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BERTOLT BRECHT

THE GENIUS OF BRECHT

Frederic Ewen

WORLD WITHOUT WAR

Charles Wisley

PROMETHEUS FOUND

George Hitchcock

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WORLD WITHOUT WAR

CHARLES WISLEY

WHAT a long way we have come from the American Hiroshima bomb to the Soviet moon rocket, from Churchill at Fulton to Khrushchev at the United Nations: through the valley of Containment, across the desert of Total Diplomacy, past the swamps of Liberation and Preventive War, stopping a while at Charlie Wilson's place ("A Bigger Bang for a Buck"), along the brinks of Massive Retaliation, in and out of the jungles of Graduated Deterrence and Limited War. Looking back, where exactly was the turning point? Was it in China, about which Professor Nathaniel Peffer wrote in 1948, "More is involved . . . than victory and defeat in a Far Eastern civil war. The world's political balance has tipped and, moreover, tipped in a direction opposite to that which America had hoped for"?* Was it the test of the first Soviet atom bomb in 1949, which marked the end of the American nuclear monopoly much sooner than Secretary of Defense Forrestal expected it?** Was it Washington's inability to prevail in the Korean war, stalemated despite the commitment by the United States of one and a half million men and all modern weapons short of the atom bomb? Was it the Soviet detonation of hydrogen bomb in 1953, a mere nine months after a thermonuclear device had been exploded by the United States, which meant that two could retaliate? Without deciding whether there was a definite turning point or a series of bends, I think it is useful to recall these landmarks of the Cold War, now that we have reached what we hope is the homestretch leading to coexistence and disarmament. For if we are entering a new era, it might help us to draw some lessons from our past experiences and to prepare ourselves for some of the problems ahead. On hand to initiate this discussion are three recent books dealing with the subject: C. Wright Mills' *The Causes of World War Three* (Simon & Schuster, $3.50), J. D. Bernal's *World Without War* (Monthly Review Press, $5.00), and Linus Pauling's *No More War* (Dodd, Mead & Company; reissued by the Liberty Book Club, $1.85; members $1.25).

The common purpose of these three books is to educate people about their present condition and move them to action. "I believe that there

* *New York Times Magazine*, November 14, 1948.
** Cf. *The Forrestal Diaries*, pp. 495-496.

will never again be a great world war, if only the people of the United States and of the rest of the world can be informed in time about the present world situation," says Pauling. Bernal is concerned with showing the nature of the choice that faces humanity, pointing out that, "The old path will not be abandoned until enough people see a hopeful and practical alternative to it." Mills appeals particularly to intellectuals to discard the notion that history is fate beyond the control of men, to recognize that events today are more subject to human decision, and consequently to assume their own political responsibility and to judge other groups by the exercise of theirs: "The idea of political responsibility stands opposite the idea of historical inevitability. To understand that history—in particular the history of World War III—is not inevitable is to grasp its causes as an intellectual problem and as a set of political issues, rather than in the obscure and now fearful terms of a human destiny which overwhelms good little men who are doing their best, even though it is far from good enough."

All three, too, base their arguments on practical considerations arising from the qualitative change brought about in warfare between great powers by the advent of nuclear weapons. "In 1945," Pauling writes, "the world changed from the period of TNT blockbusters, with war as in the Second World War, when one large bomb could kill ten people or a hundred people, into its second period, the period of the great atomic bombs, each capable of killing one hundred thousand people. In 1952 the world moved into the third period, when the bombs became not just one thousand or ten thousand times more powerful than the blockbusters, but one million or ten million times as powerful—one thousand times more powerful than the Hiroshima and Nagaski bombs." As a result of this revolutionary progression, war has ceased to be a reasonable alternative to peace, since, as Mills observes, the cost of a war can no longer be balanced gainst its possible results. Total war with absolute weapons has ended old distinctions between strategic and tactical targets, between military and civilian, between attack and defense. "If war is not an alternative," Walter Lippmann once wrote, "then anyone who threatens war is either mad or is bluffing,"* and Mills strikes the same note in arguing that cessation of nuclear tests and weapons production, abandonment of overseas military bases by the United States and other measures to ensure peaceful coexistence are the only rational ways of meeting this development: "We are at a curious juncture in the history of human insanity; in the name of realism, men are quite mad, and precisely what they call

* *New York Herald Tribune,* January 17, 1956.

utopian is now the condition of human survival. Utopian action is survival action; realistic, sound, commonsense, practical actions are now the actions of madmen and idiots."

HOWEVER, it seems to me that Professor Mills makes the accomplishment of such utopian or survival action appear much more difficult than it really is, because he misses a most important effect of the development of nuclear wepons itself and of the possession of such arms by the Soviet Union. He apparently feels that one of the principal sources of war danger arises from the weapons themselves, contending that the [war] aparatus is now among the prime causes of war." This is of course true in the sense that the arms race has its own momentum and in the United States has created powerful vested interests. The progression from atom bombs to hydrogen bombs to fission-fusion-fission superbombs with corresponding advances in the means of their delivery, the elaboration of the air-atomic strategy whereby the Strategic Air Command became the principal arm of the American military system and the nuclear bomb the primary weapon, resulted in part from military, technical and economic factors inherent in the weapons themselves. I remember in this connection the cold-blooded dictum of the *New York Times* editorial of August 6, 1955, "The A-bomb and H-bomb are primarily labor-saving devices." It is also true in the sense, noted by Bernal and Pauling, that the development of nuclear rocketry, the spreading of possession of nuclear weapons to other powers besides the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union, and the consequent diffusion of responsibility for the use of such arms greatly increase the danger of the accidental outbreak of nuclear war. As Pauling writes: "The nature of nuclear war is such that delay by even a few hours in meeting an attack might make retaliation impossible. Decision about initiating the counterattack cannot be postponed until the time when the Commander-in-Chief can be informed; it must be invested in the various subordinate commanders. With increase in the number of people with power to launch the planes and missiles with their loads of superbombs, there comes greater and greater chance that a mistake will be made, that a nuclear war will be started because of an error."

But in fixing on these aspects of nuclear weapon development, which he correctly sees as having made the distinction between attack and defense meaningless and whose consequences he sums up in the phrase "War becomes total—and absurd," Mills does not recognize the positive side of this remarkable contradiction. On the other hand, Pauling, reflecting the position of thousands of scientists throughout the world,

declares, "It is the development of great nuclear weapons that requires that war be given up, for all time" and "There is little doubt that the nuclear weapons have been effective in preventing the outbreak of great wars during recent years." And Bernal, recalling his reactions on hearing of the use of the atom bombs against Japan in 1945, writes: "Now I was not at the time under the illusion that the mere horrible nature of nuclear weapons would prevent their use: in fact Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been a striking demonstration to the contrary. But it was clear that sooner or later the destructive power would strike back at those who temporarily had the mastery of it, and that then only insanity in its most violent sense could risk a war."

This is exactly what happened. When Churchill declared on March 1, 1955, "It may well be that we shall, by a process of sublime irony, have reached a stage in this story where safety will be the sturdy child of terror, and survival the twin brother of annihilation," the irony lay in the fact that the policies which followed his Fulton call to arms nine years earlier had boomeranged. The irony was not that peace might be attained through threat of nuclear war. The irony was that the fear should be "mutual"—that Washington, which unleashed this Frankenstein, should have become afraid of it. The irony was that the desired safety, to the extent that it exists, should have been achieved by the failure, rather than by the success, of the militant anti-Soviet policies of containment, total diplomacy, etc. The irony was that the very arsenal of atomic arms amassed by the United States in furtherance of these policies had become a liability. And not only was the Soviet Union capable of exchanging blow for nuclear blow with the United States, but the latter presented better targets, as competent observers beginning with Dr. Ralph E. Lapp pointed out as long ago as 1953. This is what made hash out of Dulles' doctrine of massive retaliation, unveiled before the Council on Foreign Relations on January 12, 1954. That same month, Professor Bernard Brodie, one of the leading American students of the subject, wrote: "It is self-evident that national objectives in war cannot be consonant with national suicide . . . The ability to destroy the enemy's economy and some 30,000,000 or 40,000,000 of his people overnight might be inharmonious with our political objectives in war even if it could be done with impunity; but if we have to suffer such a blow the fact that we can also deliver one may be of small advantage and smaller solace."*

TO be sure, the ruling groups of the United States have strenuously resisted making the policy revisions required by the advances in nu-

* *Foreign Affairs*. January 1954.

clear warfare and the achievement of nuclear parity by the Soviet Union. But as Bernal observes, "In these last years, with the knowledge of the destructive power of the hydrogen bomb and with the demonstration, in the launching of satellites into space, that there is no limit to the range of modern missiles, even generals and political leaders are beginning to realize that a critical stage has been reached." It will be remembered that the proposal to end hydrogen bomb tests became the central feature of Adlai Stevenson's bid for the Presidency in 1956. And even earlier the issue had become the subject of politics in the United States, as is shown by the appearance of an article in the *Democratic Digest,* organ of the National Committee of the Democratic Party, entitled "We're Rattling the H-Bomb From Inside a Glass House" in June 1955, one month before the Geneva summit conference. In the United States as elsewhere, political leaders have increasingly recognized that no people is going to allow itself to suffer the fate of the Kilkenny cats of nursery fame.

But let us follow this process set up by the qualities of nuclear weapons and the possession of such weapons by the Soviet Union one step further. From the fact that "with modern developments the very concept of nuclear warfare has become as illogical as it is terrible," Bernal concludes that "the tendencies of military technique itself are pointing more and more towards the necessity of partial and, probably, of total disarmament." And he proves the point admirably: "As war gets more scientific, the effects of weapons become more calculable and the human element disappears. If we know four figures giving the number, range, accuracy and destructive power of the weapons on each side, we can calculate the consequences of their being used. It is hardly worth firing them to find this out. If either side doubts the performance of the other's weapons, why not arrange a shooting match, as Mr. Khrushchev has suggested, in some corner of the Arctic Ocean or even on the moon? But if the answer should be, as most knowledgeable people already believe, that each could destroy the other and that between them they could destroy the rest of the world, why not accept the nuclear stalemate and dismantle the whole apparatus?"

Two conclusions emerge from all this. First, nuclear war has been shown to be altogether impractical for a variety of military and political reasons (incidentally, Bernal has an excellent summary of the contradictions that invalidate the idea of limited nuclear warfare and other variations which Western strategists have thought up to escape from this dilemma). In part for these very reasons, peaceful coexistence and dis-

armament are practical. With the recognition of their practicality is linked the possibility of their being accepted as alternatives to war. Second, that we have reached the stage where coexistence is being considered by more and more persons in the West as a practical necessity is largely due to the scientific achievements of the Soviet Union. Pauling reminds us that little progress was made in disarmament negotiations until a rough equality in military power was reached between East and West. There is nothing new or radical about this conclusion. In Soviet hands, the A-bomb and H-bomb have been primarily used to lend force to the constant Soviet demands for the prohibition of nuclear weapons. As Dr. Lapp wrote in *The New Force* six years ago: "In one sense it should be easier for the United States to make further concessions since Russia now has the A-bomb. The gulf between the two nations is thus less than it was before the advent of the Soviet bomb. One can imagine how the United States Senate would have viewed turning over the United States atomic stockpile and atomic secrets to an international authority when the Soviet Union did not have a single A-bomb."

The result of a failure to appreciate this dialectical effect of the development of nuclear weapons and the consequences of Soviet nuclear capabilities is shown by Mills' book. He offers little hope that his extensive and well-formulated proposals for peace are not just a valiant exercise of intellectual honesty, but have a chance of being put into action. As I shall discuss in a moment, Mills likewise does not see the existence, not to speak of the power, of public opinion in this area, and he discounts the influence of any country besides the United States and the Soviet Union. Assuming for the sake of argument the absence of all these factors and accepting moreover Mills' basic contention that both the United States and the Soviet Union are governed by "crackpot elites", "possessed by the military metaphysic", how can one explain that a world war did not break out during the last ten years? How did it come about that Eisenhower and Khrushchev finally met and agreed that all outstanding international questions should be settled not by force but by peaceful means and negotiation? In plain English, how did the cow get up on the roof? Or have we forgotten so much so soon to think now that it has been up there all the time? This would be going to the other extreme. It is necessary to examine what exactly happened, so that we can keep it up there and defeat those who would pull it down again.

TURNING from the consequences of nuclear weapon developments which, in my opinion, influenced the course of the Cold War and

which should further promote the great thaw, I want to comment briefly on some political questions.

Bernal makes the important point that besides the main conflict of the Cold War itself, there is another dispute as to whether it should be ended or not, and that in the latter dispute the alignment of forces is by no means the same. There are many leaders and large bodies of people in the West and in the neutral or uncommitted countries who despite their dislike of the Soviet Union and animosity towards communism, have expressed themselves against the continuance of the Cold War. However, in order to conduct a consistent and conscious struggle for peace, one must be able to discern some of the fundamental distinctions between the United States and the Soviet Union, and in their attitudes towards the Cold War. It does no good to the cause of peace just to lump them together, be it by speaking of two imperialisms or by describing them, as does Mills, in terms of two basically similar power elites.

Professor Mills acknowledges that in preparing this book he used the ideas contained in his famous work *The Power Elite,* "extending and adapting them to the problems of war and of peace." This produces many significant insights into the factors making for war in the United States: the rigidity and bankruptcy of the Acheson and Dulles foreign policies dominated by military considerations, the tradition of war and violence in American history, the connections between war preparatons and economic conditions in the United States, the ascendancy of military figures to policy-making positions and their alliances with politicians and corporation executives, and the moral corruption of important sections of the American people. Consequently, Mills is also able to lay bare the implications of the struggle for peace: "A real attack on war-making by Americans today is necessarily an attack upon the private incorporation of the economy, upon the military ascendancy, upon the linkages between the two. It requires the rehabilitation of political life, making politics again central to decision-making and responsible to broader publics."

