks her through left upstage exit.)

Shore. Of course. Well, Mr. Courtenay, I can imagine how very proud you are of your daughter tonight! (The butler weaves through the crowd, refilling the glasses.)

Courtenay. Yes...yes, indeed. I am very proud of Lory.

Harrow. I understand that Barlow - you know, the critic with The Sun - stayed through the whole three acts! Barlow is our barometer; he's never been known to sit through a second act at any opening. He rushes back to his office, sits down to his typewriter, prophesies the number of curtain calls to the fraction, after having seen only one-third of the play, and he has an uncanny knack for predicting the run of a play right down to the final matinee. Tonight, Barlow completely forgot his old habits and stayed for the
whole three acts, right through the final curtain and the
curtain calls! Tonight, he seemed to forget that he was
a critic and he became a member of the audience...

Marcia. I can see the reviews... (She gestures with
her upraised champagne glass.) "Overnight Sensation Opens
New Era in the Theatre!"

Spears. (continuing the dramatic predictions of Marcia ,
as he holds up his champagne glass.) "Beatrice Britton...
or do you suppose they'll use her real name...?

Shore (toasting with his drink of Scotch). "Lorraine
Courtenay! 20th Century Prophetess! Innovator of Genius
in a Long Decadent Theatre!"

Barry. (toasting with his glass). "Lorraine Courtenay,
Overnight..." (Brockman enters and crosses to group.)

Mr. Courtenay. I beg your pardon, but would you kindly
allow me to correct a very fallacious idea floating about?
Lorraine isn't the Cinderella you presume her to be. I ad-
mitt that she is a very young woman to achieve the distinction
of seeing one of her plays produced in the - yes, in the
greatest theatrical center in the world - it is no ordinary
feat in a time when the success of a play is based upon the
box-office receipts. But do you ladies and gentlemen real-
ize how long my daughter has been writing? How long she's
served her apprenticeship? For fifteen years! Lorraine's
first poem was published when she was fifteen. She's been
writing seriously, and laboriously, for fifteen years! The play you saw tonight wasn't hacked out overnight, or in a week, or a month, or a year! She has been working on "Mourner's Mansion" for ten years - she spent two years of that ten working almost exclusively on the expressionistic stage-settings!

Marcia. Not born with a golden spoon, but a golden typewriter!

Mr. Courtenay. No, Miss Laymon; she was born with only the name of Courtenay; that was her only wealth. She's bought her golden typewriter, and she's paid dearly for it - on the installment plan - but then, that's another story...

Shore. She's a genius! There's some tragedy in Lory's eyes - even when she's laughing, her eyes seem to be weeping...

Mr. Courtenay. To be very frank...(The guests close in about Mr. Courtenay anticipating that he is about to reveal the story behind the 'tragedy in Lory's eyes'.) To be very frank, I was somewhat startled by some of the lines myself. You know my daughter wouldn't let me read the play while she was working on it - I had no idea even what the theme of Mourner's Mansion was. ... I only know that she labored over Mourner's Mansion for ten years, and I dare-say there's more poetry in it than I've written in a lifetime!
Brockman. You seem to forget, Mr. Courtenay, that the Thornton Prize was awarded to you last year for having written America's best poetry!

Mr. Courtenay (laughing). Yes, a committee of twelve thought so, but the American public seems to have forgotten about poetry; at least, I can't feast upon honey and nectar from the royalties I receive from my work. In the tradition of poets, I, too, am poor. America has become a nation of spectators - no longer do our families spend an evening around the fireplace reading aloud the works of our great authors... No, now our families father about their television sets balancing an ashtray on one knee and a cocktail on the other. We're reduced to the level of passive spectators - content to sit, sip, smoke, and snooze - and grateful if we can be but half-amused, while our appreciation for good literature shrivels to standards of the soap-box opera! Meditation is no longer an indulgence, but a time-wasting, money-wasting stupor isolated in our minds with ancient philosophers! And philosophy? Merely the faint title of a dusty old book, yellowing with age in the farthest corner of the bookshelf! (The gathering disperses into smaller groups upstage where they talk quietly in the background.)

(Countess Reimann and Garth Wilson enter.)

Brockman. Countess Reimann! (He greets his guests.) I'm delighted that you've come!
Countess. Why, Brock! I wouldn't miss one of your parties for the world - you give such marvelous parties!

May I present Mr. Wilson, Mr. Brockman? (Brockman and Garth acknowledge introduction.)

Brockman. Dorothy, you're ravishing tonight!

Countess. Why, Brock, that is to say that I'm not ravishing every night!

Brockman. Dorothy, you know you are - only more so, tonight. (Garth crosses to bar to get cocktails for the countess and himself.)

Countess. I shall tell you why, Brock! I am in love, and love does such wonderful things for a woman's looks. It is so wonderful to be in love again - I thought I had lost all capacity to love...

Brockman. Wasn't it only last year that you captured a second husband, Dorothy?

Countess. Oh, yes - my American colonel - my ticket to your country, Brock.

Brockman. His name has escaped me...

Countess. J.V. Wethering - He was from New York.

Brockman. Wethering, of course. J.V. Wethering - I knew him - met Mrs. Wethering and him at a party here in New York before he left for duty overseas. She was a very charming woman, Dorothy...

Countess. He sent her a ticket to Reno.
Brock. His price for your ticket to America.

Countess. Brock! Aren't you naive! I simply had to get to America; you'll never know what I went through during the war. Garth is very indebted to the Colonel - first, for bringing me to America, and secondly, for introducing me to him...

Brockman. You use men, Dorothy, like the rungs of a ladder - one serves only as a step to another. Thank God our American women aren't as mercenary about their travels as you, Dorothy.

Countess. You're an idealist, Brock! I'll bet that you believe in Santa Claus!

Brockman. And you're a shameless wench! Wethering was a very gullible colonel.

Countess. Oh, Brock - don't you understand? My castle was simply pulverized! I could just sit and weep and weep and weep when I think of my furs, and my jewels, and all my gowns all blown to heaven knows where... I wanted to escape, I simply had to escape from the poverty of Germany - I simply couldn't stand it for another day! (Lory enters after having the hem of her dress mended.)

Lory. Countess Reimann! What a wonderful, wonderful surprise!

Brockman. You know our playwright, Dorothy?

Countess. Playwright?
Brockman. Yes, Dorothy. Lory is the author of *Mourner's Mansion*.

Butler. Telephone, sir. (Brockman exits.)

Countess. Oh, I can't believe it! I never dreamed that the gentle little Southern belle I met in Switzerland ten years ago would become a playwright! And a tragedian! How can one so young know so much of the miseries of life?

Lory. I'm not so young, really...chronologically, perhaps...

Countess. She still talks through veils! You know, when I first met Lory in Davos, she spent all her time behind a pen and notebook - and there were the most eligible young men in Switzerland that season, and such marvelous parties! (Garth starts to cross stage from bar right upstage to left center stage, carrying two Scotch and sodas.)

Countess. (confiding in Lory as Garth approaches the group.) Lory, I want you to meet the most utterly charming man I've ever known! Good family, but no money - it's really a pity that he doesn't have a sou to speak of - but he's made me live again, and he tells me that I've made him forget some silly girl he knew ten years ago... He has some ingenious scheme for amassing a fortune practically overnight, and when he proves his boast, I shall marry him the next day! (Lory suddenly drops her champagne glass when she sees Garth. The butler quietly picks it up, as though it were a common
occurrence. There is a moment of complete silence as Lory and Garth stand, face to face.)

Garth. (visibly moved). Hello, Lory...

Countess. You two know each other?

Lory. (as though she were in a trance). Yes... I was engaged to Garth's brother... to Tony...

Countess. The "Tony" to whom you sent your poems when you were in Davos?

Lory. Yes... Tony...

Countess. Well, what happened, dear? (Dramatically) Did he betray you by marrying another?

Lory. Shortly after father and I returned from Europe, Tony was awarded a fellowship to study abroad. He was flying to Austria to work with the Viennese psychiatrist, Dr. SIGMEUND...his plane crashed between Bermuda and the AZORES. (Like the lament of a Greek chorus) Tony was killed... he was killed... Tony was killed...

Countess. How dreadful! And he was to study with Dr. SIGMEUND? Well, he was one who got away from the Nazis - the F.P.I. helped him to escape to England. He's been there since '39; I understand he intends coming to the United States and becoming an American citizen... Yes, I remember the poems you wrote in Davos - only an Apollo could inspire such lines from a woman! But all that was ten years ago, Lory - weeping WILLS attract no men; be realistic, darling - The world is full of "TONYS"...
Lory. (regarding the Countess' statement as blasphemous). Dorothy: There'll never be another Tony! There couldn't be...there was only one Tony... Oh, Garth, if only he could be here tonight! I'm so grateful that you are here; it's as though you were his voice, as though you came to share this hour with me, as he would have done, if...

Garth. What do you mean - 'share this hour with you'?

Countess. Why, Garth! Don't you know? Lory is the author of Mourner's Mansion.

Garth. Beatrice Britton? You're Beatrice Britton, Lory?

Lory. Yes, "Beatrice Britton" is my nom de plume.

Garth. But why do you, with the name of Courtenay, use a pen name?

Lory. Because producers have eyes in the back of their heads riveted upon the box-office receipts. When I first began to write, I felt so self-conscious about my poems... they were so much a part of myself, and a person doesn't like holding her soul up for public display. And then, we were still living in St. Clair - you know what a small town St. Clair is, Garth; besides, father had already published his fourth volume, and I didn't want to capitalize upon his name in the literary world, so I took a pen name: "Beatrice Britton". Then, when Mr. Brockman decided to produce Mourner's Mansion, he felt that I should continue to use
my pen name.

Garth. To capitalize upon the reputation you'd already built up through your poetry?

Lory (smiling). With those who read poetry, Garth...

Garth. You! Beatrice Britton! I didn't recognize you when the audience called for 'author'! I expected a neat, mousy creature in flat shoes and horn-rimmed glasses - not the vision that you were! (Brockman enters and joins group).

Lory. Truly, I didn't recognize myself. It seemed as though I were out on that stage for an eternity - oh, I could never be an actress... I had such stage-fright! It was all as though...as though I were somebody else...as though I were merely playing a part in a play, myself, when they applauded the 'author'... Oh, Tony, (instinctively raising the back of her hand to her mouth as she realizes her error in calling Garth, "Tony") I mean Garth, I still can't believe it! They liked my play!

Garth. And they liked you!

Brockman. You were so refreshingly modest. Humility becomes womanhood... After the second act, I strolled about the lobby listening to the reactions of the audience, and I heard one critic say that **Mourner's Mansion** will be the top contender for the Circle Critic's Award, the Nobel Prize, the...

Countess (in accumulative jealousy of Lory). Garth,
I have a splitting headache - would you mind taking me to my apartment?

