

*and opens it. Elaine Harper enters. Elaine is an attractive girl in her twenties; she looks surprisingly smart for a minister's daughter.) Oh, it's Elaine. (Opens door.) Come in, dear.*

*(Elaine crosses to C. Abby closes door, crosses to C.)*

ELAINE. Good afternoon, Miss Abby. Good afternoon, Miss Martha. I thought Father was here.

MARTHA. *(Stepping to L. of table.)* He just this minute left. Didn't you meet him?

ELAINE. *(Pointing to window in L. wall.)* No, I took the short cut through the cemetery. Mortimer hasn't come yet?

ABBY. No, dear.

ELAINE. Oh? He asked me to meet him here. Do you mind if I wait?

MARTHA. Not at all.

ABBY. Why don't you sit down, dear?

MARTHA. But we really must speak to Mortimer about doing this to you.

ELAINE. *(Sits chair R. of table.)* Doing what?

MARTHA. Well, he was brought up to know better. When a gentleman is taking a young lady out he should call for her at her house.

ELAINE. *(To both.)* Oh, there's something about calling for a girl at a parsonage that discourages any man who doesn't embroider.

ABBY. He's done this too often—we're going to speak to him.

ELAINE. Oh, please don't. After young men whose idea of night life was to take me to prayer meeting, it's wonderful to go to the theatre almost every night of my life.

MARTHA. It's comforting for us too, because if Mortimer has to see some of those plays he has to see—at least he's sitting next to a minister's daughter. *(Martha steps to back of table.)*

*(Abby crosses to back of table, starts putting tea things on tray. Elaine and Martha help.)*

ABBY. My goodness, Elaine, what must you think of us—not having tea cleared away by this time. *(She picks up tray and exits to kitchen.)*

*(Martha blows out one candle and takes it to sideboard. Elaine blows out other, takes to sideboard.)*

MARTHA. (*As Abby exits.*) Now don't bother with anything in the kitchen until Mortimer comes, and then I'll help you. (*To Elaine.*) Mortimer should be here any minute now.

ELAINE. Yes. Father must have been surprised not to find me at home. I'd better run over and say good night to him. (*She crosses to R. door.*)

MARTHA. It's a shame you missed him, dear.

ELAINE. (*Opening door.*) If Mortimer comes you tell him I'll be right back. (*She has opened door, but sees Mortimer just outside.*) Hello, Mort!

(*Mortimer Brewster walks in. He is a dramatic critic.*)

MORTIMER. Hello, Elaine. (*As he passes her going toward Martha, thus placing himself between Elaine and Martha, he reaches back and pats Elaine on the fanny... then embraces Martha.*) Hello, Aunt Martha.

(*Martha exits to kitchen, calling as she goes.*)

MARTHA. Abby, Mortimer's here!

(*Elaine slowly closes door.*)

MORTIMER. (*Turning R.*) Were you going somewhere?

ELAINE. I was just going over to tell Father not to wait up for me.

MORTIMER. I didn't know that was still being done, even in Brooklyn. (*He throws his hat on sofa.*)

(*Abby enters from kitchen. Martha follows, stays in doorway R.*)

ABBY. (*Crosses to Mortimer at C.*) Hello, Mortimer.

MORTIMER. (*Embraces and kisses her.*) Hello, Aunt Abby.

ABBY. How are you, dear?

MORTIMER. All right. And you look well. You haven't changed much since yesterday.

ABBY. Oh, my goodness, it was yesterday, wasn't it? We're seeing a great deal of you lately. (*She crosses and starts to sit in chair above table.*) Well, come, sit down. Sit down.