But then he does something which to my mind is quite illegitimate: he takes the idea of the power elite, which he originallly elaborated to explain major institutional trends in the United States, and applies it more or less like an epithet to the Soviet Union. I say like an epithet, because while the original employment of the concept with regard to the United States was based on long documented study, no such support justifies its extension to the Soviet Union. Here there are only sweeping conclusions, which even when correct are not necessarily relevant to the issue. One may, for example, accept the substance of the statement that

"Technologically and geographically both [the United States and the Soviet Union] are supernations." But is it true that "In both, science and loyalty, industry and the national canons of excellence are in the service of the war system and of war preparations"? Is it true that "in both Russia and America, the ruling circles are possessed by the military metaphysics"? In answer I ask, is there anything in the Soviet Union that corresponds to what Mills describes as "the permanent war economy" of the United States? "Since the end of World War II," Mills writes, "many in elite circles have felt that economic prosperity in the U.S. is immediately underpinned by the war economy and that desperate economic—and so political—problems might well arise should there be disarmament and genuine peace." Where in the Soviet Union is there this incentive to the maintenance of armaments? "On the contrary," Bernal replies, "occupied with a terrific task of industrial construction and raising the standard of living, the Soviet government and the Soviet peoples grudge every rouble spent on armaments and every man kept from the farm or the factory by military service." And so we can go down the list of Mills' specifications of what has made Uncle Sam run—the "privately incorporated economy," the "military ascendancy," the "civilian default of political power," etc.—without finding a counterpart in the Soviet Union. At times it seems that Professor Mills himself notices the limp in his analogy and then he makes curious exceptions, such as the following: "Both Russia and America are 'imperialistic' in the service of their ideas and in their fears about military and political security. It is in the economic element that they differ." And: "In surface ideology they apparently differ; in structural trend and in official action they become increasingly alike."

My purpose in raising this question is not to "defend the Soviet Union," which is quite able to speak for itself. It is merely to voice my opinion that in extending the idea of the power elite to the Soviet Union, Professor Mills contributed to the confusion, rather than clarification, of the issues before the peace movement. And this is all the more lamentable in a scholar who, speaking of the role of American intellectuals, is capable of this keen observation: "Some of the best of them allow themselves to be trapped by the politics of anti-Stalinism, which has been a main passageway from the political thirties to the intellectual default of the apolitical fifties."

Nor do I believe it to be helpful to exaggerate the existing polarization of the world to the extent that Mills does when he writes that everything between the United States and the Soviet Union is "practically a

political vacuum." Knowledge of the colonial liberation movement, of friction between the United States and its allies, of differences among the Socialist countries, of the attitude of the Afro-Asian group of states in the United Nations, etc., is fresh enough that this contention needs no extensive refutation. It is indeed contradicted by Mills' observation elsewhere in the same book that "The coexistence of China and India—together they contain one third of all the people in the world—is now a pivot of world history."

Finally, I must dissent from Professor Mills' view that while the elite in the United States is practically all-powerful, the people are correspondingly powerless, "fatalistically accept," "politically indifferent," so that there is not even on the part of the elite "the felt need for new ideologies of rule." Then why the sustained propaganda of a "people's capitalism," for example? This attitude of Mills is carried over from *The Power Elite* and was fully discussed by Dr. Herbert Aptheker in his essay on that book in *Mainstream* of September 1956. While joining in Dr. Aptheker's criticism on this score, I wish to say that I also share his regard for Professor Mills' honesty and humanism, expressed in his outrage at the crackpot realists and their spiritual and intellectual lackeys in the United States.

Almost important characteristic shared by these books is that they begin to tackle the problems presented by the alternative to war and war preparations. Bernal actually devotes the bulk of his *World Without War* to showing what the new advances in science and technology could mean to mankind if they were properly applied The importance of discussing this question in a concrete and practical way is obvious, since one of the things holding up the demise of the Cold War is the fear of many people in the West—and particularly in the United States—that it will be followed by an economic collapse and mass unemployment

Bernal's point of departure, what he calls the major disharmony in the world today, is the great unevenness of production and consumption whereby the average United States citizen has an income 10 times that of the average of the world and 100 times that of the average Indian. On the other hand, the very advances of science—nuclear energy and electronics for example—which have made war total and absurd, are those that could transform the whole economic situation. Bernal argues that it is not only possible but practicable to raise the standard of living of all the world, within a generation, to that enjoyed by the people in

the most favored countries today. The benefits to be obtained from science are far greater than anything that could be gained from the conquest of the most fruitful territories or by winning the most exclusive control of raw materials, thus making pointless all the disputes about which wars have been fought in the past.

What impresses me is the broad similarity of the proposals advanced in this respect by Bernal, Mills and Pauling. Bernal estimates that a reduction of military expenditure to one-third of its present value would provide not only all the funds from the industrialized countries necessary to industrialize all the underdeveloped countries of the world within ten to twenty years, but that there would also be plenty left for further improvements in the levels of production and the standard of living in the industrialized countries themselves. The financing of this development and its effect on the industrialized countries is envisaged as follows by Bernal:

"The normal way of financing it would be by means of a long-term loan at small or normal interest, at any rate for the first few years. On account of their scale only governments can provide the necessary security for these loans. And governments, unlike private firms or banks, who have only their shareholders' profit to consider, have quite considerable reasons for granting them. The capital required is in the form of materials or machines produced in the industrial countries, and their purchase would mean a corresponding increase of wages and profits in those countries. It would be, in fact, exactly the same, from the point of view of national economy, as the present production of military weapons and equipment which, though absolutely useless, maintains the activity of the industries in most of the capitalist countries. In so far, therefore, as this military production is what holds back the danger of a slump, long-term loans for industrialization of Asian, African, or American countries would fulfil the same role.

"This type of low-interest loan financing is already an acceptable one in most industrial countries. It goes with the type of economy, established during the slump and reinforced in wars, of budgeting for a deficit; in other words directly or indirectly borrowing from people on the security of the government. This is an operation which, at least in times threatened with slump, even pays for itself because it avoids the alternative payment of unemployed relief or the construction of public works of a kind that are not worth undertaking for their own sake.

"But it would also do more, for, at least after the first few years, it

would provide new purchasing power in the underdeveloped countries which would react on imports from the industrial countries and help other industries, such as textiles and semi-luxury goods, not involved in producing the raw materials or machinery."

SIMILARLY, Mills suggests as an immediate step the allocation of some 20 percent of the current United States military budget to economic aid and industrial development of underdeveloped countries, to be increased in subsequent budgets by 10 percent each year. His idea is that the program be carried out under the authority of the United Nations in such a way that the recipients are able to participate fully in its planning and administration.

Like Bernal, Pauling stresses the need for scientific and technological research, to think ahead, because the requirements of the world thirty years hence must be considered now. Therefore he proposes a World Peace Research Organization within the United Nations which, among other things, would study and recommend ways of decreasing military budgets and of applying the savings to the solution of world problems.

Are such proposals to be laughed off as utopian and impractical? I think not when I read that a respectable Texas millionaire, who has been practical enough to become chairman of the board of Slick Oil Corporation, director of Dresser Industries, Inc., etc., sees the possibility of reducing world military expenditures, amounting presently to about 150 billion dollars a year, to one-tenth of this amount and proposes that one-half of the resultant savings be returned to the taxpayer and the other half, or about 67.5 billion dollars, be turned over to the United Nations to finance a World Betterment Program.* Rather than relegating such ideas to the moon, which incidentally seems to have come a lot nearer recently, I think this might lead progressive intellectuals to ask themselves whether they are doing everything possible to marshal all the arguments in favor of the peaceful alternative. And in a practical and imaginative way, not merely repeating hoary slogans about 600 million Chinese customers. Here are just two examples:

". . . the other object of the Cold War, the weakening of the socialist countries and particularly of the Soviet Union and China is plainly not going to be achieved," writes Bernal. "Hampered as it has been by blockade and the necessity for large military expenditure, economic development is sure to go forward, and at a continually faster rate. Thus the Cold War may well have a result precisely the opposite of what

* Tom Slick, *Permanent Peace*. Prentice-Hall, Inc. $2.95.

was intended, by increasing the relative strength of the Socialist part of the world and increasing its attractiveness in the eyes of the peoples of Asia and Africa"

And Mills points out:

"Yet it is a hard fact for capitalism that the new weaponry, the new kinds of war preparations, do not seem to be as economically relevant to subsidizing the defaults and irrationalities of the capitalist economy as the old armament and preparations. The amount of money spent is large enough, but it tends to go to a smaller proportion of employees, to the technician rather than to the semiskilled. The people who make missiles and bombs will probably not put into consumption as high a ratio of their incomes as would the more numerous makers of tanks and aircraft. Accordingly, the new type of military pump-priming will not prime as much; it will not carry as great a 'multiplier effect'; it will not stimulate consumption or subsidize capitalism as well as the older type. It is a real capitalist difficulty, and the military expenditures may indeed have to be great to overcome it."

Having come this far since Hiroshima, let us use now all the knowledge so painfully acquired to make the next steps a little easier. We have had Great Debates over various issues of the Cold War. Let us initiate now the Great Debate on Peace.

THE GREATNESS OF BERTOLT BRECHT

FREDERIC EWEN

NOT the least, among the outrages committed by the Nobel Prize Committee for Literature was the failure to honor Bertolt Brecht while he was alive. So far as continuity of productive work was concerned, originality, genius, he had, among his coevals, few rivals. Even among West Germans, where his political allegiance was decried, he was considered the only German playwright of international stature to appear since the First World War. Since his untimely death in 1956, the curtain of neglect has been somewhat lifted. The "Three-Penny Opera" continues its victorious run in an off- Broadway theatre, breaking all records; juke boxes blare forth and the man in the street whistles tunes from that work—and we are now promised productions of *Mother Courage* (more carefully prepared, we hope, than some other of Brecht's works that have gained haphazard productions in these parts).

It is with pleasure, therefore, that one greets the first full-length study of Brecht in English. Mr. John Willett's book,* brief though it is, is remarkable for the intelligence, sympathy, and understanding he brings to his subject. Neither over-adulatory nor over-apologetic, the author succeeds in compressing within its 200 odd pages as lucid an account of a complex genius as is to be found in any language.

For Brecht is not an easy subject to deal with. One of the very few playwrights who was equally concerned with dramatic theory, dramatic practice, and dramatic productions, he never ceased to regard each of his works as a "Versuch"—"an attempt" or "an experiment," whose tentative character and quality were to be tested in production, and he was always ready to alter and delete as well as add, when practice demanded.

It is this element of constant experimentation which many of his critics and commentators fail to remember, when they become caught up in the too attractive web of Brecht's theoretical discussions. Mr. Willett is a notable exception to this procedure. His eye is fixed on the practicing dramatist, on the work as written for the stage; but he never for a moment loses sight of the fact that the dramatic works, and the theory out of which they grew—the *synthesis* toward which Brecht strove and which he finally achieved—cannot be understood without reference to

* *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht: A Study from Eight Aspects*, by John Willett. New Directions Books. $8.00.

Brecht's personal development and the growth of his understanding of the historic period in which he lived.

AND what was that "synthesis" toward which Brecht was striving throughout his life? Nothing less that the creation of a drama that would be a truly "dialectical" embodiment of the dialectical process of life itself. Such an achievement is not consummated overnight. In Brecht's case it was born of a lifetime experience that began with the bitter violence, harshness, near-anarchic rebellion following the First World War—a "cynicism on the brink of catastrophe"—an attitude marked by such reflections as "Man only keeps alive by bestial means," and depictions of life as a spiritual and moral jungle; by a revulsion against bourgeois corruption and depredation, without the compensating safeguards of *direction* and *understanding*. Such was Brecht in his earlier works, already marked by extraordinary genius—*Baal, Drums in the Night,* and best-known of all, *The Three Penny Opera.*

The critical turn in his creative career came toward the end of the twenties, when he began a serious study of politics and economics from the Marxist point of view. He appropriated these for his theatre with the same avidity and the same creative absorption as he had before the poetry of the cabaret, of Villon, of Rimbaud, and of Kipling. It is out of that latter experience that the revolutionary theory of the "epic" theatre was fully forged, and the new "synthesis" achieved, that was to mark all his subsequent creation.

"The subject of politics," Mr. Willett justly remarks, "becomes so natural and congenial to him that he can use it imaginatively as another poet might use landscape, often striking the same brilliant perceptions."

This is, of course, what Brecht's professional confreres in other camps can never forgive him. Not that he was *political;* but that he assimilated politics in such a masterly fashion into his art, and emerged victorious. He successfully fused accessibility, artistry, and solid content. . . .

Where they had still been dawdling with outworn forms and formulae, Brecht had given the drama and dramatic theory an unexpectedly new and fresh direction. He entrenched the concept of "change" and made it vital; whereas they were still immersed in the bogs of fixity and immutability. For Brecht Nature and Man and Society were interrelated entities, interactive, and forever in process of movement; for them they were frozen. It did not matter that the terms of the equation they utilized changed; from Oedipus to Beckett, the equation itself remained the same. What did it matter if for "Unalterable Law," "Fatality," "Divine

Judgment" you substituted "Original Sin," "the racial or collective unconscious"? Man still remained impotent, and doomed to destruction!

AND what about our audiences? Here too Brecht brought his full armory into play. For tradition had it that the audience was fully to "identify" with the action on the stage, and with its chief protagonists; forget that it was in the theatre and that it was present at an "illusion"—and when finally it was "purged" of "pity and terror"—that is, emotionally "played out" and "depleted," with all its "passion spent," it emerged, reconciled and submissive, and went its own merry way! For Brecht, on the other hand, the spectator was as significant an element in the dramatic production as the actor or the action. Just as the action on the stage must illustrate and reflect "change"—that is activity through understanding of Nature and Society—so must the spectator be made a participant, an active participant in the drama. He must emerge, not a "drugged" being, but one who has graduated from ignorance into knowledge. That it seems to me is the meaning of the much-discussed theory of "Verfremdung"—"distancing," or "alienation." The spectator must not forget that he is in the theatre; and that there is the world outside, of which the theatre should be a truthful reflection. To this end Brecht brings to the audience the various instruments of "didacticism"—direct addresses, poetry and music, interruption of the main action, and various other theatrical devices.