Garth (in forced solicitude). Oh, my dear, of course, of course. (Spielman enters, rushes to group and bursts into their conversation).

Spielman. Say, Miss Britton, don't make any commitments to any of the movie companies without consulting me first! Fritz Leonard made me a tentative bid of $500,000 for the movie rights - tentative, of course, on the reviews. (He exits excitedly.)

Garth (as though he were thinking out loud). Half a million dollars!

Butler. Telephone, sir.

Brockman. Damn it! (He exits.)

Countess. (trying desperately to get Garth away). Garth, I really must go!

Garth. (visibly annoyed). Yes, Dorothy! Oh, Lory, will you have lunch with us tomorrow?

Countess. Not tomorrow, I'm afraid, Garth - the McLanns have invited us up to their place in Connecticut for the week-end.

Garth. Oh, the plastic people!

Countess. Not plastic people, darling - they deal in plastics!

Garth. I'd love to have one tenth of the money they have! I'd be delighted to go with you, Dorothy, but
business interferes. I have my weekly consultation with Mrs. J.R. Stoddard tomorrow, and her account alone pays all my monthly overhead. I have to be realistic about these things till I get established in New York.

Lory. Take your Mrs. Stoddard along, Garth - then you can have your plastic people, Dorothy, and your monthly bill paid, all in one swooping week-end.

Garth. Mrs. J.R. would bore us all to death. She, of the Boston Stoddards, is an unmitigated hypochondriac, and she'd love nothing more than having a nice large audience listening to her purely imagined ills. Then she'd start in on them - no snob can outsnob an amateur psychologist; she'd see dipsomania in Mr. McMann, an Oedipus complex in 'junior', psychasthenia in the mother, euphoria in Agnes, the maid, and ochlophobia in Boris, the butler!

Countess. Well, you can come up on Saturday, then, and leave Mrs. Stoddard to her ill health in her Park Avenue penthouse. Lory, I'm so proud to have known you 'when'... I'm sure that Mourner's Mansion will run till Doomsday, and St. Peter will renew the option! It's been a wonderful party - where's Brock?

Lory. I believe he's on the telephone.

Countess. Good night, Lory, call me when I get back from the McManns, dear.

Garth (to Lory). I'll be back soon, Lory, as soon as
I drop off Dorothy.

Countess. (suspiciously). What did you say, Garth?

Garth. Oh, nothing. Let's go...

Lory. (calling after him). Oh, Garth, I forgot to tell you - father is here!

Garth. Of course, he would be - for his daughter's theatrical debut... I'll see him as soon as I get back, Lory.

(The Countess and Garth start to left upstage exit.)

Countess. Tell me, Garth - there's something I'd like to ask you - was Lory your young heroine of ten years ago?

Garth. (curtly). Shut up, Dorothy! (As an afterthought.) You know her story, she was engaged to my brother.

Countess. Are you jealous, Garth? Could it be that she preferred "Tony" - to you?

Garth (recalling his earlier torture). Dorothy! Stop it! (Countess and Garth exit.)

Lory (crossing to right center-stage where her father is engaged in conversation with Harrow and Barry). Father! Garth Wilson is here! (Enter Brockman and Rocky Radcliffe).

Marcia. Rocky Radcliffe! The idol of the debs! You've arrived just in time to play for us! (Rocky crosses to Lory).

Rocky. I hear your play was sensational, Lory! If I didn't have to make my living at night, I'd have been at the opening, too!

Lory. You shall have the finest seat in the house at
our first matinee!

Rocky. I'll take it!

Lory. Father, this is Rocky Radcliffe, cafe society's most popular pianist - he plays at the Twilight Room.

(Mr. Courtenay and Radcliffe acknowledge introduction).

Marcia. (taking his arm and pulling him toward left upstage exit). Rocky - just one little song for the star of the show!

Rocky. For Lory? (teasingly).

Marcia. For Marcia Laymon!

Rocky. I'm a victim of my profession - I can't say "no" to a lady's request! (They all follow Rocky and Marcia to the living-room except Lory and Mr. Courtenay.)

Mr. Courtenay. Aggressive wench, isn't she? Now, what were we talking about? Oh, yes, Garth Wilson... Tony's brother. What is he doing in New York? Haven't heard a word about him since Tony won out over him in that fellowship for study abroad, in Vienna.

Lory. I heard that he'd dropped out of medical school when the Wilsons lost their money. I believe he had only one semester left before he would have gotten his M.D. I felt terribly sorry for him at the time.

Mr. Courtenay. I'm not in the least surprised to hear that he gave up. Garth is not the type of person that would exert any extra effort to get his degree. He could have
worked on a part-time basis so that he might have finished up, you know, but I suppose he counted too heavily on his family name to carry him through. What did you say he was doing here?

Lory. He mentioned having an office - and a wealthy client. I believe he's practicing psychoanalysis.

Mr. Courtenay. Sort of a male Dorothy Dix, eh? I thought he didn't get his M.D. - psychoanalysts have to earn their M.D.'s before they can practice.

Lory. Well, he must have gotten his M.D. - later, perhaps, after we lost contact with him. You'll never guess who his lady-love is!

Mr. Courtenay. That's very simple - some lovely, innocent, little debutante, I suppose, wealthy, romantic, and gullible.

Lory. (laughing) On the contrary, she's neither wealthy, any more - nor gullible - and no, basically, not even romantic.

Mr. Courtenay. Sounds logical - gullibility seldom flourishes in unromantic natures. Who is this siren you're referring to?

Lory. I'll give you one clue - she's as mercenary as Midas!

Mr. Courtenay. (thoughtfully). Let me see... She must be an actress!
Lory. The Countess Reimann, father! (Laughter, talk, and exciting music are heard, emanating from the living-room).

Mr. Courtenay. That lacquered Countess we met in Switzerland ten years ago? Now, wouldn't that be a likely match! Two parasites trying to outdo the other! I only hope they don't choose to attack the same host!

Lory. Father, you're being much too cruel! Dorothy is really a very charming person, and so is Garth!

Mr. Courtenay. Superficially, perhaps - like people who've memorized a "How To Be Charming Course" - by correspondence! I've known many of them - stock answers for stock situations. Both Garth and the Countess remind me of bright new pennies - shiny on the surface - and just as cheap underneath.

Lory. But Garth is Tony's brother, Father!

Mr. Courtenay. Only by coincidence of having the same parents. I always thought it unfortunate that Garth hadn't inherited as many of his father's fine traits as Tony did. Too bad he wasn't more like Tony! Then consider the Countess - she's an opportunist, my dear, a lecherous opportunist. She was an actress, you know - who had no feeling of reverence to the theatre as a true artist does. She used the stage, my dear, and contributed nothing to it! To her, the stage was a mere stepping-stone - to a life of luxury and idleness - to that group of play-girls and play-boys.
who call themselves the "International Set"! She put her talons - do you remember those horrible long fingernails of hers? Always simonized to a bright-blood-red? Her fingers reminded me of the tentacles of an octopus. To go on...the Countess had been an actress, and she had all the vices of a second-rate actress and none of the virtues. Completely artificial, my dear - false eyelashes - false hair - false face - and false heart.

Lory. But she had a horrifying experience during the war, father...

Mr. Courtenay. She lost her finger-nail polish?

Lory. Father!

Mr. Courtenay. Her husband?

Lory. They were divorced - after the war - after everything they owned was wiped away... The Russians bombed their castle; it was near Dresden, you remember. It must have been horrible...

Mr. Courtenay. Well, what is ill-acquired is ill-lost. And now, she seeks pity because she’s lost her castle! Has she ever considered the thousands of people who paid for the war in bones and flesh? In human lives? I'm not surprised that the Russians did bomb her castle - they'd probably seen her on the stage in Paris!

Lory. Really, father, I believe she's been mellowed a great deal by the war.
Mr. Courtenay. I'm amazed that you're being so gullible, Lorraine! (Brockman joins Lory and her father.)

Brockman. Well, Lory, I hope that you're prepared for the deluge of unpleasantries that come with success in the theatre!

Lory. Unpleasantries? Oh, no, there couldn't be! Tonight has opened a beautiful new world to me...

Mr. Brockman. But there are unpleasantries in it, too, Lory. There'll probably be moments when you'll wish for the peace and quiet of St. Clair - moments when you'll wish that you'd never written Mourner's Mansion. You'll be hunted down and haunted by social climbers, autograph fiends, and racketeers; they'll try to sell you oil wells in Timbuctoo and gold mines in Zanadu. (Spielman enters hurriedly, dashes to the balustrade and rivets his attention on the street below.) Commercial agents will ask you to endorse the products they sponsor - you don't have to use them - merely endorse them, to sway the public, increase the sales. Your telephone will be ringing constantly... Now, you have become a public figure, and the public demands certain priorities on the lives of those they choose to acclaim!

Lory. I refuse to be intimidated! Oh, father, here comes Garth... (Garth enters from upstage left.)

Garth. (enthusiastically). How do you do, Mr. Courtenay? It's certainly a pleasure to see you again, sir!

Mr. Courtenay. (cooly). Hello, Garth.
Lory. I was just telling father you've run into the Countess Reimann.

Garth. (smiling). She ran into me... (There's an awkward silence, then Spielman rushes from the balustrade to Lory.)

Spielman. They're coming out, Miss Britton! The papers are coming out! They're on the streets - I'll run down and get them - we've got half a million dollars on those reviews!

Garth. Half a million...

Mr. Courtenay. What does he mean?

Lory. The movie men seem to be interested in Mourner's Mansion, father. They may want to buy the rights - isn't it fantastic?

Mr. Courtenay. Hollywood? They'll ruin it! I can well imagine what they'd do to the climax! They'd manufacture a Cinderella ending to assure its being a box-office success! The mental children who make up the movie-going public insist on those fairytale endings! They'd distort the whole thing so that you wouldn't even want to acknowledge it as yours!

Lory. But I'd insist upon doing the adaptation! Wouldn't that be wonderful... Imagine how I could expand upon the subconscious sequences, father. The movies offer so much more freedom than the stage!

Mr. Courtenay. Profound statement, my dear! That's exactly why it takes a greater artist to write for the theatre! The theatre is more strict in its limitations, and just
as all poets cannot write a sonnet, so all dramatists cannot write tragedy.

Lory. Think of what $500,000 could do, father... We could buy back grandfather's estate! We could return to Hartshorne! Wouldn't that be a dream come true!

Mr. Courtenay. To be very mundane, I'd like to remind you that it would probably take a dozen Mourner's Mansions to get Hartshorne back! Don't forget the tax deductions of these days... (He relaxes into a dreamily anticipatory mood.) But yes, my dear, indeed, that would be wonderful - to return to Hartshorne! (Mr. Spielman and guests return through left upstage entrance, their arms loaded with the early morning papers.)