"Detachment," then, is not the absence of feeling; but the emergence of "thinking," of critical reflection, that, in turn, will lead to action. *The spectator, too, has been changed.*

But Brecht not only looked on history; he lived it. Like so many Germans before him, and like so many of his own generation, he was forced into exile, into a life of wandering. "I ate my food between battles," he wrote. No matter where he tarried, he still continued fighting with his pen. Out of these years came the maturest of his works, *Mother Courage, Galileo, Herr Puntila* and many, many others; each a response to a particular historic moment, caught up for perpetuity.

He was fortunate to return to East Germany after the war, where he was offered the direction of the very same theatre in East Berlin, in which he had had his first successes—as well as unlimited governmental subsidies and resources for the creation of a truly great theatrical company. He lived to see the Berlin Ensemble hailed as one of the outstanding groups in the world, with an international repertory that ranged from Sophocles to the present.

EVEN West German critics acknowledge him a master, both as dramatist and director, much as they might cavil at the politics. Willy Haas, a well-known writer, bitterly remarks that the dream that Wagner had cherished and failed to realize under Ludwig of Bavaria, of a fully-subsidized and independent theatre, completely dedicated to a rounded dramatic art, was now a reality in the German Democratic Republic.*

There were other self-respecting Germans who did not fail to rise to Brecht's posthumous defense, when they felt he was being maligned. Such was the West German publisher, Peter Suhrkamp, whose letter to Foreign Minister Heinrich von Brentano speaks for itself.

> When I was told that you in your capacity as Foreign Minister had compared the later lyrics of Brecht with those of Horst Wessel before the Federal Parliament in Bonn, I refused to believe it. Apart from the Nazi Stormtrooper song I know of no poem by Horst Wessel, but certain repulsive features of his life and person are deeply ingrained in my memory. I was, nevertheless, disturbed, remembering that only recently your Secretary of State had questioned the inherent value of plays by Brecht and Wedekind. And now I read in the minutes of the budget debates held on the 9th of May, 1957 in the Federal Chamber, that you actually gave the following reply to the Social-Democrat M. P. Kahn-Ackermann:
>
> "In your opinion Brecht is one of the greatest dramatists of our time. That is a debatable question. However, I am of the opinion that the later poems of Brecht can only be compared to the lyrics of Horst Wessel." . . .
>
> You know that Brecht was forced into exile as an enemy of the Nazis. During the years of exile he struggled against the Nazis, and the war unleashed by them occupied all his thoughts and found reflection in his works. Brecht throughout those years lived but for the moment when he could return to a Germany freed from the Nazis. At that time you were following your civilian occupation in Germany. . . . And then you pass a pithy literary verdict bracketing the names of Brecht and Horst Wessel!
>
> . . . The rest of the world knows as well as we that Brecht was a Marxist with an individual, personal note of his own; yet it does not hesitate to perform his plays and honor him as a poet. What is more, it does not even consider it necessary, as we do, to draw that ominous dividing line between the poet and the politician, so that it might do honor to the poet. The complaint is made that German poetry, German music and German art have no significance in the world today. Can we under the circumstances afford ungratefully to disown that which still remains to command respect for us in the world? . . . .

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* *Bert Brecht,* by Willy Haas. Berlin, 1958.

POEMS ON THE THEATRE

BERTOLT BRECHT

ON THE EVERYDAY THEATRE

Actors
You who perform plays in great houses
Under false suns and before silent faces
Look sometimes at
The theatre whose stage is the street.
The everyday theatre
Common, unrewarded with honour,
But of this earth, living,
Made from the traffic of men together.
The theatre whose stage is the street.
Here the woman from next door
Gives us the landlord.
Imitating his stream of words,
How well she shows him up
Trying to keep the conversation off
The burst water pipe.
Young men mime to giggling girls
In parks at dusk
How girls resist yet while resisting
Beckon to them with their breasts.
And there the drunk
Playing the pulpit parson
Refers the less fortunate among us
To the golden fields of paradise.
Earnest and gay, the theatre of the street
Has uses
And dignity.
Not like parrot or ape
Do these men imitate for imitation's sake,
Unconcerned with what they show
Save that they themselves are imitating well.
They have their purposes in mind.

And in this, great actors that you are,
Masters of imitation,
Do not ever lag behind.
However polished your art
Do not step too far
From the everyday theatre,
The theatre whose stage is the street.
Look—the man at the corner re-enacting
The accident.
Thus he gives the driver at his wheel
To the crowd for trial.
Thus the victim, who seems old.
Of each he only gives so much
That the accident be understood
Yet each lives before your eyes
And each he presents in a manner
To suggest the accident avoidable.
So the event is understood
And yet can still astound.
For the moves of both could have been different.
Now he shows how both could have moved
To circumvent the accident.
This witness is free from superstition.
Never to the stars
Does he abandon his mortals
But only to their own mistakes.

Notice too
How serious and careful his imitation.
He knows that much depends on his precision:
Whether the innocent is ruined,
Whether the injured one receives his compensation.
See him now do what he has already done
Over again.
He hesitates,
Calls on his memory's aid,
Doubts if his imitation is truly good,
Stops to demand correction for this detail or that.
Observe with reverence.
And observe with astonishment:

This imitator never loses himself in his imitation.
Never does he lend himself whole
To the person he plays.
He remains, disengaged, the one who shows.
The man he represents has not confided in him.
Nor does he share
The feelings or views of this man.
He knows but little of him.
His imitation does not engender
A third
Composed in roughly equal parts
Of him and the other,
A third in whom but one heart beats
And one brain thinks.
His senses collected he, the performer,
Stands and gives us
The man next door,
A stranger.

In your theatres
You would take us in
With your magical transformation
Somewhere between
Dressing room and stage.
An actor leaves his room
A king enters the play,
And at this I've seen the stage hands
Laugh out loud with their bottles of beer.
Our performer there on the corner
Spins no such spell.
He's no sleep-walker you may not address,
Nor high priest at service.
Interrupt as you will.
Calmly he will reply
And when you have had your say
Continue his performance.

Don't declare this man is not an artist.
By creating this distinction between the world and yourselves
You banish yourselves from the world.

If you declare:
He is no artist,
He may reply:
You are not men.
A worse reproach by far.
Declare instead:
He is an artist because a man.
What he does we may do
With more perfection
Thus gaining honour.
Yet we practise
What is universal,
Human,
To be seen every hour in the teeming streets,
Almost as popular as eating and breathing.

Thus all your acting
Leads back to daily life.
Our masks, you should say,
Are nothing special
If they remain mere masks.
Over there the seller of scarves
Dons the masher's hat,
Dangles a cane,
Pastes on a lady-killing moustache
And behind his stall
Cake-walks up and down
To prove how hat, moustache and scarf
Indeed change men
Most favourably.
They like us, you should say,
Have their verses.
The newspaper sellers cry their headlines
With a rhythm to heighten
Effect and make their own refrains
Easier to sustain.
We learn, you should say,
The words of others
But likewise too salesmen and lovers learn
And how often

The sayings of people
Are repeated.
Thus common the quotation, the verse and the mask
Yet uncommon a mask transforming large,
Uncommon a beautifully said verse,
And uncommon the intelligent quotation.

But let us understand one another.
You may perform better than he
Whose stage is the street.
Still your achievement will be less
If your theatre is less
Meaningful than his,
If it touches less
Deeply the lives of those who look,
If its reasons
Are less,
Or its usefulness.

AN ADDRESS TO DANISH WORKER ACTORS ON THE ART OF OBSERVATION

You have come here to act plays
But now you are to be asked:
For what purpose?
You have come here to reveal
Yourselves in all that you can do
You think this worthy of being watched.
And you hope the people will applaud
As you transport them
Out of the narrowness of their world
Into the largeness of yours,
Sharing with you the dizzy peaks
And the tumults of passion.
But now you are to be asked:
For what purpose is this?

On their low benches
Your spectators begin to argue.

Some hold and maintain
You must do more than show yourselves.
You must show the world.
Where is the use, they ask,
Of being shown time and time again
How this one can be sad,
How she is heartless,
How that one would make a wicked king?
Where is the use in this endless
Exhibiting of grimaces,
These antics of a handful
In the hands of their fate?

You show us only people dragged along,
Victims of foreign forces and themselves.
An invisible master
Throws them down
Their joys like crumbs to dogs.
And so too the noose is fitted round their necks—
The tribulation that comes from above.
And we on our low benches
Held by your twitches and grimacing faces,
We gape with fixed eyes
And feel at one remove
Joys that are given like alms,
Fears beyond control.

No. We who are discontented
Have had enough on our low benches.
We are no longer satisfied.
Have you not heard it spread abroad
That the net is knotted
And is cast
By men?
Even now
In the cities of a hundred floors,
Over the seas on which the ships are manned,
To the furthest hamlet—
Everywhere now the report is: man's fate is man.

You actors of our time,
The time of change
And the time of the great taking over
Of all nature to master it
Not forgetting human nature,
This is now our reason
For insisting that you alter.
Give us the world of men as it is,
Made by men and changeable.

Thus the gist of the talk on the low benches.
Not all of course agree.
Most sit their shoulders hunched,
With brows furrowed
Like stony fields ploughed
Repeatedly in vain.
Worn away by increasing daily struggles
They avidly await the very thing their companions
Hate.
A little kneading for the slack spirit.
A little tightening for the tired nerve.
The easy adventure of magically
Being led by the hand
Out from the world given them,
Out from the one they cannot master.
Whom then, Actors, should you obey?
I'd say: the discontented.

Yet how to begin? How to show
The living together of men
That it may be understood
And become a world that can be mastered?
How to reveal not only yourselves and others
Floundering in the net
But also make clear how the net of fate
Is knotted and cast,
Cast and knotted by men?
Above all other arts
You, the actor, must conquer
The art of observation.

Of no account at all
How you look.
But what you have seen
And what you reveal does count.
It is worth knowing what you know.
They will watch you
To see how well you have watched.
But one who observes only himself
Gains no knowledge of men.
From himself he hides too much of himself.
And no man is wiser than he has become.

Therefore your training must begin among
The lives of other people. Make your first school
The place you work in, your home,
The district to which you belong,
The shop, the street, the train.
Observe each one you set eyes upon.
Observe strangers as if they were familiar
And those whom you know as if they were strangers.

Look. A man pays out his taxes. He differs from
Other men paying their taxes.
Even though it is true
No man pays them gladly.
In these circumstances
He may even differ from his normal self.
And is the man who collects the taxes different
In every way from the man who must pay?
The collector must also contribute his due
And he has much else in common
With the one he oppresses.
Listen.
This woman has not always spoken with her present harshness,
She does not speak so harshly to all
Nor does that charmer charm every one.
Is the bullying customer
Tyrant all through?
Is he not also full of fear?
The mother without shoes for her children

Looks defeated,
But with the courage still left her
Whole empires were conquered:
She is bearing—you saw?—another child.
And have you seen
The eyes of a sick man told
He can never be well again
Yet could be well
Were he not compelled to work?
Observe how he spends such time as remains
Turning the pages of a book telling
How to make the earth a habitable planet.
Remember too the press photos and the newsreels.
Study your rulers
Walking and talking and holding in their pale
Cruel hands
The threads of your fate.

All this watch closely. Then in your mind's eye
From all the struggles waged
Make pictures
Unfolding and growing like movements in history.
For later that is how you must show them on the stage.
The struggle for work,
Bitter and sweet dialogues between men and women,
Talk about books,
Resignation and rebellion,
Trials and failures,
All these you must later show
Like historical processes.
(Even of us here and now
You might make such a picture:
The playwright, having fled his country,
Instructs you in the art of observation.)

To observe
You must learn to compare.
To be able to compare
You must have observed already.
From observation comes knowledge.

But knowledge is needed to observe.
He who does not know
What to make of his observation
Will observe badly.
The fruit grower will look at the apple tree
With a keener eye than the strolling walker.
But only he who knows that the fate of man is man
Can see his fellow men keenly with accuracy.
The art of observing men
Is only part of the skill of leading them.
And your job as actors
Should make you prospectors and teachers
Of this larger skill.
By knowing and demonstrating the nature of men
You will teach others to lead their own lives.
You will teach them the great art of living together.
Yet now I hear you asking:
How can we—
Kept down, kept moving, kept ignorant
Kept in uncertainty
Oppressed and dependent—
How can we
Step out like prospectors and pioneers
To conquer a strange country for gain?
Always we have been subject to those
More fortunate than us.
How should we
Who have been till now
Only the trees that bear the fruit
Become overnight
Fruit growers?
Yet as I see it,
That is the art you must now acquire,
You, my friends, who on the same day are
Actors and workers.

It cannot be impossible
To learn that which is useful.
You are the very ones,
You in your daily occupations,

In whom the art of observing is naturally born.
For you it is of use
To know what the foreman can and cannot do,
To know also the ways of your mates exactly
And their thoughts.
How else save with a knowledge of men
Can you wage the fight of your class?
I see all the finest among you
Impatient for knowledge, making
Observation more keen
Thus adding again to itself.
Already the best of you learn
Those laws which govern
The living together of men,
Already your class makes ready
To overcome all that hindering you
Stands in the way of mankind.
Here is where you
Acting and working,
Learning and teaching,
Can intervene from your stage
In the struggles of our time.
You with the intentness of your studies
And the elation of your knowledge
Can make the experience of struggle
The property of all
And transform justice
Into a passion.

LOOK FOR THE OLD AND THE NEW

When you read your lines
Trying them,
Waiting to be surprised,
Look for the new and for the old.
Our time and the time of our children too
Is the time of struggle,
The new against the old.
The cunning of the old working mother

Who lifts the teacher's knowledge
Too heavy now for him by far,
Her taking is new
And must be given as new.
The war-time workers who hesitate
To pocket the leaflets
Pages of printed knowledge,
Their fear is old
And must be given as old.
The people have a saying:
The young moon holds for one night long
The old one in her arms.
The hesitations of the timid
Herald the new.
Show always
What still remains,
What already has come.
The struggle between classes
The new against the old
Also rages in the heart.
The teacher's desire to teach
Is not seen by his brother
Yet the woman who is a stranger feels it.
In all the feelings and actions of your characters
Look for the new and for the old!
The hopes of the small trader Courage
Deal death to her children.
But her daughter's dumb despair at war
Belongs to the new.
Her helplessness
As she drags up her warning drum
To beat astride the roof,
She the great helper,
Should fill you with pride.
The capability of her mother
Who learns nothing
Should fill you with pity.
When you read your lines
Trying them,
Waiting to be surprised,

Rejoice in the new
Be ashamed of the old!

THE CURTAINS

Paint
On the great front curtain
The peace dove militant
Of my brother Picasso.
Stretch the cord of wire behind
And there hang
The screen that gently flutters
With its two overlapping waves of gauze:
The screen that lets
The working woman disappear
Handing out her leaflets,
And Galileo disappear
Recanting.
The screen may be
Of coarse linen or of silk
Of white leather or of red
Don't ask me
That depends on the play.
Only do not make the screen too dark
For you must project thereon
The captions of the event to come
Thus to create suspense
And proper expectation.
Make my screen half high,
Don't shut off the stage!
Leaning back the spectator
Should see
How cunningly you prepare for him,
Should see
The tin moon come swaying down
And the cottage roof brought in.
Do not disclose too much
Yet disclose something to him.
Friends

Let him discover
You are not conjuring
But working.

THE LIGHTING

Electrician
Give us light on our stage.
How can we disclose
We playwrights and actors
Images to the world in semi-darkness?
The sleepy twilight sends to sleep.
Yet we need our watchers wide awake.
Indeed we need them vigilant.
Let them dream in brightness. The little bit
Of night that's wanted now and then
Our lamps and moons can indicate.
And we with our acting too can keep
The times of day apart.
The Elizabethan wrote us
Verses on a heath at evening
Which no lights will ever reach
Or even the heath itself embrace.
Therefore flood full on
What we have made with work
That the watcher may see
The indignant peasant
Sit down upon the soil of Tavastland
As though it were her own.

THE SONGS

Mark off clearly the songs from the rest.
Make it clear that this is where
The sister art enters the play.
Announce it by some emblem summoning music,
By a shift of lighting
By a caption

By a picture.
The actors having made themselves singers
Will address the audience in a different tone.
They are still characters in the drama
But now also openly
They are the playwright's own accomplices.
The tenant farmer's round-headed daughter
Nanna Callas,
Carted to market like poultry,
Sings about a simple change of master:
Words that signify nothing
If she does not also swing her lips
To the beat of the trade
Which has worn her modesty to a scar.
And equally without significance is
The camp-follower's song of the Great Surrender
Unless in it the anger of the playwright
Is added to the anger of the singer.
And thus too the Bolshevik
Ivan Vessovshchikov the worker of dry wit
Must sing
With the metallic voice of the class that cannot be defeated.
And friendly Vlassova the mother
Must sing in her own voice
Carefully
Of how the banner of reason is red.

Translated by John Berger and Anya Bostok

PROMETHEUS FOUND

GEORGE HITCHCOCK

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

A mountaintop: volcanic rocks. Beyond, a gun-metal sky empty of everything. At the rear a great wheel against which the naked Prometheus is chained as if crucified. His head hangs forward and it is only by its intermittent movements that we see that he lives.

THE GUARDIAN *sits on a rock a little distance apart. He is an inconspicuous man of middle age clothed in a shabby serge suit. He smokes a pipe.*

After a moment THE GUARDIAN *knocks the coal from his pipe arises, steps downstage and speaks.*

THE GUARDIAN: (*Unemotionally*) This is Prometheus, imprisoned here because in disobedience to the will of Zeus he carried fire to Man. I do not know any other details of his story. It all happened thirty thousand years ago, and thirty thousand years is a long time, even to immortals. I have been here less than three hundred and already I am thoroughly tired of it. I have nothing against the prisoner. I simply carry out orders: discipline must be preserved and, after all, Zeus is Zeus.

Today there has been more excitement than usual. A plane passed overhead at 0800 and after lunch there was an electrical disturbance. (*Prometheus moves on the wheel.*) He is restless. Usually at this hour he catches a few winks of sleep. There is no way of finding out what he feels. He does not talk to me and when he screams I find it pleasanter to stop my ears. This has been a very lonely station for me.

I hear it rumored about that his term of punishment is very nearly over. It's said that Hercules is coming to rescue him. Of course, that's just hearsay. I don't object. I prefer a station where there is some company, even if it's only the company of mortals. And if they try to rescue him Zeus must have foreseen it. Probably he approves. Anyway, it will all come out the way he planned it. I shan't interfere. I am only an inferior god. It doesn't do to show *hubris*. It's safer to let events take their course.

(*He goes off.*)

(MEG *enters from the other side and assumes a pose against a*

We are indebted to the *San Francisco Review* for permission to reprint this play.—*The Editors.*

rock. She is 23, handsome, suntanned and dressed in a white blouse and shorts. She has an intelligent face with signs of tension in it. She has been hiking and carries a light rucksack.)

HARRY: (*Voice off-stage.*) Hold it. The light is too strong.

MEG: Don't you have a filter?

HARRY: (*Off-stage.*) K-3. Dark yellow. It brings out the sky tones. At this altitude I should have ultraviolet.

HARRY *enters bearing a lightmeter which he holds against* MEG'S *face.* HARRY *is an athletic young man of perhaps 25, unmistakeably American. He too is dressed in hiking shorts; on his back he carries a packsack on a Norwegian packboard with bedroll attached. Around his neck and from his belt hang pieces of photographic equipment, a hunting knife, etc. When he speaks it is in a strong, pleasant, midwestern voice which is suffused with almost permanent enthusiasm. It is obvious that he has few doubts about the world or his place in it, but all the same his brashness is generally inoffensive since it is tempered by a boyish delight with the world.*

I can get by without it. (*He gives* MEG *the end of a tapemeasure.*) Hold this a second. (*He paces away from her.*) I'll focus at 16 and stop down to f-11.

MEG: Sounds complicated.

HARRY: (*Rolling up the tape.*) Not really. Below f-11 you lose the shading. Ready?

MEG: (*Neither of them have observed Prometheus.*) Ready.

HARRY: (*Kneeling.*) Nothing but the sky beyond. (*He snaps a picture*). One more. Lean back against the rock. And raise your arm just a bit.

MEG: There isn't too much glare?

HARRY: It's all right. (*They stand with their backs to Prometheus.*) Now I want to get one of the valley.

MEG: We've come a long way.

HARRY: Tired?

MEG: A little.

HARRY: It was a stiff climb. You're a good sport.

MEG: Do you suppose the others will make it?

HARRY: No, they turned back. They didn't have the endurance. And that's what it takes. Endurance. (*He removes his pack.*)

MEG: (*Seated.*) My shoes are full of volcanic ash. (*She takes one off and shakes it.*) Frankly, I'm just as glad. If there's anything I detest it's conducted tours. And I had about all I could take of those mousy school teachers with their stupid questions about Byzantine art.

HARRY: I'm glad you feel that way. I'm the lone wolf type myself.

MEG: Oh?

HARRY: Now don't get me wrong, I think it's perfectly all right to go places in groups. I just don't think

the group ought to be too large.

MEG: (*Changing the subject.*) Is that the railroad?

HARRY: Where?

MEG: Over there. Those puffs of smoke.

HARRY: Must be. (*Pause.*) You know, ever since I was a kid I've loved mountains. I don't know why, maybe because in Nebraska, where I was brought up, there weren't any.

MEG: (*Pointing.*) Look! There's an eagle!

HARRY: Where?

MEG: Over there. Just below that strange-looking cloud.

HARRY: (*Looking along her arm.*) I don't see it.

MEG: It's out of sight now.

HARRY: I guess so. (*He has obviously enjoyed being close to her and it takes an effort of his will to break away.*) Like I said, it's all just one flat plain laid out in sections.

MEG: What?

HARRY: Nebraska. And all the roads run at right angles. (*He sits.*) That does something to you, growing up where the roads don't wind. It's like living on a checkerboard. Where are you from?

MEG: New England.

HARRY: Oh. (*He pauses and searches for a new opening.*) Say, you're not from Brockton, Massachusetts, by any chance? (*She shakes her head.*) I suppose that sounds like a peculiar question, but the reason I asked is because my father's company has its main office there and a lot of people from Brockton, Massachusetts are always visiting us on their way out to the Coast. (*Pause.*) They make fibreboard.

MEG: What?

HARRY: Fibre-board. You know, out of asbestos and glass. It's for sound-proofing things.

MEG: It sounds like an admirable product.

HARRY: Sure, sure. (*Suspiciously.*) You from Boston?

MEG: No. Vermont.

HARRY: Oh.

MEG: But, quite frankly, I've been away to school for so long and then travelling that home seems like a strange country to me.

HARRY: I guess I'd feel that way, too, if I went back to Nebraska, after this. After travelling over most of Europe and Asia, I mean.

MEG: Yes, it does alter your perspective, doesn't it?

HARRY: It sure does. Look, if you'd rather, I'll keep quiet. I know how you must feel.

MEG: You do?

HARRY: Sure, when you're alone like this in the back country or on some mountaintop you want to appreciate nature in silence and there's nothing more irritating than somebody yak-yakking all the time when all you want is to be left alone. I feel the same way myself plenty of times. It's like when you've spent all day hiking up to some place you really thought was remote and

when you get there you find a lot of empty beer-cans and newspapers lying around. It really disgusts you. So, if you want, we can just sit quiet and not say anything for a while.

MEG: All right. (*They sit.* MEG *takes out a cigarette.* HARRY *attempts to light it but she forestalls him. He thinks of a number of things to say but controls himself.*) Frankly, it was better when you were talking.

HARRY: (*Jumping into the breach.*) That's because you've had too much loneliness.

MEG: How did you make that discovery?

HARRY: Oh, I can tell. All the way up the trail I was watching you. When you are hiking you hold your hands in like this, with your fingers bent into your palms. That's the way lonely people walk.

MEG: Really, that sort of theory went out with phrenology.

HARRY: No, it didn't. I've made a study of gestures. You can always tell what a person is by what he does with his body. You bend over forward when you're climbing—that means you're impulsive. Here, let me show you something. (*He takes her hand.*) Look at your thumb, it won't bend backward—that's a sign of stubbornness and a strong will-power.

MEG: Flattering but completely untrue.

HARRY: Then why did you keep on up the mountain when all the others turned back?

MEG: (*Hesitating.*) I suppose I had to prove something to myself.

HARRY: What?

MEG: Nothing in the least important.

HARRY: (*Triumphantly.*) Anyway, it took will-power, didn't it?

MEG: Really, I've already been psychoanalyzed. By a Jungian. Don't you think it's rather late for palmistry?

HARRY: And you hold your cigarette right at the tip of your fingers —that means you're fastidious.

MEG: Why fastidious?

HARRY: Because you don't want to get nicotine stains on your fingers.

MEG: Believe me, I've never given it a thought.

HARRY: It's subconscious. That's the beauty of it, it's subconscious. But you don't perspire in your palms, that's lucky. It means you're not anxious.

MEG: (*Disengaging her hand.*) I have a presentiment that I am not going to like you.

HARRY: Yes, you will. Strong-willed, fastidious and lonely girls always like me. Although at first they generally deny it.

MEG: (*With feigned shock.*) No!

HARRY: I'm just being perfectly frank.

MEG: Are you?

HARRY: (*Sure of himself now.*) At first they always think I'm dumb and when they find out that I'm not

it's a big surprise and that pleases them. Then I'm strong—physically *and* morally. I know just what I want and I go after it without a lot of beating around the bush. Do you want to hear any more?

MEG: Not particularly.

HARRY: Okay. There are some things you can't say with words, anyway. (*He kisses her—she neither resists nor reacts; she has suddenly seen Prometheus for the first time.*)

MEG: Harry! There's someone here! Someone watching us!

HARRY: What?

MEG: (*Breaking away from him.*) Look!

HARRY: (*Running toward Prometheus.*) My God! They left him here to die!

MEG: Don't touch him!

HARRY: Why not?

MEG: Those sores. He may be a leper.

HARRY: He's trying to say something. (*To Prometheus.*) Do you speak English? We want to help you

MEG: He doesn't understand. Perhaps he wants water.

HARRY: Give me the canteen.

MEG: We'll have to boil it afterwards.

HARRY: Never mind that. (*He holds the canteen to Prometheus' lips.*) Sorry, old fellow. It's only Choco-malt. That's all we have.

MEG: Can't we get him loose?

HARRY: I need something to pry with. My geology hammer.

MEG: Where is it?

HARRY: In my pack. Hurry.

MEG: (*Handing it to him.*) Here.

HARRY: I may be able to spring the chain with it.

MEG: If only he weren't so diseased looking.

HARRY: That's not his fault. But Meg—

MEG: Yes?

HARRY: We ought to discuss this.

MEG: Discuss what?

HARRY: Well—everything.

MEG: Can't we get this over with first and then talk about it later? I'm beginning to feel sick.

HARRY: That's not the point. Once we take him down we're responsible for him.

MEG: All right. But let's not talk in front of him.

HARRY: What difference does it make? He can't understand us.

MEG: I can't stand the way he's looking at us. So expectantly.