Mr. Spielman. Here's one for everybody! (He starts distributing them, excitedly. Marcia is heard saying, "What did he say about me?" A group of the guests open the newspapers on the floor - tearing wildly through the pages.)

Garth. Lory, this is a precious moment for you.

Lory. Garth, I don't want to read the reviews here - I want to be alone, I want to read them in solitude - it's really Tony's play, you know...

Garth. As Tony's brother, I know how you feel... May I go to your place with you - may we read the reviews together?

Lory. Garth! Of course. Where's Brock? We must say goodnight to him.

Garth. Oh, there he is... (nodding toward living-room)
He's reading the papers in there!

Lory (beckoning to her father, who is quietly reading one of the accounts isolated from the rest of the group). Come on, father! (As Lory, Garth, and her father start off-stage, excitement of the group rockets to hilarity as a result of the highly commendatory reviews.)

Shore (reading from one of the papers as Marcia looks over his shoulder). "Mourner's Mansion, certainly the finest modern tragedy seen on the New York stage in this reviewer's career, is destined to place its author among the greatest of contemporary dramatists. With delicately balanced...

Marcia. Well, what does he say about us?

Shore. Wait a minute... (reading silently) Oh, here it is: "James Shore enacted the role of the young doctor with admirable sensitivity, complemented by Marcia Laymon, who...

Marcia. ..."complemented by Marcia Laymon! I get one measly line! The dog! (She turns to read over Harrow's shoulder.) What does the "Times" say?

Harrow. They've all fallen in love with our playwright, with Lory!

Marcia. The days and nights we spent in rehearsals! You'd think there hadn't been any actors in the play! She can't do it again! She can't! She can't do it again!

CURTAIN
ACT TWO

Scene: It is late afternoon, six months later. The livingroom of Mr. and Mrs. Garth Wilson. The decor belongs to a period of the past, predominantly early Jacobean. The walls are sheathed in oak panels extending to the moulded parge ceiling. Right centerstage is the fireplace; left center stage, a cabinet of the period. A modern sofa upstage center and a coffee table in front of it obviously were made to blend with the Jacobean motifs. Right upstage from the fireplace is a Dante chair. A stairway, upstage right, leads to the bedrooms. Dark red tapestry draperies adorn the window right center stage. Downstage from the window is a writing desk. The entrance door to the apartment is left center stage. The overall pattern of dark colors and heavy furniture recall the past, and about the apartment prevails an atmosphere of gloom.

(Lory is working at the desk and Garth is sitting on the sofa reading a current periodical. The doorbell rings and Garth answers it. A messenger boy is revealed as Garth opens the door.)

Messenger. For Mrs. Garth Wilson, sir.

Garth. I'll sign for it. (He signs the receipt and lifts the large package inside the door.)

Lory. Whatever is that?

Garth. It's from your father. (Garth unwraps the
package and lifts from between cardboard padding a huge oil painting.

Lory. It's Hartshorne!

Garth. (holding it up). Can it still be that beautiful?

Lory. Even more so! There's something about Hartshorne that can't be captured in a painting - the lovely spirit about the place. Garth, will you please take it to Victor's and have it framed - an early nineteenth century frame? There's no place here where we can hang it (as she surveys the wall space), I'll hang it my room.

Garth. Over the fireplace... Was there anything important in the mail today?

Lory. Oh, yes - I had a letter from father. He wants us to come down to Hartshorne so he can show us the improvements he's made since we've bought it back again. Let's go tomorrow!

Garth. We can't, Lory; your lecture for Yale is scheduled for tomorrow night.

Lory. Oh, Garth, you didn't commit me for a lecture at Yale!

Garth. Why, of course! What better publicity could you want? I've arranged for a photographer to go along with you to get some pictures while you're enlightening the stage-struck 'Whiffenpoohs' on "How to Write a Play for Broadway".

Lory. But Garth, I couldn't tell them how to write a
play! I couldn't tell anybody how to write a play! I
don't have any magic formula to manufacture plays on an assem­
bley line:

Garth. Don't worry, my sweet! I'll get a book for you
on the drama -- The Yale boys will devour every golden word
that falls from the lips of the famous Lorraine Courtenay...
They make a fuss over anybody that has a hit on Broadway!

Lory. Well, if I must go through with it, I'll at least
try to present my own ideas. I could present my ideas on the
theatre of tomorrow... I feel, somehow, that there is to be
a great Renaissance in the theatre - that the dance and song
will again become an integral part of the drama, just as it
was in the Golden Age...

Garth. Which one?

Lory. Of Greece, of course! (Doorbell rings.) Who
could that be?

Garth. I hope it's a telegram from Spielman. (He opens
the door.) Oh, Dorothy! Come in!

Lory (rising from her desk). Come in, Dorothy! It's
been so long since we've seen you!

Dorothy. I've been out of town... How's the new play
coming along?

Lory. Rather slowly, I'm afraid... (The telephone rings.)

Garth. Maybe that's long distance from Spielman!

Lory. If it's Brock, tell him I'm not through with the
play, and don't know when I will be!
Garth (on the telephone). Yes, it is ... no, I won't be in the office this afternoon... who? I've never heard of him. What? Oh, yes, tell him to wait, I'll be right over... I'll be right there!

Lory. Is it urgent, Garth? Do you have to leave? It's been so long since Dorothy's called on us...

Garth. I'm dreadfully sorry, ladies, but I'll have to excuse myself for awhile - something... something important has come up. (Putting his topcoat on.) Don't rush away, Dorothy...

Lory. Of course she won't - I won't let her.

Garth. (in a state of high excitement). I'll be back shortly - Au revoir! (Exits hurriedly.)

Dorothy. Good heavens! Off like a gazelle! What could be that pressing?

Lory. Garth has been working with Mr. Spielman on the movie rights on Mourner's Mansion; it might have been something about the contract.

Dorothy. Lady Luck's favorite child - that's you, Lory!

Lory (smiles wistfully). Where have you been, Dorothy?

Dorothy. In Bermuda - to escape this nasty New York weather! Are all your winters as severe as this one?

Lory. Why, it just occurred to me - this is the first winter I have spent in New York! I guess most every New Yorker who can afford to manages to avoid at least a part of these winters by trekking off to the tropical sun. Did
you enjoy Bermuda?

Dorothy. It was dull - deadly dull! I can't imagine why any couple chooses Bermuda for honeymooning. It's so humid, you know! Your hair won't stay up - your clothes stick to you and the gnats! I'm sure all the gnats in the world winter in Bermuda!

Lory. Gnats?

Dorothy. Wasp stingers with wings! I know they only used their wings until they found me. They simply welted me with attention! And the humidity! Simply insufferable! No one could look glamorous in that climate!

Lory. Our friend Brock would hate you for running down his winter haven. He makes a ritual of his yearly trip to Hamilton!

Dorothy. (with a flourish of her arms). I relinquish it all to him! (Looking about the apartment) This is an interesting apartment, Lory - however did you find it?

Lory. Garth was the sleuth. He found it a month or so ago. He had a horde of carpenters and workmen redecorate it, and I was beginning to think we'd never move in! They spent weeks and weeks enlarging closets and windows, and I don't know what all... I don't like these dark dank colors, though.

Dorothy. (looking at the panelled walls). It's obvious he's never heard of forest conservation!

Lory. He wouldn't let me see it until it was completely finished, and he was really furious when I insisted on re-doing
my bedroom in pastels. Would you like tea, Dorothy?

Dorothy. I'd really much prefer a Scotch and soda, dear.

(Lory crosses to liquor cabinet.)

Lory. Let me see... This is really Garth's domain...

(She picks up different various-shaped bottles and reads the labels until she finds the bottle of Scotch.) Oh, here it is. (Lory starts to pour the drink for Dorothy, then prepares for herself a soft drink.)

Dorothy. Aren't you having one?

Lory. I'm allergic to Scotch.

Dorothy. You simply aren't in the swim these days unless you do have an allergy, but what a pity yours is to Scotch!

Lory. It gives me a headache so that I can't write... and I must finish my third act tonight.

Dorothy. I don't want to keep you from your Muse!

Lory. Oh, you aren't! I'll tell you a secret, Dorothy; my best lines always come to me at night. I go to bed fairly early, then something happens while I'm asleep. I wake up religiously at two in the morning - completely refreshed and...exalted, and then I write unceasingly till dawn.

Dorothy. And this unorthodox routine doesn't annoy your husband?

Lory. No, it doesn't bother Garth...

Dorothy. He sleeps like a rock?
Lory. We have separate bedrooms...

Dorothy. Sounds like a very unconventional marriage!
Lory (trying to restrain her feelings). It isn't a marriage. It isn't a marriage - I've failed; I should never have married Garth.

Dorothy. You're stealing my line, dear! I have always been of exactly the same opinion - that you should never have married Garth. No two people could be more different... (The Countess happens to see a white round sea-shell lying on the mantel above the fire-place. She crosses right downstage to to admire it.) Why, what a beautiful sea-shell! I saw one like that when I was in Bermuda. I was strolling along the beach one day and saw a beautiful white shell - just like that one - lying on the shore just ahead of me. I started to run to get it and just as I was about to reach it, a huge wave rushed in and carried it off into the sea... Where did you get this one?

Lory. Tony gave it to me...the last Sunday we were together... We were at the beach...only once in a lifetime does one see a sun-set like the one we saw on that day... We swam way out into the ocean, and the most glorious feeling came over me... We were swimming along side by side and I remember feeling a strong impulse to just keep on swimming and swimming - with Tony beside me, right out to the horizon. Before we started back to shore, we dove down into the ocean, and it was like a vast wonderland - full of beautiful bright colored fish and sea-plants. I succeeded only in peppering my leg with nettles from a sea-urchin, but Tony came back up with
this sea-shell...

Dorothy. You still think about Tony, don't you, Lory?

Lory. He'll be with me forever...

Dorothy. All of which has a devastating effect on Garth's ego, my dear!

Lory. I can't go on with Garth. I've talked to him about it, but he keeps reminding me that there has never been a divorce in his family. We've been married now only six months, but I can't live this lie any longer. Even the marriage ceremony seemed blasphemous to my inner self...(Pick-up the white sea-shell). Here is my life - this shell - empty, a mere void - a mere shell - The living creature that once inhabited this shell is dead, just as I am, for when Tony died, my heart and soul died with him... (As Lory speaks these words, Garth has entered without her knowledge to hear her self-revealing thoughts... As she turns to see Garth standing there by the entrance door, she realizes the impact her words have upon him, so she instinctively seeks escape by running to the right upstage exit, the stairway leading up to her bedroom.) Excuse me, Dorothy... (Garth crosses to the mantle, picks up the shell and is about to throw it into the fireplace when an idea occurs to him and he slowly and deliberately replaces it on the mantle.)

Dorothy. She won't forget him, Garth!

Garth. He couldn't have more power over her if he were alive! A variation of the old triangle theme: a woman, her
husband, and a dead man! (Throwing his topcoat over the desk.)

Sit down, Dorothy, I want to talk to you.

Dorothy. About what?

Garth. About us, about you and me, Dorothy!

Dorothy. You know I love you - though I'm a fool for it.

(Garth embraces her.) She doesn't know about us?

Garth. She's so wrapped up in her new play, she doesn't know I'm in the same room with her half of the time.

Dorothy. Have you told her I'd like to do the lead?

Garth. Not yet, but don't trouble yourself about that... You won't be returning to the stage, if my plans work out.

Dorothy. Divorce her, Garth! She doesn't love you! She's not a wife to you! ... She doesn't love you, and I do!

Garth. It won't be necessary to divorce her... I'm going to... I won't tolerate it any longer... (He tries to control his inner rage.)

Dorothy. But darling, you needn't tolerate it any longer! I'm curious about something, darling. You remember when you asked me to marry you, before Lory re-appeared? You said you had some ingenious scheme that would enable you to amass a fortune overnight... what was that scheme? Will you tell me, now?

Garth. (he looks up toward the second floor of the apartment, toward his room.) Oh - that? It required more time than I had anticipated - but now, at last, everything is ready!

Dorothy. Lory is getting very rich, Garth!
Garth. Yes...very rich! The SRO signs are still out for **Mourner's Mansion**; she's getting a fortune for the movie rights, and do you know what she's doing with her money? She sends practically all of it to her father, so he can restore the old family mansion! Look! (He opens a drawer of the writing desk and extracts from it a series of check stubs neatly held together by an elastic band.) G.S. Courtenay, January 5, $5018; G.S. Courtenay, January 12, $6075; G.S. Courtenay, January 19, $7014 - and so on, every week! Every week since **Mourner's Mansion** opened! Do you know what we live on? My salary as her agent!

Dorothy. Which is still four times more than my alimony from Colonel Nethering!

Garth. My salary is about 1/40 of her monthly income!

Dorothy. But surely it doesn't take so much money to restore their home!

Garth. Strangely enough, it does...(He crosses to fireplace wall and holds up the painting of Hartshorne.) This is Hartshorne...

Dorothy. Oh, it's beautiful!

Garth. You should see what the nouveau riche have done to it! The peasants! Hartshorne was the showplace of the south; they tell the story that when Lory's great-grandfather had finally completed it, all the best families from the south cam to its opening; people travelled from hundreds of miles around to accept old Courtenay's invitation - sort of a
"command performance" for festivities that lasted a week...
(Sincerely.) It's the most beautiful mansion I have ever
seen - Old J.L. Courtenay sent agents abroad to get the fin-
est furnishings to be had. Hartshorne is the prototype of
all-Southern mansions...goldleaf ceilings...crystal chande-
liers made by the same family of artisans that made the ones
for the Palace of Versailles...the parquet floors shine like
mirrors...marble for the staircase was imported from Italy...
the gates and fences are made of iron hand-wrought in Venice...
and the grounds are like another paradise, another Eden! Lory's
great-grandfather lost it all, right after the Civil War, and
the family has tried to get it back ever since. It's been
her father's life-long dream to recover it again - for his
"heirs"...it's a matter of the Courtenay family pride.

Dorothy. Would we like it?

Garth. Yes, indeed! Visiting nobilities were always es-
corted proudly to Hartshorne. It would be...very pleasant...
being the master of Hartshorne! ...What do you mean, Dorothy?

Dorothy. Don't get angry, dear - but sometimes, I won-
der if you are not still in love with Lory... She is destroy-
ing you! You're no longer the dashing man I once knew! I
haven't told you this before, because I feel so very sorry
for you, darling... Your eyes are haggard, and there are
wrinkles of worry where there were none before - though
that is rather appealing, in a way - but she is destroying
Garth Wilson!
Garth. (in hatred and resentment). She is - I know she is! She lives in a world of her own, where there's not even a corner for me - and I've come to hate her!

Dorothy. ...You are jealous because she excludes you from that world of hers. It's a pity - really - she is destroying you!

Garth. I'll destroy her first!

Dorothy. Has she received the money for the movie rights yet?

Garth. The deal closes next week.

Dorothy. Half a million, isn't it?
Garth. Half a million.
Dorothy. Oh, what half a million dollars could do! To spend the season on the Riviera again - to live in Paris, and Switzerland - and Venice again! To see those marvelous people I left behind, once again, the Duke and Duchess of Warnick, and the Marquise, and Princess Micha, and all my wonderful wonderful friends in Paris!

Garth. We will, Dorothy! We'll see them again, together!

Dorothy. And how, may I inquire?

Garth. Do you remember the lines from Mourner's Mansion...

Dorothy. Which lines?

Garth. Victim may be victor,
And victor, victim,
In the Heaven or Hell of the mind...

Dorothy. And what do they mean?

Garth. Lory dictated the means to me - in her own play!
(He laughs diabolically.) These are the lines that she said Tony brought her in the night... His 'voice in the night' has given us our rich authoress, and now, his voice in the night will destroy her! (There is a violent roll of thunder as the lights go down. As the lights go up again, Garth is seen by Lory's desk examining more check stubs. The Countess has gone. He puts the stubs back in the drawer and starts reading a page from Lory's new play. As he hears Lory's bedroom door open, he replaces the page where he found it.)

Garth (as Lory descends the stairs). I thought you were in bed!

Lory. I couldn't sleep...

Garth. That was not a very hospitable gesture toward your guest, Lory, leaving me alone to entertain her! Did we... did we keep you awake, visiting?

Lory. Oh, no - I'm terribly sorry, Garth - I was just upset... I thought I'd come down here and work awhile.

Garth (intensely). Incidentally, when can you finish up the second act? Brockman has been asking about it. He wants to see it so he can start the readings.

Lory. I don't know - I'm having difficulty with it.

Garth. Don't take it so seriously! I can't understand why you insist upon writing it in verse!

Lory. Oh, you've looked at it?

Garth. I just glanced at it - Why are you writing it in
verse? You know that sort of thing is death to the box-office!

Lory. I'm not having difficulty with the verse, Garth! The type of play I'm writing this time couldn't be written in any other form.

Garth. People don't go to the theatre in this age to engage in mental gymnastics, Lory. They don't want anything too deep; they want to be entertained! They come to the theatre to show off their new husbands or wives - to parade their new Schiaparellis between acts! Lory, you have never discussed your new play with me - why don't you confide in me? I'm a husband - as well as an agent - in name only!

Lory. Don't underestimate either the intelligence of the audience or their motives in coming to the theatre! The theatre to me, Garth, is a sacred place. Every member of the audience is giving two or more hours out of his life to those of us who've brought a play to life on the stage. It's a privilege and an opportunity to lay our talents before the altar, and if a writer has nothing to say - except re-hash with new parsley - something that's already been served, the doors of the theatre should be barred to him! You can read the play as soon as I finish it...

Garth. Well, you've got to hurry it up; Brockman's been pressing me for it. Try to finish it tonight. I'm taking the 1:40 plane to Philadelphia and when I get back tomorrow, I want to take it over to Brock.

Lory. When did you decide to go to Philadelphia?
You hadn't mentioned it before.

Garth. It'll be a quick trip, on business. Oh, Dorothy said she's like to do the lead - in you new play.

Lory. Oh no! I wouldn't want to hurt her feelings, but there's no role suitable for her in this play!

Garth. Well, finish it as soon as you can, and then we'll see if you couldn't revise a part for her... It can't be another big hit, like your first one, but it'll draw the crowds because you're the author of *Mourner's Mansion*...

Lory (stunned by Garth's mercenary attitude). But Garth! Don't you know how much this play means to me? They all feel that I can't write another success - everybody does - even you do, don't you, Garth?

Garth. Don't be silly, my pet, of course it'll be a hit! You've established a reputation with *Mourner's Mansion*; of course it'll be a hit!

Lory. I shall never write a play to serve as a parasite on another! It must be sufficient unto itself! I'll tell Brock I want it produced under a pseudonym...and I'll be content if it isn't a money-maker, if only it's a literary success! Garth - you must believe in me! I need your help - you must have faith in me!

Garth. I do have faith in you, Lory! But who was your inspiration on your first play? Your father said you wouldn't let even him read it until Brockman started production!

...Who helped you on your first play, Lory? Have you
forgotten?

Lory. That was Tony's play... He wrote it, really...
It was his voice in the night... by the sea... that wrote
Mourner's Mansion ...

Garth. Get over that silly notion! Stop talking about
Tony! I'm not an agent for a corpse!

Lory. Garth! How can you talk like that? He is your
brother!

Garth. Was, Lory - was - he was my brother! He's dead!
Can't you understand that? He's dead, gone - when will you
realize it? He no longer is - stop talking of him in the
present tense!

Lory. Please don't quarrel, Garth! Please! I can't
write with all this disharmony between us!

Garth. (as in review). Tony was my rival all my life -
He got his M.D. - (Lory gasps.) He got the fellowship to study
in Vienna! And he got you! He's dead now, but you still be-
long to him!

Lory. Garth! Don't talk like that! It's just the mem-
ories that envelope me...

Garth. Stop tormenting me about Tony! (Lory retrenches
into her dream world. She goes to the mantel, picks up the
sea-shell that Tony had given her. Garth crosses to right
downstage and puts his arms about her, feigning sympathy.)

Garth. Lory darling, forgive! Say you'll forgive me!
I lost you once to Tony and I can't stand losing you again - can't you understand my jealousy? You live in a world of your own dreams - it's a world that belongs to you and Tony, a world that closes its doors to me. Come close to me, Lory! You're always so far away - so far away - in that world of yours and Tony's. I'm the one that loves you - I'm flesh and blood! And I love you! Can't you understand? Stop torturing me!

Lory. Garth...I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I've lived with Tony - in my mind - for so long - I can't shut him out. He's so much a part of my being, I can't separate myself from him!

Garth. I won't be a rival to a dead man! (Garth picks up the white sea-shell, and in uncontrolled rage, crushes it in his hand, and dashes upstairs. Lory sinks to the floor, picks up a few fragments of the shell, then breaks into uncontrolled sobs as the lights go down.)

**SCENE TWO**

(Lory's bedroom. The decor is carried out in pastels of blue, and white. Her bed is to the left centerstage; there is a chaise lounge right centerstage. Her writing-desk is right upstage, beside large French-doors that open out on a very narrow balcony ledge. Over the fireplace left downstage is a wall-space reserved for the oil-painting of Hartshorne, and on either side of the fireplace are bookshelves. Upstage right is a radio-record player, and left upstage, her vanity.)
The time is later that same evening. A storm is raging outside and the impatient of thunder is heard. Lory is lying in bed, propped up with pillows. She is writing in a notebook, working out a scene in her new play. There is a quiet knock upon the door right upstage.)