HARRY: Okay. (*They walk downstage and lower their voices.*) There's something weird about this whole thing. Meg. Someone must have put him there. And they must have had a reason. We have to take that into consideration. If we were at home I wouldn't hesitate a moment. But this is a foreign country. Perhaps he is some odd-ball like those Indian fakirs—you know, the ones who lie on a bed of nails just to prove how strong they are.

MEG: But this isn't India.

HARRY: All right, all right. Then maybe he's a criminal.

MEG: But such a cruel punishment!
HARRY: I know. But they do things like that here.
MEG: Even so, we can't let him stay there.
HARRY: Of course not. But if there's trouble with the police we have to agree on what to say.
MEG: Do you suppose there will be?
HARRY: I don't know.
MEG: Look! Someone is coming.
HARRY: Perhaps he can tell us what this is all about.
THE GUARDIAN: (*Entering hurriedly.*) If you have come to rescue him, I shan't interfere. I am unarmed. I bow before superior force.
HARRY: But who is he?
THE GUARDIAN: (*Surprised.*) You don't know?
HARRY: No.
THE GUARDIAN: Then there has been a mistake. You are not the one I took you for. I am sorry but there has been a mistake. (*He pulls a screen across the rear of the stage, concealing Prometheus. On the screen is painted an appropriately banal classical landscape.*) Casual visitors are not permitted. It was a mistake. Few people come here. Those who do always prefer something agreeable. Pleasant, isn't it? Not inspired, but pleasant. Ah, you think it out of place on a mountaintop? I can see that you do. I quite agree with you. It *is* in bad taste. I have often thought so myself. Now, what can I do for you? You'll find the best view from the western promontory. Takes in a great deal of picturesque country. On a clear day you can see the ocean. This way, please, and watch where you step. Many of the pebbles are jagged and bruise the feet. (*He offers to lead them off—they do not move.*)
I like company. Young girls don't often come here. When the sun passes its zenith it is shady and cool on the other side of the crest. We could sit and converse.
(*They do not move. He pleads.*) There is a glacier on the north slope. Not a big glacier but it is worth seeing.
(*Silence: he gives in.*)
All right. He is a troublemaker. I don't know the details. It all happened a long time ago.
HARRY: He's a criminal?
THE GUARDIAN: If you wish, a criminal.
HARRY: But why do they torture him?
THE GUARDIAN: He is not being tortured. He is being punished.
MEG: That's no justification for cruelty.
THE GUARDIAN: You are quite right. But what can we do? There it is.
HARRY: Who are you? An official of the government?
THE GUARDIAN: (*Modestly.*) My name would mean nothing to you. Shall we look at the glacier?
HARRY: (*Outraged.*) And leave

him to suffer?

THE GUARDIAN: He is used to it. is annoying. It's like living in water. —If you don't drown you grow gills. (*Prometheus coughs.*) Furthermore, he enjoys being disagreeable. In all these years he hasn't said a dozen words to me. If you set him free, he won't thank you for it. He is a trouble maker. You will find him very unpleasant company.

HARRY: But we can't leave him here to die.

THE GUARDIAN: He won't die. You don't understand these things. No matter how much he is hurt, the wounds all heal the following day. That is the restorative power of suffering.

HARRY: Take the screen down!

THE GUARDIAN: Take it down yourselves. You have been warned. If there are reprisals, it is you who will suffer them. I wash my hands of the whole thing.

(*He goes. Silence.*)

HARRY: (*Takes out a map and studies it.*) We're only five degrees from the equator. How could there be any glacier?

MEG: (*Sitting, her hand to her stomach.*) I think I'm going to be sick.

HARRY: You can't trust these native guides about anything. It's too hot here for any permanent formation of ice.

MEG: (*Her eyes closed, in a tense, automatic monotone.*) The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. The quick brown fox—sonofabitch, sonofabitch, sonofabitch—

HARRY: (*Alarmed.*) What's the matter?

MEG: (*Under iron control.*) There. It's better. (*She get up and walks about.*)

HARRY: What?

MEG: The nausea.

HARRY: (*Solicitously.*) Hadn't you better lie down?

MEG: (*Pacing.*) That doesn't help. I've got to keep my mind off it. Say something.

HARRY: What should I say?

MEG: (*Explosively.*) Anything! For God's sake, just start talking! That shouldn't be too difficult.

HARRY: (*As he talks she continues her pacing.*) Okay. I was thinking how we would have to carry him when we got him down because he'll be too weak to walk by himself so I thought of the Fireman's Lift and I tried to remember how we did it when I was at Scout camp on the Platte River only it came out all confused. Let's see. (*He demonstrates.*) You take your left wrist in your right hand and the other fellow takes his right wrist in his left hand and then you take *his* left wrist in your right hand—no, that must be wrong; you take his right wrist in your left hand and he takes your left wrist in his right hand then the fellow you have to carry sits on your hands and puts his arms around your shoulders and

you carry him down the trail. Feel any better?

MEG: Not much.

HARRY: Well, there's an even better way. We can make an Indian litter—I learned how to do it up in the Michigan woods. Here, I'll show you. (*He undoes his pack.*) You take a single blanket and spread it out on the ground and then you fold it over so that it's double. Then you take your sheath knife and stab six holes in the blanket like this, one in each of the four corners and one in the middle of the left hand side and the right hand side. If you've got time you reinforce the holes with leather thongs to that they won't tear but it'll work pretty well without that if the person you have to carry isn't too heavy. Then you run two long poles through the slits and you have a litter. I take the front end and you take the back end.

MEG: Where are we going to get the poles? There isn't a tree for twenty miles.

HARRY: (*Who obviously hasn't thought of this.*) There must be some poles around somewhere. There always are.

MEG: In Michigan, perhaps. But this isn't Michigan.

HARRY: Well, anyway, you feel better, don't you?

MEG: Some.

HARRY: It's probably just mountain sickness.

MEG: No it isn't.

HARRY: If you're not used to the altitude it plays tricks on your stomach.

MEG: I've been through this before. I know all about it.

HARRY: Loosen your shoulders. Like this. Just let your arms hang down like dead weights and move your shoulders up and down, forward and back, up and down, forward and back, up and down—

MEG: What for?

HARRY: It relieves tension.

MEG: Have you got any exercise to relieve cowardice?

HARRY: What?

MEG: Cowardice. That's my trouble. All the time you were talking to that guide I had just one impulse. To run away. As fast and as far as possible.

HARRY: But you didn't.

MEG: No, I didn't.

HARRY: Don't you see what that proves?

MEG: (*Sitting on the blanket.*) Of course. That I've got rubber legs and would never make it down the mountain by myself.

HARRY: No, it doesn't. It proves that you've got real courage. Who do you think are the bravest men in a war? Not the ones who aren't afraid, but the fellow who knows how scared he really is but conquers his fear and doesn't run away.

MEG: You're really very sweet.

HARRY: I told you you would like me once you got to know me.

MEG: You talk as though the world had just been discovered yesterday.
HARRY: Now you're laughing at me.
MEG: No, I'm not. Not really. I mean, essentially I really do admire strong people, even if I don't always believe in them. In their motives, I mean. This is very confused.
HARRY: No, it isn't.
MEG: I suppose it's a form of compensation.
HARRY: What?
MEG: Compensation. What I mean is, basically we know so little about our inner drives and I think that's a shame, don't you?
HARRY: Sure, sure.
MEG: I'm not making myself at all clear.
HARRY: Oh, that's all right. You've just got to learn to relax.
MEG: I doubt if that will help.
HARRY: Of course it will. And cut down on the smoking for a week or two. You'll notice the difference right away.
MEG: But when I stop smoking I always gain weight.
HARRY: Not with a high-protein diet you won't. Have you tried that?
MEG: I was on the Good Housekeeping Diet for a while. Is that the same?
HARRY: Pretty much. Lean meats, cottage cheese and leafy vegetables with a high sunshine content. No potatoes or starchy foods. You have to realize that one of the basic troubles with modern man is that he eats too much.
MEG: And the wrong things.
HARRY: Sure, and the wrong things. (*Rising.*) Well, what about it?
MEG: What about what?
HARRY: Shall we take him down?
MEG: Now?
HARRY: Why not?
MEG: All right.
HARRY: Sure you feel up to it?
MEG: That doesn't make any difference. It's got to be done, hasn't it?
HARRY: That's the spirit.
MEG: Only you've got to help me.
HARRY: Sure. Any way I can.
MEG: Lift me up. (*She holds out her hands to him. He takes them and starts to pull her to her feet.*) No, not that way. (*Gently but insistently she pulls him toward her.*) This way. (*She throws her arms about him and kisses him fiercely.*)

Blackout.

SCENE 2

The same as Scene I save that the blanket has been put away and there are now a bridge table and two folding camp stools downstage. MEG and HARRY are playing cribbage as the lights come up.

HARRY: Ten.
MEG: Twenty and a pair.
HARRY: Twenty-eight.
MEG: Go.
HARRY: Thirty-one for two.
MEG: Eight.
HARRY: Fifteen-two.

EG: Twenty-one. Twenty-six and
ıe for last.
ARRY: (*Picking up his hand.*)
fteen-two, fifteen-four, and a
ouble run is twelve.
EG: Fifteen-two, fifteen-four and
flush is eight.
ARRY: Your crib.
EG: Harry.
ARRY: What?
EG: I'm cold.
ARRY: You're sitting in the sun.
EG: Just the same, I'm cold.
ARRY: Take my sweater, then.
He takes it off.)
EG: Sure you don't need it?
ARRY: Of course not. I like this
ountain air.
EG: Well, if you're sure . . .
ARRY: I'm sure. Count your crib.
EG: (*Struggling with the sweat-*
.) How can I?
ARRY: Warmer now?
EG: Some. Fifteen-two.
ARRY: Where?
EG: The six and eight.
ARRY: That's fourteen, not fifteen.
EG: All right. Nothing then.
Pause)
ARRY: If only there was some
ay to get in touch with the Amer-
an consulate!
EG: Could we send the guide?
ARRY: I don't trust him.
EG: Frankly, I don't either.
ARRY: What do you mean by
at?
EG: Just what I said.
ARRY: He'd report us to the pol-
e. And then we'd be in serious
trouble.
MEG: Why?
HARRY: Why? Because it's just the sort of thing that starts an international incident.
MEG: A what?
HARRY: An international incident. They're always being started by seemingly unimportant things. You know, the Archduke at Sarajevo, that sort of thing.
MEG: But we would only be doing the right thing.
HARRY: The man who shot the Archduke thought he was doing the right thing, too. I read about him. His name was Gavrilo Princips.
MEG: How did we get on this subject?
HARRY: But of course we have to do something. We can't just sit here.
MEG: All right. Let's take him down, then.
HARRY: You're sure we ought to?
MEG: (*Weakening.*) I don't know. What about you?
HARRY: What?
MEG: I asked, what do you think?
HARRY: I'm willing if you are.
MEG: All right. Let's do it.
HARRY: Now?
MEG: (*Rising.*) Yes, now. Let's get it over with.
HARRY: (*Rising slowly.*) All right. (*They take a step toward the screen.*) Meg . . .
MEG: Yes?
HARRY: There's no point in going

off half-cocked about this. Suppose he should die. I mean, after we took him down.

MEG: Don't say things like that!

HARRY: But supposing he does. Then we'd be responsible.

MEG: I don't see why.

HARRY: Yes, we would. There was a case just like this in Omaha. Some man fell down in the street with diabetes—you know, insulin shock. The people who picked him up thought he was drunk and took him to the police station. They were just being Good Samaritans. But he died in jail and his family sued them and got a judgment for fifty thousand dollars.

MEG: I don't see the parallel.

HARRY: The point is, *they were responsible.* It didn't make any difference that they thought they were doing him a favor.

MEG: But what should they have done? Left him lying in the street?

HARRY: I'm not saying that.

MEG: What *are* you saying then?

HARRY: I'm just pointing out that from the legal point of view your intentions don't count. The law says that if you interfere you are responsible for what happens.

MEG: We've got to make up our minds. It'll be dark soon and we can't stay here all night.

HARRY: Don't get so excited. Of course we're going to take him down. But there's no harm in studying all of the angles, is there? (MEG *returns to her chair and sits down despairingly.*) I mean, i we're going to have a law-suit o our hands we ought to be prepare for it.

MEG: Who could possibly sue us

HARRY: I'm not saying that anyon *would* sue us. I'm just saying tha it's a possibility, that's all. (*Si lence.*)

MEG: It's your deal.

HARRY: (*Shuffling the cards.* You've got to be careful. There wa a professor my father knew wh signed some sort of manifesto clea back in 1936. To get milk for th Spanish Reds or something lik that. That was all he did—just tha one little thing. Twenty years late he was working for the State De partment. Along they came—(*H riffs the cards.*)—that was it. H was out of a job.

MEG: That's terrible!

HARRY: (*Dealing.*) Sure, it's te rible. I agree. But what does prove? That you've got to be car ful. You heard what the guide sa Suppose this fellow is a politic prisoner?

MEG: That wouldn't make a bit difference to me.

HARRY: No?

MEG: (*Firmly.*) No.

HARRY: You a radical?

MEG: No.

HARRY: A liberal?

MEG: I guess so.

A conservative liberal. Your pl

HARRY: That's all right. I am t

MEG: Ten.

me to go back and repeat it all over again?

(*They glare at each other.* RASMUSSEN *enters. He is a pink-cheeked old man dressed in a neatly pressed suit and carrying a physician's bag. He is the perfect picture of the amiable, warm-hearted and gruff smalltown family g.p.*)

HARRY: Fifteen-two. (*Scores.*) What I mean is, I may not agree with his opinions but he's got every right to have them.

MEG: Twenty and a pair.

HARRY: That's fundamental. But if we interfere, it goes into our records. Twenty-eight. They put every little thing down, things you never even remembered. And then some day it pops up to confront you. Go?

MEG: What?

HARRY: I asked, is it a go?

MEG: Go.

HARRY: Thirty-one for two. (*Pause.*) And all the governments have extradition treaties now. It isn't like it was twenty years ago when a Samuel Insull could go abroad and practically thumb his nose at a federal indictment.

MEEG: Who?

HARRY: Samuel Insull.

MEG: Who in God's name is he?

HARRY: A utility magnate.

MEG: We're getting off the subject. Far off.

HARRY: It was just an example.

MEG: Of what?

HARRY: (*Irritably.*) Do you want

RASMUSSEN: *Good* morning, Beautiful stretch of weather, isn't it? Puts the springtime in these old bones, puts springtime in 'em. (*He puts down his bag and stretches his arms.*) Aaah! Aaah! That does it! Does me good to breathe that pure mountain ozone. Nothing like it. Nothing like it. God's own remedy. Wonder people don't realize it.

HARRY: (*Eagerly.*) Are you a doctor?

RASMUSSEN: Physician and surgeon —obstetrics, gynecology, intestinal disorders.

MEG: There is a man behind that screen—

RASMUSSEN: Don't have to tell me. No hurry, though. You get out of breath after that climb. (*He sits.*) I suppose you came up the south slope?

HARRY: Our compass is broken.

RASMUSSEN: Easy to tell. On the south slope your back is to the sea. Now I generally take the north trail myself. It's steeper and there's danger of falling granite, but the shade is a compensation—

HARRY: Then you've been here before?

RASMUSSEN: Although in the winter there's more snow on that other side. (*He opens his bag, takes out a bottle, and gargles.*) You will pardon me. Antibiotics. Bacteria in the air. You'd think at this altitude they'd find it hard to

live, wouldn't you? But that's not the case. (*Prometheus can be heard to sigh.*) All right, all right, I'm coming. (*But he does not rise.*) You're a photographer? So am I, in a way. Would you care to see some pictures of my children? (*He takes pictures from his wallet.*) Of course, I don't have your sort of equipment. Just snapshots. This one was taken by a Brownie. It's Ella at Camp Larrabee—the one on the left—the other girl is her swimming instructor—

MEG: She is lovely. But, doctor, there is a man there in terrible agony—

RASMUSSEN: This one is my son James, James Junior. It was taken the day after his graduation. That's the Grand Canyon in the background. It's blurred, of course, as I had to focus on the close-up. I only wish I had the equipment for color photography. You have no idea how lovely it is—shades of mauve and pink all turning to purple where the shadows fall across them. It's like a fairyland.

HARRY: I know. Only I saw it in wintertime.

RASMUSSEN: This one I took sailing. In the Mediterranean. The chap at the tiller is a young Dane we met in Nice. That's my wife with her head behind the sail. We had just jibed the moment before I took it.

MEG: Doctor, you must do something for him.

RASMUSSEN: I know, I know. Bu don't be alarmed. I've been treat ing him every day for ages.

MEG: But if he is ill, why do the leave him on that wheel?

RASMUSSEN: Why? My dear young lady, ask me why the moon rise by night and the sun by day. The never give *me* any sensible answers I requisitioned a hospital bed fo him months ago. Do you think got one? But that's the way thing are here. Inefficient. Hopelessly inefficient.

HARRY: What's the matter with him?

RASMUSSEN: (*Putting on his spec tacles.*) I'll read you the diagnosti report. Of course, it's all rubbish but it's what they gave me. (*Reads.*) "Paranoia, messianic delusions. Pa tient convinced he is chosen t save mankind Irrational fantasies Delusions of persecution by un named spiritual being—" et cetera et cetera. What am I make of tha lingo? These diagnosticians are a infatuated with psychosomatic me icine, simply because it's the late craze. Everything must have i psychological explanation. Balde dash! Would you believe it, the sent a consultant down here la week who tried to convince tha poor devil that his chains wer only "the externalization of psych reality"! I must say that when hear gibberish of that sort I blus for the whole medical professio

HARRY: But what is the matt

with him? In your opinion?

RASMUSSEN: My opinion? There's no opinion about it: It's liver disease. The pancreas is damaged, too, but the infection is mainly in the liver. Yellow skin, palpitations, jaundiced condition, it's perfectly plain.

MEG: But isn't there something we can do to help?

RASMUSSEN: (*Drawing on a pair of surgical gloves.*) Help? What do you want to help for? What you mean is, you want to mind someone else's business for him.

MEG: That's not—

RASMUSSEN: (*Interrupting her.*) Yes it is. We've turned out a generation of bleeding-hearts.. They can't manage their own affairs and they think that gives them the right to manage the other fellow's. No thank you. If I need your help I'll call for it. (*He disappears behind the screen. There is silence.*)

MEGS: Harry.

HARRY: Yes?

MEG: I'm frightened. Harry.

HARRY: What for? He knows what he is doing.

MEG: But did you see what was in his bag when he opened it?

HARRY: Oh, the usual thing.

MEG: No. Scalpels. Knives. Dozens of them.

HARRY: Why shouldn't he carry them? They're part of a doctor's equipment.

MEG: I feel sick.

HARRY: Of course, he doesn't know anything about photography. Everything he showed us was over--exposed.

(*There is a long, agonized scream from Prometheus.*)

MEG: I can't stand this, Harry.

HARRY: Hold my hand. There is nothing we can do about it.

(*They stand in silence. Then there is another scream, even more intense than the first: then silence.*)

MEG: We shouldn't have let him do it.

HARRY: There's no point in being hysterical. If you can't trust the doctor then there is no one you can trust.

MEG: But I don't think he is a doctor.

HARRY: That's ridiculous, Meg, and you know it. I'd know that man was a doctor if I met him anywhere.

MEG: Why?

HARRY: Why? Because—oh, don't ask silly questions. Because anyone can see he is a doctor.

MEEG: Don't shout at me, I can hear you.

HARRY: Sorry. (*Pause.*) I need a drink.

HARRY: Is there any whiskey left?

MEG: (*Holding him a flask.*) A bit.

HARRY: (*Holding it up.*) For snakebite. (*He drinks, then passes her the flask.*) Here.

MEG: You finish it.

HARRY: I thought you wanted a

drink.

MEG: I've changed my mind. (RASMUSSEN *can be heard shouting in Greek.*)

HARRY: What's that?

MEG: I don't know.

(THE GUARDIAN *runs across the stage speaking in Greek. He disappears behind the screen and* RASMUSSEN'S *angry voice can be heard berating him. Then silence.*)

MEG: Me, too.

HARRY: It's all gone. (*He holds the flask upside down.*) You know, I used to throw the discus at college. I bet if I threw this as hard as I could it would land at the bottom of the mountain.

MEG: Don't.

RASMUSSEN: (*Reentering, taking off his gloves.*) Still here, I see.

MEG: What did you do to him?

RASMUSSEN: Are you staying long?

HARRY: What language were you speaking to the guide?

RASMUSSEN: There's a chalet a few miles down the east slope. You'll find it more comfortable at this time of the year. Rather like a hostel—informal singing, supply your own bedding, that sort of thing. But clean, no insects, and a tree on the grounds. (*He starts to go off.*)

MEG: Doctor! Wait a minute!

RASMUSSEN: It's your own fault if you don't enjoy it here. (*He goes.*)

MEG: (*Turning back.*) It's no use.

HARRY: You can't make him stay if he doesn't want to.

THE GUARDIAN: (*Who enters wiping his hands on a towel.*) Has he gone?

HARRY: Look here. Who is he? Is he a government physician?

THE GUARDIAN: He left his forceps. He always leaves things. (MEG *starts to take the instrument from his hand.*) Don't touch it, signora, you'll get blood on your hands.

MEG: (*Crying out.*) Harry! Pull back that screen!

THE GUARDIAN: No, no! It is not permitted! Visitors are not allowed!

HARRY: Get out of my way, you little wop!

(*He strikes* THE GUARDIAN *and advances to the screen.*)

THE GUARDIAN: (*On his knees.*) Zeus! Zeus! Have you forgotten your servant? Is it for this I have served you? To be beaten and reviled? Give me a sign, Zeus, let me know that you have not deserted me!

(*There is a roll of thunder. Harry pulls the screen aside, revealing Prometheus on the wheel with a great gash across his abdomen from which blood pours.*)

MEG: Harry! They've killed him!

HARRY: The barbarians!

(*Blackout.*)

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

At rise the stage has been changed

in the following details: the screen has been closed, there are tin cans, empty cigarette packages and candy wrappers on the ground, and women's panties and bra are spread on one of the rocks, drying in the sunlight. Over the arms of the camp chair are towels neatly labelled "His" and "Hers." Harry stands downstage leaning on a golf club. Meg sits on a rock. She is now dressed in slacks and blouse and is filing her fingernails.

MEG: It would be a hospital for children. And every little kid that was sick or undernourished or wanted to run away from home because her parents didn't love him could come there for free and instead of stairways there would be bannisters and slides from one floor to the next and the waiting rooms would all be laid out in gold mazes with yew trees growing in the center and . . . and the gardens would be on three levels with pathways through the air among the branches and down below through the roots of all growing things and no violins no potted plants no calla lilies but sunlight and all the chairs made out of yellow straw and no Sundays or Mondays but just the middle of the week from one year to the next and the nurses all African women dressed in apple green and —and—(*She breaks off.*)—and that's all. Ridiculous, isn't it?

HARRY: No, it's beautiful. It shows the kind of person you really are.

MEG: But I'm not like that at all. It's sheer fantasy.

HARRY: You shouldn't be ashamed of it.

MEG: I never finish anything I start. When I was fifteen I ran away from home. I was going to the Belgian Congo.

HARRY: Why the Belgian Congo?

MEG: To join Dr. Schweitzer. I got as far as Boston.

HARRY: We all have to have our dreams—or nothing would ever be accomplished in the world. Every time there's a great improvement, like the electric light or the automobile or penicillin, it's because someone had the courage to dream about it.

Now watch this one. (*He takes a stance and swings.*) I've got to correct that slice. I bring my shoulder up a little too far every time.

MEG: Harry.

HARRY: (*Taking a stance again.*) Yes?

MEG: Are you glad?

HARRY: (*His eye on the ball.*) Huh?

MEG: About us, I mean.

HARRY: Sure, sure. (*He swings again.*) Damn it! Did it again. It starts perfectly straight but it always ends in a slice.

MEG: And you don't think I am frigid?

HARRY: Ahh, you know I was just kidding when I said that. It was just kidding around, you know that. You were swell. Now keep your

eye on this. The stance is the thing you've got to watch. You have to have your feet equidistant from the ball. Start with the body weight on the right foot and then as your swing comes down the weight is transferred forward onto the left foot. (*He swings and then waits for her comment.*) What's the matter?

MEG: I just thought you might say you liked me.

HARRY: Of course I do. Lots.

MEG: Thanks.

HARRY: Don't be sarcastic. What do you want me to say? All right. You're Cleopatra and Lady Godiva and Marilyn Monroe all rolled up in one. Does that make you any happier?

MEG: No, it doesn't.

HARRY: Then put your bra back on before that little Greek comes back. I can see him undressing you every time he looks at you.

MEG: I don't care.

HARRY: (*He puts the golf club back in the bag.*) Well, you ought to.

MEG: I wonder what it's like down there.

HARRY: (*He looks for a rag to clean his clubs and, finding none, appropriates the towel marked "Hers."*) Down where?

MEG: In the glacier. There are caves there, you know.

HARRY: I wish you would stop harping on that subject. It's all in his imagination. There isn't any glacier.

MEG: How do you know?

HARRY: In the first place because we're practically on the equator And in the second place, I went and looked.

MEG: When?

HARRY: Yesterday. When I went for firewood.

MEG: And you didn't see anything?

HARRY: No. I thought I did. A first.

MEG: What was it like?

HARRY: Just a big patch of dirty ice. Only when I got there it wa gone.

MEG: Oh.

HARRY: It must have been the sun light reflected on the mica.

MEG: On the what?

HARRY: Mica. It's crystallized po tassium silicate.

MEG: Thanks. (*Silence.*)

HARRY: Well, what about a game

MEG: All right. (*Listlessly, the take their places at the table.*)

HARRY: Cut for deal?

MEG: You deal. I don't care.

HARRY: No, it's fairer to cut. (*H cuts.*) Nine of spades.

MEG: (*Cutting.*) Deuce of heart

HARRY: My deal. (*Shuffles.*) Tha reminds me, I found somethin down there.

MEG: What?

HARRY: (*Taking a stone from h packet.*) See that? You know wh it is?

MEG: A rock.

HARRY: No, those red streaks

it. That's ferrous oxide. Iron ore. There's a cropping of it nearly a hundred feet long down there.

MEG: Deal.

HARRY: Just a minute. I estimate that it runs at least fifty per cent pure iron. Hold that rock.

MEG: Frankly, I don't want to.

HARRY: But see how heavy it is. And it's lying right out on the surface. The only thing that's needed is some good, cheap way to get it down to the railroad. (*He consults a scratch-pad.*) You owe me three thousand, four hundred and sixty dollars.

MEG: I'll write you a check. On the Burlington First National.

HARRY: Want to play one game, double or nothing?

MEG: If you want.

HARRY: (*Dealing.*) That makes it more exciting, everything on one game.

MEG: Harry.

HARRY: Yes?

MEG: (*With a glance toward the screen.*) Do you suppose he—?

HARRY: I thought we agreed we weren't going to discuss that subject any more.

MEG: What good does that do if you can't stop thinking about it?

HARRY: It's just a question of willpower.

MEG: Is it?

HARRY: (*Firmly.*) Yes, it is. Make your discard. It's my crib.

MEG: (*Playing.*) Ten.

HARRY: Fifteen-two.

MEG: Twenty-three.

HARRY: Twenty-nine. Go?

MEG: What?

HARRY: I asked, is that a go?

MEG: Yes.

HARRY: Well, that's all I asked. It's your play.

MEG: I don't want to play any more.

HARRY: You can't quit in the middle of a game.