Lory. Yes? (Garth enters.)

Garth. You've forgiven me, haven't you?

Lory. (in resignation). Yes, Garth.

Garth. My plane takes off at 1:40, Lory. The weather report says the storm will continue - hope the ride won't be too rough. I'll be back early tomorrow. You'll have the third act done by then, I hope?

Lory. Oh, yes - I promise; it's just a matter of writ-it down, now. It's all composed, in my mind, even my last line - I just have to type it out, now...

Garth. Good! Our bank account is getting quite low, you remember. It's always wise to have a sizable sum set aside -- in case of an emergency.

Lory. Yes...that's right. (Trying to forget the afternoon episode.) Garth, you are very understanding about our buying Hartshorne back...As soon as it's all paid for, then we can use this play's receipts for somethings else...something that's always been my dream...(Garth looks at her quizzically.) You're as happy for father as I am, aren't you?

Garth. Yes, indeed! It'll be splendid to live as our
social heritage demands, once again.

Lory. You've always loved Hartshorne, too, haven't you, Garth? Do you remember when Tony and you and I as children used to climb over the fence and explore the grounds? It was a land of enchantment to us all... Remember the day when the new tenant caught us playing hide and seek in the oriental gardens and he told us to get off his land? He sicked his dog on us - I started to cry, and Tony said, "Don't cry, Lory! When I grow up, I'm going to be a doctor and I'll be rich, and I'll buy Hartshorne back for you!" Isn't it a dream come true, Tony? (Garth winces at her unconscious blunder.) Oh, I'm sorry - isn't it a dream come true, Garth? Only ...(She is thinking in reality it is only a half-dream come true, with Tony gone... She makes a forced transition of her thoughts.) Father's getting old, and I think nothing has made me happier than seeing him lord and master of Hartshorne once again! His heart was nearly broken when he first saw how the last owners had neglected it...

Garth. Well, of course, if the last owners had had enough money to keep it up properly, I don't imagine they'd have sold it for any price. (Disgustedly.) New York's nouveau riche on that estate! They had no right to it in the first place!

Lory. They lost their money as suddenly as they'd won it... Money has become so many people's god, I sometimes think
of the world as degenerated into a huge silver dollar, spinning through space to destruction...

Garth. But money means power, Lory! Be realistic about it! It's only money that can give us back what the rabble has taken from us! Believe me, I'm going to make up for years of niggardly living when I get back to Hartshorne! (Lory looks at him questioningly upon his unconscious reference to his return to Hartshorne.)

Lory. Any material wealth can be so quickly wiped away... it's only the essence of things spiritual that build the invincible fortress... (Garth makes a gesture of impatience at her philosophizing.) Try not to be so bitter, Garth; many people were forced into the same situation as we were.

Garth. I've got a right to be bitter! (The clock chimes.) 11:30! I'll have to dash! (As he puts on his topcoat and starts to exit.) Incidentally, where were you last night? You were out quite late...

Lory. I went for a drive - out to the sea - to work out the climax of the third act. (Garth becomes angry; he has come to look upon Lory's drives to the sea as synonymous with her communion with Tony. He slams the door, as he exits. Lory starts to run after him; she hesitates, then decides not to follow him, when she notices Garth's briefcase on the night table, obviously forgotten in his anger.)

Lory. (opening the door and calling after him). Garth,
you've forgotten your briefcase! (She hears the downstairs door slam, so she telephones the airport.)

Lory. (after dialing). Would you please tell Mr. Garth Wilson when he arrives that he left his brief case at home? He's scheduled to take the 1:40 flight to Philadelphia...

Yes, that's right ... Thank you. (Lory goes to her vanity table, brushes her hair, then climbs into bed, and turns off the lightswitch above her bed. Lights from the adjoining buildings cast a dim sheen over her bedroom. The whine of an eerie wind is heightened by a sound system with numerous outlets stationed throughout the theatre. She runs to the French doors, opens them and stands on the balcony, only partially sheltered from the rain. Sharp bursts of lightning silhouette the skyscrapers against the black void of the sky. Lifting her head high, she holds out her arms, fascinated by the temper of the wind lashing against her body. Finally, she closes the doors, while the wind continues to throb against the panes of the doors. Returning to bed, she becomes aware of the unrhythmic staccato of raindrops. The sound of the raindrops falling upon the balcony ledge is magnified by the loud volume of the sound system and grows with ever-increasing intensity. Disturbed by the unrhythmic sound, she runs to the doors, opens them again, and looks out over the city, as if she were searching for some invisible mass of cacophonous drums... but as she opens the doors, the magnification of the
sound instantaneously ceases. Frightened, she hastily dresses, to run out-of-doors - to seek escape outside - but she drops upon the bed in a state of exhaustion. Wearily, she rests her head upon the up-propped pillows and closes her eyes - trying to believe that the amplified sound of the raindrops was but the figment of an over-taxed imagination. Suddenly, she hears the music of spiritual spheres, and a voice is heard, a voice which carries the character of the spirit world.)

Voice. Lory...Lory... where are you?

Lory. Tony... Tony!

Voice. Lory... where are you? I've been searching... searching for you for so long ... For ten years I've been searching for you, Lory... (Lory jumps out of bed and staggers about the room in a daze, as though searching for the ghost of that voice. In a high state of exaltation, she begins to weep...)

Voice. Turn away from the world, Lory... Turn away from worldly riches so I can find you once again... I've been searching... and waiting for ten long years... for ten eternities... Give up your wealth, Lory ... give it to Garth, and turn away from the world... (Now, on the dimly-lit stage, a shadowy figure of St. Theresa is projected upon the wall near the upstage center French doors.)

Lory. (as though she were seeing a revelation). St. Theresa! (In a state of mental shock, Lory runs to the wall-switch and turns on the bright overhead lights. Then she
wildly runs about the room, turning on the desk-lamp, the lamp by the chaise-longue, and the lamps on the vanity table. Center stage, she stands in awe, her eyes riveted upon the wallspace where she has seen the hazy picture of St. Theresa, and suddenly, all the lights go out. The picture of the Saint briefly appears once more. Running to the French doors, she throws them open wide, and sees that other lights are burning, in other buildings, in other apartments. She runs to the mantle of the fireplace and terror-shaken, lights the candles in the candelabra. Slightly heartened by the glow of the candlelights, she crosses to the telephone beside her bed and places a call.)

Lory (after dialing). Long distance? A personal call to Mr. Courtenay at Hartshorne, St. Clair, Virginia... The number...? The number... I don't remember... (In hysteria.) Call father! Call Mr. Courtenay at Hartshorne! (Suddenly, all the lights go on again. She tries to compose herself and walks slowly toward the wallswitch, knocking from the night table Garth's briefcase as she flicks the switch back and forth - yet, the lights remain on. A vigorous blast of wind throws open the doors and the candle lights go out. Lory climbs upon her bed, and slowly moves her head about, as though she were searching about the room for some invisible evil. Slowly, the lights become dimmer, and dimmer. She crosses right upstage to her writing desk, determined to overcome her fears by writing, and pulls from the platen
of her typewriter a page from her new play. Re-reading the dialogue:

Lory. My beloved... since you've gone away, my whole world mourns with me... The soul of my heart weeps for you, and the heart of my soul...

Voice (as though in answer to the dialogue she reads). Lory... Lory ... where are you? I've been searching, and waiting ... searching ... and waiting ...

Lory. Tony ... Tony!

Voice. Don't weep, my love ... don't weep for me ... I have wept for ten years, and now there are no tears ... My soul cannot rest till we are together again ... I am waiting for you, Lory ... Come to me, Lory ... come to me, my Lory!

Lory. Tony ... Tony... I will come to you... I will, I will...! (She grabs a raincape from her wardrobe, puts a white chiffon scarf about her head, and runs out of the room. For a moment there is complete silence; then, after a tower clock chimes out the midnight hour, the telephone rings as the curtain falls.)
ACT THREE

The time is the following morning. The stage is dimly lit. Lory is lying in bed, in the death-like sleep of exhaustion. Slowly, the left upstage door opens, as though by invisible hands. As it swings more widely open, the silhouette of someone's head is seen through the shadows, stealthily peering at the still figure of Lory. Assured that she is sleeping soundly, the man tiptoes into the room and lays a white scarf over the chair where her clothes have been thrown. He bends down, and without moving her slippers, takes a small paper bag from his pocket and seems to be spilling its contents into her shoes. Glancing over Lory again, he crosses to her desk and picks up her finished manuscript, as a doorbell is heard. Quickly, yet quietly, he exits through the left upstage doorway. Lory begins to stir, and only a moment later, Mr Courtenay enters in a high state of anxiety; in his hand he carries a large number of letters. He removes his topcoat and throws it over a chair. Lory has awakened and sits upright in her bed as her father rushes toward her. His expression reveals his shock upon seeing the change which
has overtaken her. She is pale and wan, and shows the effects of torturous mental distress.

Mr. Courtenay. Here's the morning mail ...

Lory. Father! When did you come up from Hartshorne? Just put the mail on my desk ... I'll read it later.

Mr. Courtenay. Lorraine! You are ill... What has happened to you, my dear? When the operator called me last night, I had a feeling that you were not well; when she was unable to get an answer on your end of the line, I decided to come on up... my plane just landed. Lorraine, what is wrong? Has Garth called a doctor?

Lory. I... I don't need a doctor! Rest, just rest, I guess... (She is reticent to tell her father her fears.) I've been working day and night on my play... (Sighing.) but now it's finished.

Mr. Courtenay. (not to be eluded.) What has happened to you? I've never seen you like this before! What are you worried about? What is it... that has made a tortured ghost of you?

Lory (refusing to unburden her obsessions). I'm all right, father... really I am... I'm just tired...
Mr. Courtenay. You're keeping something from me, Lorraine, that you have no right to hide from me. As your father, I want to share this trouble with you if only you'll tell me! (Lory jumps out of bed after putting on her negligee, and crosses to the fireplace, trying to blot out the turmoil within her. With her back still toward him, she begins to confess in restrained anguish her dreadful apprehension.)

Lory. I'm going insane...

Mr. Courtenay (shocked at her factual tone). Ridiculous! That's not so!

Lory. It is... it is! Take me away, father! Take me away from here! (In a pleading tone as though her very life depended upon his granting her this one request.)

Mr. Courtenay. Of course, I'll take you away...

Lory. But I've finished my play... I've finished it... (The telephone rings and Lory answers it.) Yes... I finished it this morning.... I'll send the manuscript over right away, Brock. (She replaces the receiver upon its hook, and crosses to her desk.) Brock wants the manuscript of my play right away.
Mr. Courtenay. Do you have your title for it?

Lory. Yes... (Lory searches about the desk for the script and suddenly discovers that it has disappeared.) It's gone! (Frantically, she pulls out several drawers, looks excitedly through her papers on the desk, while her father peers under the desk to see if the manuscript might have fallen on the floor.) Where is it? What have I done with it!