MEG: Why not?

HARRY: You just can't.

MEG: (*Throwing her cards down.*) Oh yes, I can. (*She gets up.* HARRY *starts to follow her and then, seeing that she is in a temper, thinks better of it.*)

HARRY: Okay, have it your way. (*Pause.*) What's for lunch?

MEG: Van Camp's pork and beans.

HARRY: Again?

MEG: Again. And it's your turn to get firewood.

HARRY: I got it yesterday.

MEG: No, you didn't. That was the day before yesterday.

HARRY: Always right, aren't you? (*He goes off.*)

(*When he has gone,* MEG *goes swiftly to the screen and draws it back. Prometheus is revealed chained to the wheel and so haggard as to appear almost lifeless.* MEG *takes a jar of water and holds it to his lips. He drinks and then thanks her with a wan smile. Alternately attracted and repelled, she finally touches his wound to see if it has stopped bleeding. He winces. She dips*

her handkerchief in the jar and cools his forehead with it.)

MEG: (*Softly.*) It doesn't make any difference what I say, does it? (*He attempts a smile.*) Yet you like to hear a human voice, don't you? If you knew how vile and cowardly we really are you wouldn't say so. But you can't know that, can you? I suppose not.—If only you didn't smell so much! Don't be offended, I'm sure you can't help it.

(*She takes the moist handkerchief and commences cleaning his calves and feet, kneeling before him.* THE GUARDIAN *enters unobserved.*)

Why are you here? Are you a murderer? Did you strangle someone in the night? Or perhaps poison your wife? Never mind. I understand. I forgive you. I forgive you everything if you'll only stop staring at me. I can't sleep any more because of your staring, did you know that?

THE GUARDIAN: (*Coolly.*) Where is your husband?

MEG: (*Jumping up startled.*) He went to get firewood. And he is not my husband.

THE GUARDIAN: Then the signora is a signorina?

MEG: Yes.

THE GUARDIAN: Let me show you the glacier.

MEG: No, thank you.

THE GUARDIAN: The ice is very beautiful. Deep blue.

MEG: I'm not interested.

THE GUARDIAN: (*Taking up th lingerie from the rock.*) Very pret ty.

MEG: Put that down. (THE GUAR DIAN *laughs.*) Please! (*He puts i back.*)

THE GUARDIAN: Why don't yo go?

MEG: We are going today.

THE GUARDIAN: You say tha every day.

MEG: Today we are going.

THE GUARDIAN: (*With a nod t Prometheus.*) And will you tak him?

MEG: Yes.

THE GUARDIAN: (*Laughing.*) H is no good for a woman. He is to thin. Take me instead. But n your husband would not like tha

MEG: He is *not* my husband.

THE GUARDAN: He will not tak *him,* either. He sees that you lov him: he is jealous. That is to be ex pected.

MEG: I love him! That wretche diseased man?

THE GUARDAN: Why did you com here, then?

MEG: By accident.

THE GUARDIAN: Indeed? And yo stay—why?

MEG: We are leaving today.

THE GUARDAN: How tender yo fingers were on his wounds. Or a they your own wounds? (*He a proaches her.*) Do not be alarme I have manners, I shall not har you. (*He lowers his voice.*) Ho ever, I see everything quite clear

You desire to take him in your rms. Just as he is, bloody and rimed as he is. You desire to kiss is wounds. To throw yourself at is feet. To worship him as one vorships a god. Answer me, signo-ina! Is it not the shape of your ream? (MEG *stands as if trans-xed.*) Are you angry? Strike me, nen. Strike the little wop whom our husband has already insulted. *He pauses: she seems incapable f motion.*) Then you are no longer apable of anger? The air is thin ere. It is an effort to exert one's elf. (He *turns contemptuously to-ard Prometheus.*) You are foolish! Ie is not worth your adoration. He an show you nothing. It is I, signo-ina, who am the god here. It is I vho can show you mysteries. In my ngers are the keys to these doors. *Suddenly he becomes obsequious nce more.*) However, I am pa-ent. The signorina will still be ere tomorrow. And when she rows tired of this show of suffer-ng, the signorina can always rely n my discretion. (*He bows.*) In ie glacier there are caves of great eauty.

(*He goes.* HARRY *enters with an armload of thorns.*)

ARRY: I found some grapes along ie trail. (*He puts the brush down nd searches in his pockets.*)

EG: (*Motionless.*) What?

ARRY: Grapes. Someone must ave left them. They're Concords.

EG: (*In fear.*) Let's not stay here any longer, Harry.

HARRY: There was a yellow sparrow flitting around between the rocks.

MEG: All right, I believe you.

HARRY: It's just that it's interesting that they can live where there's hardly any vegetation. It shows how adaptible life is.

MEG: Harry, are we going to set him free or not?

HARRY: Don't look at me that way. Is it my fault that we've been held up?

MEG: I didn't say it was.

HARRY: But that's what you think. (*He goes to the screen.*)

MEG: What are you doing?

HARRY: (*Closing the screen.*) I told you I don't like to talk about this in front of him.

MEG: I didn't know you were so squeamish.

HARRY: Meg, if there is one thing I don't like in you, its that tone of moral superiority you adopt whenever this subject comes up. If you want to be a savior, why don't you go ahead and set him loose yourself? I won't stop you.

MEG: I'm not strong enough to pry the chains off, that's why.

HARRY: Have you tried?

MEG: Harry!

HARRY: Well, have you?

MEG: I meant to.

HARRY: But you haven't. So before you call me a moral coward, just take a good look at your own behavior.

MEG: Harry, let's not fight!
HARRY: And now you get the worst of an argument, so you say, "Let's not fight."
(*Silence.*)
MEG: I'm so tired. I think I could sleep for years.
HARRY: Well, build the fire first. It's your turn.
MEG: You do it this time.
HARRY: The one who gets the firewood doesn't have to build the fire. That was the agreement.
MEG: All right. But couldn't we just once forget the agreement?
HARRY: It was your idea.
MEG: Oh, all right. (*Listessly she picks up some of the brush.*) Harry.
HARRY: Yes?
MEG: Harry, what is it like to make love in the ice?
HARRY: (*He is lathering his face to shave.*) In what?
MEG: In the glacier.
HARRY: Look, for the last time, I tell you there isn't any glacier.
MEG: I know. But suppose there were. And suppose there were caves deep down inside it, all blue and pure and shimmering. Would you make love to me there?
HARRY: Stop being morbid. We've got enough to worry about without you being morbid.
MEG: But would you, Harry?
HARRY: You disgust me when you talk like that.
MEG: Why? Is it any different than in a bed or on the beach or in an automobile?
HARRY: Stop this, Meg. You're heading for a nervous breakdown
MEG: Do you care?
HARRY: Of course I do.
MEG: No you don't. No one care
HARRY: (*Outraged.*) That's a he of an unfair thing to say. Wha about your family? What woul they say if they knew what you've been saying to me?
MEG: Oh, they'd be horrified, a right. But they don't care eithe Not really.
HARRY: Well, I do. You've gotte to be someone very close to me. mean really close. And I don't lik to see you being so morbid.
MEG: Oh. (*Silence.*) Harry, let go.
HARRY: All right. After lunch.
MEG: (*With sudden, furio energy.*) No. Not after lunch. Rig now.
HARRY: I've got to shave.
MEG: Why?
HARRY: Because I started to.
MEG: We've got to get out of her
HARRY: And leave all that fir wood? We may not find any mo for miles.
MEG: Now! Right now!
HARRY: And what about *him?* W can't just leave him there.
MEG: Why not?
HARRY: You really mean it?
MEG: Yes, I really mean it.
HARRY: Well—
MEG: (*Fiercely.*) We have to g out of this nightmare, Harry.

on't care any more for what's right r what's wrong. I simply know iat if I don't leave here right now omething awful is going to hapen to me.

IARRY: Don't be melodramatic. Ve have to think this over.

IEG: I don't want to think it over! Ve've thought it over for days and vhat good has it done us?

IARRY: Well, we can't go just like iat.

IEG: Why not?

IARRY: I've got to shave.

IEG: Why?

IARRY: Because I started to.

IEG: We've got to get out of here!

IARRY: And leave all that firevood? We may not find any more or miles.

IEG: Now! Right now!

IARRY: And what about *him?* We in't just leave him here.

IEG: Why not?

ARRY: Because I've got to shave.

EG: Why?

ARRY: Because I started to.

EG: We've got to get out of here.

ARRY: We can't go just like that.

EG: Why not?

ARRY: (*Triumphantly*) We've ot to pack! (*Pause*)

EG: Why? Let's leave everything ght here and go.

ARRY: Now you're being childish. *He pulls out the card table and lds its legs.*) I'm perfectly wilng to go but we can't leave all our ings.

EG: Why not? We can't take all this stuff, anyway.

HARRY: (*Commencing to pack.*) Then sort out things and we'll decide what to leave hebind. These are yours. (*He throws a pair of high-heeled slippers toward her.*)

MEG: Leave them. (*They run about the stage frantically picking up articles and cramming them into their packs.*)

HARRY: This goes.

MEG: That stays.

HARRY: Pick up your underwear.

MEG: Are these your socks?

HARRY: Whose Time magazine is this?

MEG: Where are my curlers?

HARRY: I dropped my fraternity pin someplace.

MEG: Hurry up!

HARRY: Now I can't find the cord to the electric razor.

MEG: You're not going to carry those clubs all the way down the mountain, are you?

HARRY: You don't expect me to throw them away, do you?

MEG: Well, at least leave the pressure cooker. I can't stand the sight of it.

HARRY: (*The tension between them is growing.*) It's perfectly easy to carry. You just tie it on the bottom of the pack.

MEG: Where did you learn that? In the Boy Scouts?

HARRY: Don't be sarcastic. What's this?

MEG: It's the halter to my sunsuit. What did you think it was?

HARRY: Well, put it away. I guess the card table will have to stay. It's a shame, though. It's aluminum and they're hard to get. And this parasol —we won't need it.

MEG: If you can find room for your golf clubs we can certainly take it, too.

HARRY: But what good is it?

MEG: It's mine.

HARRY: That doesn't answer my question.

MEG: Put it in your golf bag.

HARRY: It won't fit.

MEG: Simply because it's mine you think it's worthless.

HARRY: Look for yourself. If I take it I'll have to leave a mashie behind.

MEG: (*Shouting.*) Leave one, then! You've twenty golf clubs and there's only one parasol!

HARRY: (*Furious.*) You don't understand. The clubs come in a set. You can't break the set.

MEG: Isn't that too bad! The little Nebraska Babbitt with the Do-it-yourself kit—somebody's going to break his set!

HARRY: (*In a rage.*) Shut your damned mouth! I know all about you New England snobs. Intellectual thrills—you'd do anything for them, wouldn't you? And just because you can't feel anything decent or normal—

MEG: And what about you? I've met some windbags in my day, but when they start giving prizes for pretentious bullshit, brother, you're going to get the Oscar. (*There is a long silence during which they glare at each other.*)

HARRY: If you think apologizing is going to get you out of this you're mistaken.

MEG: (*Icily.*) I wasn't considering it.

(*Silence.*)

HARRY: (*Softening.*) Meg. (*No answer.*) Meg, why do we have to fight like this?

MEG: What difference does it make?

HARRY: (*Putting the umbrella into the golf bag.*) Look. I'll carry the mashie in my hand.

MEG: (*Drily.*) Thanks.

HARRY: (*Attemping sweet reasonableness.*) It's this place. We haven't been ourselves since we've been up here. (*Pause.*) It will all be different once we get down below. I promise you it will. Look! Look at all that country spread out below us. Down there people are living, are doing things. Building railroads and running factories and writing poems and raising families while up here we've just been stagnating. That's where we belong, Meg, down there where life is. It was a mistake for us ever to come up here, I see that now. We've done nothing but morbid introspection ever since we got here, and that's not for our kind of people. And as for *him* we have to recognize that there has always been suffering and injustice in the world

nd there always will be. We can't nange that. All we can do is make ur own lives a little brighter and ore fulfilled. And I sincerely think at in that way we will be build- ng a better future for everyone, future where everyone will have is own house and car and no one ill go hungry. But we have to do down there, Meg, down where e can get out feet on solid ground. Not up here in the clouds.

(*Silence.*)

EG: (*Slowly*) Do you really be- eve all that?

ARRY: (*After a long pause.*) No.

(*Silence.*)

EG: Than why did you say it?

ARRY: (*In a voice that is little ore than a dejected whisper.*) Vell, what *can* we do?

(*The lights go out slowly.*)

SCENE 2

(*The same as before. The screen is closed and the stage is littered with piles of rubbish,* THE GUARDIAN *sits alone on a rock.*)

HE GUARDIAN: This is certainly a dletter day for me. To think that my age I could be so fortunate! ou wait and wait. Then something ops in your lap when you least pect it. Yet I knew today would e different from the other days. st night there was a dust-cloud the moon. And a wart on my nger was gone this morning. To- y will be different, I said to my- lf. And it was. That's what comes being patient. (MEG *enters.*) Signora! (*He rises and offers her his seat on the rock.*)

MEG: (*She speaks in an indifferent monotone; indeed, for the remainder of the play she acts as if drugged.*) You needn't be so polite.

THE GUARDIAN: But it is my pleasure. (*She sits.*) Are you comfortable?

MEG: No.

THE GUARDIAN: Perhaps my coat? (*He offers to take it off.*)

MEG: Please, Just leave me alone.

THE GUARDIAN: As you wish. I am old. But I have manners. With me there is no unpleasantness, no recrimination.

MEGS (*Shivering.*) Just go, please.

THE GUARDIAN: If you should wish to see it again—

MEG: I don't.

THE GUARDIAN: (*With a bow.*) Whatever you say. (*He goes.*)

HARRY: (*Entering from the other side of the stage with his pack.*) What's he doing here?

MEG: (*Without looking at him.*) Who?

HARRY: You know who.