Mr. Courtenay. Send him over your copy.

Lory. I didn't make a copy! I only typed an original.

Mr. Courtenay. Well, no ghost has carried it off!

(Lory startles.)

Lory. No one has been in this room... (Remembering the spiritual episodes of the night...) no one has been in this room -- except myself -- since this morning. I laid it right here. (She indicates the place on the desk where she had put the manuscript.) What could I have done with it? ... I must be going insane... I don't remember what I did with it...

Mr. Courtenay. Lie down for a few moments, my dear, rest awhile, then you'll remember what you did with it... You'll find it later...
Lory (Dropping on the chaise lounge in exhaustion.) I am so tired... so weary... as though I've had no rest since the beginning of time... I feel as old as time itself...

Mr. Courtenay. You've been overtaxing yourself, Lorraine... no play is worth the price of your health!

Lory. But I couldn't rest until I finished what I had started, and Garth kept telling me how Brock was pressing him for me to finish - to finish - to finish! Do we writers have souls that are blessed... (Her tone gives this word its full connotation as she spits it out.) or cursed? Has it ever happened to you, father? Have you ever been obsessed with an idea that makes of you its slave? Have you ever known what it is to feel that sleep is a luxury not rightfully yours... that every moment and every breath you're given must be dedicated to the fulfillment of that inner cry; that every moment is a heathen waste of the short time allotted you till you've given it expression? It's like a wandering, elusive spirit - that taunts and torments your very soul until it absorbs from you the spark of life!

Mr. Courtenay. The occupational disease of true artists, my dear. But don't become a vassal to your imagination, Lorraine. You must control and direct it instead of allowing your imagination to dethrone your reason. Now get that other fantastic idea out of your mind - you're not going insane! There's never been insanity in your family! But you're not a machine! You've just been driving yourself too hard -
You'll come back to Hartshorne with me for a few months and have a nice long rest and you'll be all right again, my dear.

Lory. But it isn't that simple, father! I...I've been hearing...voices...I've been seeing things...

Mr. Courtenay (alarmed). What!

Lory. Last night, after Garth left for Philadelphia, the play all of a sudden became very easy for me...I could hardly write fast enough to keep up with my thoughts...I felt that I'd written it once before...I went to bed feeling a wonderful sense of exhilaration, but I couldn't go to sleep...I kept wondering if the play would meet with their approval - if the critics and the public both would accept it!

Mr. Courtenay. Will you tell me what your play is about?

Lory. It's in verse, father, and about a future prophet, a mystic, who brings peace to the world, to all the world.

Everyone has been so skeptical about my next play - this play-they already look at me with a certain pity; they're determined to see my second play as destined to ignoble death. Don't you see how important this play is to me? My very life hangs upon the fate of this play. If they like this one, then I know I can write another one, and another one, and another one! Then I'll know that I can go on living and writing for the rest of my life!...to fill this void within me...this deep black void within me!

Mr. Courtenay. Void? What do you mean?

Lory (in resigned confession). The emptiness within me, father, since Tony died...
Mr. Courtenay. Your marriage with Garth hasn't helped; you haven't been happy with him...

Lory. Happy? Happy with Garth? I don't believe I can ever be happy with anybody again... My marriage with Garth has only made me more aware of this loneliness within me; my marriage has forced me to see with clearer eyes the bottomless depths of my loneliness... I'm lonely because of Tony's death, but I'm lonely, too, because I don't seem to belong to anybody (Her father winces.) ... or anything, not even the theatre, yet. Have you ever felt the loneliness of one tiny star lost in a sky that's bigger than earth... of one tiny bird, high in an autumn sky, trying to reach the southern flight of his companions that have left him behind... of the last leaf of an October tree?

Mr. Courtenay (in sympathy). I know, my dear, I know...

Lory. It's all my fault... I truly hoped the marriage would work out - he's Tony's brother - it's strange that two brothers could be as different as night and day. There is no Tony in Garth... (As though she were just discovering her disillusionment.)

Mr. Courtenay. I was afraid that it wouldn't work out, from the very beginning; perhaps I've failed because I didn't try harder to stop the marriage...

Lory. Oh, no, father - don't blame yourself!

Mr. Courtenay. I feel that each one of us has the right to work out his own destiny; I have never believed in parental domination or interference. It's best, now; that you do
leave him, to regain your mental peace.

Lory. I must, I must.

Mr. Courtenay. (apprehensively). Lorraine, you said that you've been hearing voices...

Lory. (His remark throws Lory into a state of semi-trance). Father... Tony spoke to me last night... His voice was as plain as though he'd been in this very room... I heard the music of the spheres - floating through the air, riding on wings of the night; it was Heaven's music, plaintive and sweet, yet mournful. And out of its song came Tony's voice, and all the yearnings of a thousand lost souls...

Mr. Courtenay. (trying to startle her from her reverie). Lorraine! Your imagination plays tricks on you! When you become over-fatigued, your imagination can be a treacherous vulture that nourishes itself on the very force of your life, and the weaker you become, the fatter grows the vulture!

Lory (she does not hear him)... and do you want to know what he said, father? (For a moment, Mr. Courtenay does not answer, but his facial expression reveals his inner fear that perhaps the world of Lory's imagination is stronger than she, herself.)

Mr. Courtenay...What did he say?

Lory. He said, "Come to me, Lory - my soul cannot rest till we're together again..." That's how I feel, father! It was Tony's voice, reading the epitaph in my heart...

Mr. Courtenay. You're so dramatic, Lorraine, so imaginative. It's a blessing but a curse, too, at one and the same
Lory. I didn't want to worry you. Why have I told you? I'll be all right, I know I will, I'll be all right!

Mr. Courtenay. I thought we had worked all that out ten years ago. (As though he, himself, has failed.) I didn't realize you were still grieving for Tony.

Lory. I didn't want you to know, I didn't want anyone to know, but I'm afraid it's all so futile. I've tried to forget - I've tried to build a new world for myself through writing... That's why I must write! If I can just fill my mind with writing, I won't have time - there won't be any moments for memories. Can you understand, father? When Tony was killed, I was killed, too... Tony was my self, and when he died, I died, too... the heart of my heart went with him, and the soul of my soul. Tony was the very part of my life that made me whole, that made my being complete - It was Tony who gave me purpose in life, who justified my being. (In mockery.) Look at me! - The world's greatest imposter, a mere imitation of a living being! (Hysterical laughter.) You said that I look like a ghost, well, that's what I am! Not a living being, but a ghost! Masking a body without heart or soul! I grieve for two deaths... for Tony's and mine... for when he died, I died, too, and now, I'm only a ghost, only a ghost...

Mr. Courtenay (compassionately). Oh, my dear, I know so well what you feel, for I knew the same when your mother
died; but she had given me a daughter - you - there was something to live for. (Composing himself). But don't think of yourself as one who no longer has purpose in life; that is blasphemous to our Creator. Think, rather, of Tony, living, in you, and be faithful to that part of yourself, my dear. He wouldn't want you to grieve so, you know he wouldn't.

Lory. (as though she were coming back to her senses.) Why, yes, father, you're right! His voice was a betrayal of the Tony I knew! He was so full of the wonder and beauty of life. He was so full of the spirit of life, every atom of his being was so alive, so full of dynamic force, I still can't think of him as being dead.

Mr. Courtenay. All this that you tell me of hearing Tony's voice, my dear, is a trick of your fancy - of your subconscious mind giving embodiment to your brooding.

Lory. No, no, that isn't so... There was something else, too...

Mr. Courtenay (anxiously). Yes, Lorraine?
Lory. I beheld a vision...
Mr. Courtenay. ... a vision?
Lory. ... of St. Theresa.
Mr. Courtenay. The figment of your imagination!
Lory. She held out her arms, over there...(Nodding toward the right upstage wall.) She seemed to be asking me to take on the robes of the church. (In pleading tone.) I want to live in the world! Among people, and write of them!
(Pause, and then, as though she is experiencing a revelation). Why should I see St. Theresa? I'm not Catholic, though I do feel she belongs to us all - Protestant and Catholic, alike.

Mr. Courtenay. You always used to go to midnight mass on Christmas Eve...

Lory. I know - Tony has a psychological interest in watching the effect of the ritual upon the people, and I loved the pageantry of the ceremony. But I want to live in the world and be one of its people, rather than secluded from its temptations and sheltered from its evils.

Mr. Courtenay. Yes, my dear... an absence of evil in a human being is not necessarily a mark of goodness; Boethius believed that a man should be actively good, not merely negated from evil, and that is my credo. And what, then?

Lory. After hearing Tony's voice, and ... seeing St. Theresa, I couldn't sleep. I wanted to get out of this room, out to the sea - and wrap the night around me. I can believe what I see out there; everything is real out there, and peaceful and quiet... there are only the stars and the sea, the lonely sea...

Mr. Courtenay. You must have just left for the sea when I telephoned back here last night.

Lory. I didn't get out to the sea... I must have fainted as I was running out, because when I awakened, I was lying at the bottom of the stairs. I found my way back up here, and started to write again, to get my thoughts back in order.
I finished the play, and when I finally looked up from my typewriter, day was breaking through - the sun was splashing colors all over the city - the skyscrapers looked like red and gold steeple reaching beyond the sky. (During Lory's speech, Mr. Courtenay starts to cross upstage toward the French doors, and as he does so, he accidentally stumbles over one of Lory's slippers. He looks down, and as he stoops to put it back in its proper place, he notices the sand inside the shoe. He holds the slipper upside down, and lets the sand fall into his other hand. To him, the discovery of sand in Lory's shoe means that her mind is unquestionably clouded over.)

Mr. Courtenay. You didn't go to the sea last night, Lorraine?

Lory. No - no, I didn't. I didn't get outside the house.

Mr. Courtenay (convinced now that his daughter's mental state is gravely in danger.) Lorraine, Dr. Sigmeund is in New York now, you know - the Dr. Sigmeund under whom Tony was to study...

Lory. He is?

Mr. Courtenay. Yes, he's practicing here. He's become an American citizen, I understand. (Lory is in reminiscent reverie.) I want him to talk to you, Lory. I believe he can help you more than I have. Will you be all right if I
leave for just a short while, so that I might make an appoint-
ment with him for you - perhaps bring him back here?

Lory. Oh, do! I would love to meet him. Tony showed
me his letters .. before he left... (Becoming fearful again).
But hurry back, don't be gone long, I don't like being here
alone, any more.

Mr. Courtenay. It won't take long, and don't worry
about anything - you're going to be all right, my dear. He
bends to kiss her.) Incidentally, where's the painting of
Hartshorne I sent you?

Lory. Oh, I gave it to Garth - to have it framed. I'm
going to hang it over there as soon as he brings it back.(She
nods toward the fireplace wall.)

Mr. Courtenay. Looking at it will keep your spirits up.
(He pats her head and then exits through the left upstage
door. Lory becomes restless, .... walks to the wall safe at
the right of the fireplace, and takes out a record which is
encased in a flannel cloth. She places the record on the
record player, sits on the floor before it, and seems to
drift away from the world of reality, as she listens to its
voice):

The record. Hello. Lory! Just one more exam, and you
shall hereafter address me as Doctor Wilson! In the mean-
time, here is my serenade to you; I stopped by our favorite
cafe tonight, and Rafael is playing our song, just for you.
(A Latin-American orchestra plays "Cuando Se Quiere De Veras".)
Tony's voice is heard again): I love you, Lory ... Wait for me. (During the playing of the record, the lights have dimmed and taken on a bluish cast, symbol of Lory's oneness with Tony. Garth has entered the room, and stands by the doorway, listening to the closing words of the record. Angrily, he rushes across the room, and sliding the arm across the record, scratches it badly.

Lory. Garth, you'll ruin it! Tony sent me that record just before he got his M.D.!

Garth. It has ruined you! If I broke it into a million pieces, that is only what it has done to you!

Lory. Garth, I want to talk to you ... I ... I think it best for both of us that I get a divorce.

Garth. Don't be ridiculous! (Trying to divert her attention from his sadistic act.) Oh, Lory, when I got back from Philadelphia this morning, you were sleeping; I saw that you had finished the play, and I didn't want to awaken you, so I took it on over to Brock.

Lory. Oh, I'm so grateful... I didn't know where it had disappeared. When will he call me?

Garth. Just as soon as he finishes reading it, I guess.

Lory. I hope he'll like it; I hope he'll start production right away. Garth, let's do something about our situation.

Garth. Don't be silly, dear. Spielman called me at the office this morning and wanted to know if you'd
received the check?

Lory. The check? No -- no, I haven't ... Oh, it might have been in the morning mail; I haven't looked. (She goes to the desk, thumbs through a number of envelopes, and calmly opens one.) Yes, here it is. It seems incredible...

$500,000. I wonder what we'll have left, after the tax is deducted...

Garth. At least the dollar sign, and comma. Do you want to sign it now? I heard a good tip on the market today.

Lory. No... no, I don't think I will sign it right away; do you know what I'm going to do with that money, Garth?

Garth. You mean after the payments are finished on Hartshorne?

Lory. Yes.

Garth. I thought we were going to keep it for ourselves.

Lory (ignoring his statement). Think of Hartshorne, Garth... 20,000 acres of Shangri-la. Remember the area high on the hill, overlooking the sunken gardens where we used to play as children? I'm going to save everything I might earn now for a hospital for children... in memory of Tony. It will be known as the "Anthony Wilson Memorial Hospital".

Garth. A children's hospital -- on that estate! For the children of peasants, I suppose! You're completely insane!

Lory (reacts to his accusation, but tries to recover her composure). Not a hospital for peasants -- there are no peasants in this country, Garth. It will be a hospital for
children of the poor - for orphans, for any child that needs care!

Garth. This country is over-run with children's hospitals, Lory! (With sarcasm). Why not a zoo - training grounds to teach penguins how to roller-skate, or elephants, how to fly? (Seriously.) Be practical - why not a home for ourselves - in Paris, or on the Riviera?

Lory. **Mourner's Mansion** was Tony's play as much as mine, Garth. It was about his hopes, his dreams, and the money will be used for a memorial to a man who didn't live long enough to prove his greatness to the world! It was the world's loss that Tony was taken so young... when his life had reached but the stage of the bud... (Infuriated by her reverie, Garth crosses to the record-player, picks up the record and deliberately breaks it into halves, fourths, and eighths - then lets the pieces drop to the floor, a few at a time, to prolong the painful effect on Lory.)

Lory. No, Garth! Please don't! It's all I have left! You broke the shell he gave me the last time we were together! Don't, please don't break that record - please don't! It's all I have left!

Garth. What do you care for a shell, Lory? Or a mere record? You still have his 'voice in the night', Lory!

Lory (bitterly). You are Satan himself! (Garth exits angrily. Lory picks the pieces up from the floor, and despair of trying to fit them together. Despondently, she crosses to
the French doors, opens them, and looks up at the sky, showing her silent tears to the heavens. The ringing of the telephone brings her back into the bedroom.)

Lory (listlessly). Who is it? Oh, Brock... Hello, Brock... (She struggles to keep back her tears.) You called about the play? For the role of the prophet, Brock, I saw a man walking alone, out by the sea - I must find him again... He'll be the prophet... What? I don't believe I understood you. You don't like the play, Brock? You can't produce it? (Stunned by his decision, she remains motionless.) Thank you, Brock... (For a moment, she holds the receiver in her hand, and then slowly places it on its hook.

Walking slowly about the room, in a daze, she repeats Brock's words - as though she could not believe what her ears have heard.) You'd better take a nice long rest, and then try again, later... I'll send the script back to you... (She walks to her bed, lies down, and the lights fade to indicate a lapse of several hours. As the lights go up again, Lory is propped up in her bed, lost in a world of deep thought. Garth enters, carrying a beautiful bouquet of flowers, and a large crate-like package.)

Garth. Lory, please forgive me! Say you'll forgive me! (He puts the flowers in a vase beside her bed, on the night table.) Here's the painting of Hartshorne; it's finished!

Lory. Oh, let me see!

Garth. No, not yet. I want it to be a surprise. I
believe you'll like the frame! Open it sometime when you're all alone...

Lory. All right... Garth, you could be happy with somebody else...

Garth. No, there couldn't be anyone else! Just forget about it this one time, and I'll prove how much you mean to me! (His dramatic pleading almost reaches a tone of sincerity, but not quite.) I'm sorry about this afternoon; I... I just lost my temper, Lory. I didn't mean to do it. If I didn't love you as much as I do, I wouldn't be so jealous - of your love for Tony...

Lory. I'll get a divorce, Garth; it will be best for us both.

Garth. No, Lory! I could never be happy with anyone else!

Lory. But you're not happy with me, Garth - and I know it's all my fault; I can only ask you for your forgiveness. (Unjealously and sincerely.) Garth, perhaps Dorothy could make you happy...

Garth. Dorothy? Ridiculous! She's been trying to reconquer me ever since you and I were married.

Lory. Perhaps she loves you.

Garth. She's never recovered from the fact that I preferred you as my wife instead of her!

Lory. I'm so tired, Garth... Would you mind if I slept awhile?
Garth. Of course, dear ... you need rest. Didn't you sleep well last night?

Lory (reminded of her hallucinations and 'the voice in the night'). No, no I didn't. (She tries to erase from her memory the hallucinations.) I... I worked till dawn on the play, so I could finish it, as I promised.

Garth. Did you have any difficulty with it?

Lory. No... I didn't; it came easily...

Garth. You didn't have to court your Muse, to seek inspiration? You didn't go out to the sea?

Lory. No, I didn't go out to the sea last night. (As she crosses to open the French doors a bit wider, she stumbles over one of her slippers. Garth seizes upon the opportunity of deepening within her own mind the suspicion that she is going insane.)

Garth. Look at the rug, Lory! You've spilled sand on it - from the shoe you wore last night!

Lory. (She is terrified - quickly, she drops to the floor, and passes her hands over the sand that has fallen from her slipper. She picks up the slipper, just as her father had, earlier, holds it upside down, and in horror, watches the grains of sand fall to the floor.) I don't remember going out to the sea - I don't remember - I didn't! I didn't go to the sea last night!

Garth. Someone else wore your shoes to the sea last night, Lory? You did go to the sea last night - you just
don't remember! Your mind is playing tricks on you, Lory!

Lory. Garth, let me rest for just a little while; I want to be alone... I want to think...

Garth. You aren't well. (Feigning concern.) Try to rest... (Mr. Courtenay enters and recoils upon seeing Garth.)

Oh, hello, Mr. Courtenay - I'm so glad you've come up, sir. Could you stay with Lory awhile? I have to get back to the office right away. I've been mighty worried over her - she's not at all well. I've just brought up these flowers for her, but I must leave now... You'll look after her?

Mr. Courtenay (coldly). I'll look after her... She'll be all right. I'm going to take her back to Hartshorne for a good rest.

Garth. I believe I could get away for a few weeks and go down there with you... (He is uncomfortable in the presence of Mr. Courtenay and exits quietly.)

Lory. Did you see Dr. Sigmeund, father?

Mr. Courtenay. It's incredible - utterly fantastic!

Lory. What is incredible?

Mr. Courtenay. The cause of your ill-health, my dear! I was in the waiting room outside Dr. Sigmeund's office, along with a dozen or so other people, waiting my turn to see him. I sat down in the only chair vacant, beside a very pretentiously dressed woman of about sixty, I'd imagine. She was confiding her illnesses to the woman sitting beside her; at first, I felt certain that she was nothing more than a
hopeless hypochondriac, but then she started describing the hallucinations she used to have. Her dead husband's voice came to her in the night, urging her to donate a considerable amount of her wealth to the 'poor, struggling' psychiatrist who was treating her so that he might build a mental clinic exclusively for the poor...

Lory. Tony's voice asked me, too, to give away my riches...

... to Garth!

Mr. Courtenay. She, too, saw the form of St. Theresa!

Lory. Why, that's identical to my experience!

Mr. Courtenay. Yes... too fantastic to be without a flaw!

Lory. What is the... flaw?

Mr. Courtenay. The woman was from Philadelphia, Lory.

Lory. But what does that prove?

Mr. Courtenay. Garth practiced as a psychoanalyst there before he decided to set out for more wealthy and gullible widows in New York, my dear! And he's directed his venomous tactics at you! His residence in Philadelphia exactly coincides with the period of the widow's experiences in hallucinations! When I overheard her lamenting the fact that she couldn't find her Philadelphia psychiatrist's telephone here in the New York directory - she'd understood that he was setting up practice here - I showed her this picture of you and Garth taken at Hartshorne (He indicates a snapshot that he has taken from his wallet.), and she recognized
Garth as the "Dr. Owen" who had done such marvelous things for her in Philadelphia!

Lory. But why should he practice under an assumed name?

Mr. Courtenay. That confirms my conviction that Garth had never completed his medical training; he'd never finished his work toward his M.D.! He was not a licensed psychiatrist; he was nothing more than a quack practicing without a legitimate license, but with enough knowledge of psychological terminology in his background to impress his unsuspecting clients!

Lory. I can't believe it!

Mr. Courtenay. I reported what information I had to the State Medical Board, and they immediately assigned an investigator to collect the evidence against him. The investigator is waiting downstairs now to ask you a few questions...

Lory. I don't understand... I'm so tired...

Mr. Courtenay. Another surprise awaits you, my dear. We've found the source of Tony's "voice"...

Lory. Tony's voice!

Mr. Courtenay. May I bring the two in? (Mr. Courtenay accepts Lory's bewildered silence as an affirmative answer. He crosses to the entrance door and beckons to the two men to enter.) This is my daughter, Mr. Blakely.

Mr. Blakely. How do you do, Mrs. Wilson.

Mr. Courtenay. Now I want you to know one of New York's leading radio actors... His voice was the voice that resembled Tony's... His voice was Tony's "voice in the night"! (The
The sound of the downstairs door opening is heard.

Lory. It's Garth! Garth's coming back! You must leave!

Mr. Blakeley. We must not leave! He's a very dangerous person, Mrs. Wilson, with a dangerously warped mind!

We shall remain very near! In the room next-door!

Lory. But that's Garth's room! He may go in there!

Mr. Courtenay. I know. We've found some very interesting evidence in that room within the past few minutes. His broadcasting equipment is concealed behind a false wall in his clothes-closet, where he plays the records of 'the voice' that are transmitted to you through some outlet in your room, here. (Mr. Blakeley indicates the area on the wall back of Lory's bed, behind which is concealed Garth's transmitting equipment. There is not sufficient time for him to search for the outlet.) I want to warn you, Mrs. Wilson... he's planning something special tonight. We tapped his office telephone wire, and he told a "Dorothy" that he's finishing the third act tonight. Try to be calm, and don't antagonize him. He's desperate, and he's dangerous... his death weapon is not a gun, but psychology! (Mr. Courtenay, Mr. Blakeley, and the radio actor exit hurriedly. There is just a moment's pause before Garth enters.)

Garth. Good evening, Lory! (Facetiously.) How is "Miss Mourner" tonight?

Lory. Garth - you frighten me!

Garth. Do I, now! I wouldn't frighten you for the
world, Lory! It's just your nerves, my dear! They're all shot to pieces. Your nerves are tied up in a million knots and they're driving you crazy - you're insane, Lory!

Lory. Don't say that! Don't say that!

Garth. I want to tell you about a little project I'm working on, Lory - a project that requires your unlimited cooperation! Give me your cooperation quietly, mourner, and there'll be no trouble - no trouble for you whatsoever! (The downstairs doorbell rings.) Who is that? (He starts to exit to answer the doorbell, then changes his mind.) You go, Lory, you answer the door... (As Lory exits, Garth fidgets nervously until Lory returns, carrying an 8 x 11 manilla envelope. She takes a script from the envelope, casually glances through the pages, then becomes puzzled as she reads silently with growing intensity. Garth watches her changing expression with sadistic intensity.)

Lory. This isn't my play! Brock told me he'd return it when I talked to him this afternoon, but this isn't my script! It has the same title, the same characters, but it isn't my play!

Garth. No, it isn't, Lory! Sign this check, and I'll tell you a little story about that script!

Lory. I won't sign it! That money is for the children's hospital!

Garth. (He takes a gun from his pocket, and points it toward her.) Sign it, now, Lory. (At first, she hesitates,
then slowly writes her signature on the back of the check.
Garth picks up the check, puts it in his wallet, then smiles
in feigned appreciation.) Thank you, my dear - I'm very grate-
ful to you for that little sum. Now get a piece of your per-
sonal stationery, Lory... (She takes a piece of stationery
from her desk drawer and hands it to him.) No, I don't want
it! On that piece of paper, dear, you shall write your fare-
well to the world...

Lory. Garth... you can't be serious - you can't mean it!

Garth. On the contrary, Lory, I very much mean it! I
shall give you the honor of composing it, Lory - but do make
it poetic.... something like a line out of Mourner's Mansion,
something about re-union with your departed beloved...(Lory
starts to write the note under duress, then rebels.)

Lory. I won't write that note! Kill me if you like...
I won't write it!

Garth. Don't be difficult, my dear - I have no time to
waste! Let me tell you about your script - perhaps you'd be
more content to leave the fair world if you knew that your
second play was never delivered to Mr. Brockman. It wasn't
your script that he refused, Lory... it was only one like
yours, that I'd doctored up a bit. You remember that you've
always said that Mourner's Mansion was partly Tony's play,
and it just occurred to me that perhaps you'd like me, Tony's
brother, to have this play. This will be my play, Lory! I
shall postpone its sale until I reach France, and then I shall
produce it, and I shall be its author. No one will know, Lory, that you were its author, because you let no one see your scripts - do you? Not till production is under way... I appreciate ever so much, my dear, your versatility - this play is so different from Mourner's Mansion, that no one would have the slightest suspicion that only you could have written it!

Lory (as though she were thinking aloud) You think it's a good play...

Garth. I shall reap enough from this play - the stage rights, and movie rights - to live very comfortably ...

Lory. No...no... it must go to the children's hospital...

Garth. (ignoring her pleading). Now, write your farewell note, Lory, then we shall go out to the sea, where you'll join your "Tony". No one would question your impulsive desire to walk into the sea so that you can be with Tony again! (Garth nudges her right arm with the gun, urging her to compose the note.)

Voice. Give the gun to me, Garth!

Garth. Tony! Tony! That's Tony's voice! (He stares wildly about the room, deranged by the shock of hearing "Tony's voice"... The storm outside increases its violence, and a flash of lightning severs a wire concealed within the drapery above the French doors - one of the wires swings back and forth ominously in the opening of the doorway. Mr. Blakeley, the radio actor, and Mr. Courtenay rush into the room
excitedly.)

Mr. Blakely. Here is Tony's voice, Mr. Wilson! The same voice you used in your fiendish attempt to destroy the mind of your wife. Clever of you to cut just the significant lines from the transcriptions you had Mr. Darrell record - to fill your needs. He rather resents, however, your using his acting ability - for your mercenary gains! Careless, of you, though, to have saved only the name of one radio actor in your office files... You see, if you had had a roster of numerous radio actors, we wouldn't have been the least bit suspicious!

Darrell. You don't know how awful I feel about this, Mrs. Wilson... (Indicating Garth.) He called at the studio and told me I had just the voice he was looking for; he'd heard me on my weekly show. When he asked me to record, he explained that he was auditioning men's voices for the male lead on a new show that was to be broadcast soon... (Garth attempts to escape, but the men hold him back; finally, he lurches loose from their grasp to escape through the French doors, but he blindly runs into the dangling live wire and in an agonized groan hurtles over the balcony ledge down to the street below.)

Mr. Blakeley. Look out for that wire! He's electrocuted himself! (He traces the outlet for the other half of the wire to the body of a modernistic lamp on Lory's desk.) Here is the outlet - the speaker for broadcasting 'the voice'! (Mr.
Courtenay puts his arm around Lory in protective gesture as Mr. Blakeley and the radio actor quickly exit to the street below. Lory falls into a faint and Mr. Courtenay piteously calls out her name as he carries her and lays her limp body upon the bed.)

Mr. Courtenay. Lorraine... Lorraine! (Lights fade to indicate a lapse of several hours. As the lights come up, Lory is lying on her bed, and Mr. Courtenay is watching over her in deep concern.)

Mr. Courtenay. You must try to forget about all this, my dear... You'll come home, now, and rest... Then you can write another play... you're a great writer, Lorraine...

(After knocking, Mr. Blakeley enters.)

Mr. Blakeley. Your daughter has had a great shock, sir, but I wonder if you could leave her for just a short while; there are some more questions to be answered...

Mr. Courtenay. Yes, yes, I'll go with you. She couldn't go; she's completely exhausted... Rest, my dear, I'll be back shortly.

Lory. Please don't be gone long, father. (Mr. Blakeley and Mr. Courtenay exit. Suffering from mental and emotional shock, Lory becomes extremely restless. She walks about the room, then crosses to the fireplace, staring at the blank wall where the painting of Hartshorne is to be hung. Then, hurriedly, she crosses to the telephone on the night table.)
Lory (after dialing). Hello, Mr. Brockman? About my play - you didn't get the right copy, Brock. An error was made... (She hesitates awkwardly.) Garth picked up the wrong script. (She listens to Mr. Brockman.) You want me to send it to you immediately? Of course, I shall. I hope you'll like it, Brock... I'll send it right over... It must build Tony's hospital... for children... (This last statement is spoken as though she were thinking aloud, as she replaces the receiver on its hook. She dials again.) Western Union? Would you please send a messenger to 4284 East 68th - apartment 12B? I have something to be delivered... Thank you. (She walks to the balcony and wistfully watches the moon slowly escape from behind the film of rolling black clouds. Then, she remembers the oil painting of Hartshorne, still unwrapped. She calmly unwraps it and mechanically hangs it above the fireplace. Stepping back, now, to admire it, to uplift her spirit, she suddenly emits a terrifying scream, and then starts calling out Tony's name in moans of grief.) Tony... Tony... Tony! (Impulsively, she runs to her wardrobe, closet, throws a raincape over her shoulders, picks up the car-keys on the night table, and dashes from the room. For a moment, the stage is empty, while a tower clock faintly tolls out the hours of midnight, and from the French doors can be seen another black cloud enveloping the moon. Mr. Courtenay and Mr. Blakeley enter.)

Mr. Courtenay. Lorraine... Lorraine! Where is she?
I told her we'd be right back... Where has she gone? (Sudden­ly, he notices the painting of Hartshorne above the fire­place.

Mr. Courtenay. That painting! There's Tony—standing in the doorway at Hartshorne - as though he were waiting for Lory to come home...

Mr. Blakeley. (looking at the painting closely.)... beck­oning to her...

Mr. Courtenay. Garth had the figure of Tony added to the painting I had sent to Lorraine... (Studying the paint­ing forebodingly.) Of course! This picture of Tony was paint­ed over the original! But what could it have done to Lorraine?

Mr. Blakeley. She couldn't stand another shock, in her condition, Mr. Courtenay.

Mr. Courtenay. Where has she gone? To the sea, she's gone to the sea... We must hurry... (They exit hastily as the lights fade. As the lights go up again on an ethereal­like scene of a vast beach with the great ocean in the distance, sound-effects of quiet rhythmic waves are heard. Lory's voice is heard off-stage, crying out Tony's name. Her voice becomes more distinct as she approaches the immediate scene. She enters left upstage, staggering through the sands.)

Lory. Tony... Tony... (Crossing the stage, her voice continues to be heard, growing fainter and fainter, as it fades into the distance off right upstage. As Lory's voice takes on an unearthly tone, chanting the name of Tony, there
are sound-effects of huge waves lashing against her.)

Lory's voice (fading). Tony... Tony, now I shall be with you... (Now there are sound-effects of tempestuous waves pulling her into the sea, and then her voice is heard no more, only the rhythmic lapping of waves on the shore. The crescendo of the theme music indicates the spiritual re-union of Lory with the mate of her soul. The black clouds vanish and again the full moon appears, free and serene, as the curtain slowly closes.)