MEG: Nothing.

HARRY: I don't like him hanging around you. Where have you been?

MEG: I went for a walk.

HARRY: All morning?

MEG: All morning.

HARRY: You might have brought some firewood back.

MEG: I didn't want to.

HARRY: You never want to. (*Takes his pack off.*) It feels like I'd carried this all my life. (*Opens the*

pack.) Look.

MEG: (*Without interest.*) What is it?

HARRY: Iron ore. I'll bet there's as much iron in this mountain as there is in the whole Mesabi Range.

MEG: The what?

HARRY: The Mesabi Range. In Minnesota. It's where fifty per cent of the iron comes from.

MEG: What do we want with it?

HARRY: (*With an attempt at his old enthusiasm.*) It's immensely valuable. I got samples from six different out-crops. I'm going to take them to an assayer.

MEG: (*Yawning.*) Right now?

HARRY: When we get back.

MEG: And when is that going to be?

HARRY: Don't start on that again. We're going tomorrow.

MEG: (*In a monotone*). I know better. We're never leaving. We're going to stay here day after day. We're going to watch the world turn to stone around us and then to ash and then to stone again and see the snow melt and the water dry up and every airplane wither and fall out of the sky and still he'll be there and we'll be here.

HARRY: What's gotten into you?

MEG: Nothing. I wish there was some way to wash my hair. It's filthy.

(*Silence.*)

HARRY: I found a centipede. (*He takes it from his pocket.*) I thought you might be interested.

MEG: I'm not.

HARRY: Okay. (*He puts the insect down and watches it crawl away.*) That's the trouble with people. They don't pay enough attention to the world around them. (*He follows the insect with a stick.*) Ninety per cent of the people are totally unaware of how interesting nature can be.

MEG: I have a splitting headache.

HARRY: Shall I rub the back of your neck?

MEG: If you want. (*She sits. Harry sits on a rock behind her and massages her head.*) Where is it?

HARRY: What?

MEG: The centipede.

HARRY: It crawled away. (*He rubs her head in silence for a moment.*) Does it help?

MEG: Some.

HARRY: Relax. Shoulders forward. You've got to be careful. Most headaches are psychosomatic.

MEG: Mine certainly is.

HARRY: Where does it hurt worst?

MEG: (*Indicating.*) Here.

HARRY: Take off your sun-glasses. For example, it's only an accident of evolution that man is where he is today. In many ways the ordinary ant is better adapted to his environment.

MEG: The what?

HARRY: The ant. It is several times as strong as man is for his size and surprisingly intelligent.

MEG: How did we get on this subject?

HARRY: All right, if you're not interested—

G: But I am. Tell me all about ants and the bees and worms.
RRY: Don't be sarcastic. (*Si-ce.*) We're out of firewood.
G: Well?
RRY: It's your turn. I went yes-lay.
G: No, you didn't. That was the before yesterday.
RRY: I distinctly remember it yesterday.
G: And I distinctly—All right, e it your own way.
RRY: (*Walking toward the een.*) Thank God he's been quiet ay. Do you suppose he's still re?
G: What?
RRY: I asked you if you thought was still there.
G: Where would he go?
RRY: (*His hand on the screen.*) you want to see?
G: No.
RRY: Why not? You ought to rn to face him without all these otional reactions. That's the only .
G: Leave me alone.
RRY: You're shivering. (*He goes her.*) What's the matter? (*He es her hand.*) You're cold as ice.
G: Just leave me alone.
RRY: But you're freezing.
G: (*Getting up.*) Leave me ne, Harry.
RRY: All right. But you've caught l. (*Silence.*)
G: What's for lunch?
RRY: How should I know?
G: It's your turn.

HARRY: No, it isn't. I fixed breakfast.
MEG: I didn't have any breakfast.
HARRY: That's not my fault. I fixed it. Don't blame me if you didn't want any. (*He sits at the card table.*)
MEG: I wasn't hungry.
HARRY: A bargain's a bargain. That's one of your faults. You have to learn responsibility.
MEG: Don't lecture me.
HARRY: How about a game?
MEG: What?
HARRY: A game.
MEG: No, thanks.
HARRY: I just thought it would be more sociable if we both played.
MEG: Oh.
HARRY: (*Dealing a hand of Patience.*) That's all I thought.
MEG: Harry.
HARRY: Yes.
MEG: I wish I were dead.
HARRY: (*Playing.*) What brought that on?
MEG: Don't you care?
HARRY: Of course I care. But that's just an unrelated sentence. It's not related to anything.
MEG: I said what I meant. I wish I were dead.
HARRY: So?
MEG: That's all.
HARRY: You'll get over it. (*Silence.*) My foot hurts. I think I've got a pebble in my shoe. (*He unlaces his shoe.*) Look, I've been thinking this over.
MEG: What?
HARRY: Why we don't leave here.

(*He takes off his shoe.*) I think I found the answer. It's just guilt feelings. (*Shakes his shoe.*)

MEG: What do you suggest doing?

HARRY: We've got to get rid of them. They're completely irrational. And as long as we feel this way we can't get anything constructive accomplished.

MEG: Did you find it?

HARRY: What?

MEG: The pebble.

HARRY: No, there wasn't anything there.

RASMUSSEN: (*Who enters smiling, with his bag.*) Still here, I see.

HARRY: (*Hardly looking up.*) Still here. (RASMUSSEN *goes behind the screen.*) What a bore that man is.

MEG: What?

HARRY: I said he was a bore.

MEG: Oh.

HARRY: What's the matter? Can't you hear me?

MEG: Yes, I heard you.

HARRY: Then why do you always say "what" every time I say something?

MEG: Do I?

HARRY: Yes, you do.

MEG: I don't know why. (*There is a terrible scream off-stage.*)

HARRY: And he! Why does he scream like that? If he just clenched his teeth and kept quiet I'd have more respect for him.

MEG: I suppose it hurts.

HARRY: Of course it hurts. But what good does screaming do? That just makes it worse.

MEG: What?

HARRY: There you go with you "whats" again. I said it hurts wors if you scream.

MEG: Oh.

(*Prometheus screams again.*)

HARRY: If you're a man you hav to learn to face pain. When I wa a kid the dentist used to work o my teeth without any anaestheti

MEG: And you didn't cry?

HARRY: No.

MEG: Why not?

HARRY: Because I had strength o will, that's why. (*Silence.*) Yo haven't listened to a thing I said.

MEG: What?

HARRY: Look here, if you sa "what" just once more, I'll strang you.

RASMUSSEN: (*Appearing from b hing the screen.*) Still here, I se

HARRY: You said that before.

RASMUSSEN: (*Pleasantly.*) Did (*He takes off his gloves.*) Nothi holding you, you know. You c leave any time you like. (*Takes deep breath.*) This mountain a is so bracing. Gets into your vei

(*He goes off.*)

HARRY: The same thing, over a over again. (*He drums his finge on the table, Prometheus commen to groan. They are low, fitful groa but they give no promise of brea ing off.* MEG *and* HARRY *listen them for a long time.*) Meg.

MEG: Yes.

HARRY: We can't go on like thi

MEG: What?

HARRY: What?

MEG: I asked you what you said

IARRY: And I said we can't go on ike this.

IEG: I heard you. So?

IARRY: So. (HARRY *rises and goes ehind the screen.* MEG *puts her ngers to her ears.*)

IEG: The quick brown fox jumped ver the lazy log. The quick brown ox jumped over the lazy dog. The uick brown for jumped over the azy dog. The quick—(*There is a istol shot.*) Jumped over. Jumped ver.

ARRY: (*Stepping from behind the reen with the pistol.*) I'm not oing to make any excuses.

EG: Did he look at you?

ARRY: No. He didn't even see e. I don't think I could have done if he had looked at me. (*Si-nce.*) Well, shall we go?

EG: Where?

ARRY: Back home.

EG: It doesn't make any difference ow.

ARRY: (*Explosively.*) You know, e first thing I'm going to do when e get home is take a shower. As ng as we've been here I've never und a place where the plumbing worked. (*He throws the pack of iron ore on his shoulders.*) Well, are you coming with me?

MEG: (*Leadenly.*) Yes, I'm coming.

(THE GUARDIAN *enters.*)

HARRY: And you! While we're on the subject, there isn't any glacier.

THE GUARDIAN: (*Politely.*) No?

HARRY: I just don't like to be lied to, that's all.

THE GUARDIAN: But then there is never any glacier for those who cannot see it.

HARRY: (*To* MEG.) Come on. Let's get going. (*He goes resolutely, followed at a little distance by* MEG, *who walks as if dead.*)

THE GUARDIAN: (*Turning downstage.*) The thirty thousand years are up. The punishment of Proetheus is over. Hercules returns to his home. I shall be transferred to a pleasanter station. Everything came out as Zeus foresaw. (*He drops to his knees.*) Hail to Zeus the all-powerful Hail to Zeus, hail! (*Zeus obliges with an answering peal of thunder.*)

(THE END)

The text of "Prometheus Found" is as first presented by The Actors Workshop in San Francisco, July 21st, 1958, and September 5-9, 1958, with the following casts:

Prometheus	Rudolph Solari
The Guardian	Alan Mandell
Meg	Jinx Hone, Margaret Doyle
Harry	Tom Rosqui
Rasmussen	Robert Symonds, W. R. Jonason

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Carnival at a Death

THE CAVE, by Robert Penn Warren. Random House. $4.95.

ROBERT FENN WARREN's new book has been received with a good deal of critical reverence as a kind of capstone to the grand house of fiction which began with *Night River.* It has all the brilliance we have come to expect of a work by Warren: a complex structure, a stage of great proportions, a big cast distinguished by vigor and variety of character, a symbolic sub-structure as the ground for substantial and relevant philosophical questions; great flexibility and imagination in the use of shifting narrative points of view so that the field of the novel's action is seen from a number of angles; the continuing interest of the writer in the present effects of the past; an engaged and tragic view of Man—all this in a style of great range and beauty, sometimes high and poetic, sometimes salty and colloquial. Nevertheless it seems to me that there is a kind of hollowness in the book—and I am not thinking of the title.

The book begins with an epigraph from Plato's *Republic,* Book VII:

> You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners.
>
> Like ourselves, I replied; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of th cave?
>
> True, he said; how could they se anything but the shadows if they wer never allowed to move their heads?

This is a Platonic image of man condition. We face the wall of a cav Behind us is a fire. Figures pass i front of the fire and their shadows ap pear on the cave-wall in front of ou eyes. These shadows are what we tak for reality, and so long as we canno turn our heads we will be unable t distinguish between shadow and sub stance, illusion and reality.

This is the main philosophical imag against which the action of the nov is played, but I think it important t enter a caveat: the illusion and reali which the book dramatizes is mo psychological than philosophical. Th I think, is one of its central weak nesses: the work itself suggests at ce tain points that it wants to rise to gran heights of philosophic meaning b it tends to settle for the more limit meanings of human motivation, hum self-deception. This is, of course, enou for a great novel, but one is apt to disappointed at what appears to be t failure of a promise of somethi more.

At the center of the novel is a re cave, near Johntown, Tennessee, n far from Nashville. In front of t cave as the story begins are a pair boots and a guitar. The "box" on

elonged to old Jack Harrick, onetime ell-raiser and grand despoiler of virnities, who is now dying, with great ubbornness, of cancer. It presently benes to Jack's son, Jasper, a nightalker, maker of songs, Korean vet, enerally thought of as being a randy ip off the old block but actually ienated. It is Jasper who is the man the cave.

Now come on scene his worshipful other Monty and his would-be girl, -Lea who is more than a bit under e spell of Jasper's glamor. Both of em know that Jasper would never ve left the guitar out in the dews of e night. They know he is trapped the cave.

This is the beginning of the central ion of the novel. Isaac Sumpter, a ung man who, with old Jack Hark, is at the core of the story, comes ward to organize the rescue. He and per had investigated the cave, inding a partnership in its promotion. d a horrible kind of promotion does gin. Sumpter gets in contact with wspapers and radio and the affair comes one of state and national imrtance. He gets a rootless restaurant ner of Johntown to cater for the bs that gather near the cave, arges with the police authorities to nopolize the operation and takes a Similarly he monopolizes the release news and remains the sole contact h Jasper—although he never sees per in the cave and is certain that is dead.

The situation, rich in a hundred ds of irony, evolves with increasing ensity both for the central characand for the mob which is engaged the death-watch. It explodes in a terrible and sardonic Walpurgisnacht of drunkenness and fornication with the news that Jasper is dead. It is as if what has happened has been a sort of perverted ritual which, when the scapegoat (Jasper) dies, releases in the crowd a degraded act of affirmation. It is a perversion of "history" also, since the whole thing turns on a falsehood. And it is not by chance that Isaac Sumpter is a would-be newspaperman. Like the narrator of *All the King's Men*—his spiritual brother—Sumpter bears to reality the same relation (as Warren sees it) as the newspaperman bears to history: a pragmatic chronicler of accident.

If this central action were the whole of the book, *The Cave* would still be a rich novel and one which worked out, to a considerable degree, the philosophic theme announced at the beginning. But the action described here is only the second "act" of the whole story.

Between the discovery of the boots and the guitar in the first pages, and the organization of the "rescue," nearly half the book is taken up with flashbacks which present the main characters, the town, and the past. Character interrelationships are fantastically complex and worked out in a sometimes wearying (or worrying) detail. The third section is composed of a series of "recognition" scenes in which the central action forces on the characters an awareness of motives which they have disguised or hidden from themselves. This is in many ways the most interesting and frustrating part of the book. Here are only a couple of examples from the God's plenty presented to us.

Isaac Sumpter. He sees his name as symbolic, his father as the "Abraham"

who sacrifices him. His feeling of rejection is so complete that it embitters all his actions. He feels that he *must* succeed, and uses the cave episode. What he does not know is that Jasper is really alive until the last day—that, in fact, he has killed his friend. It is his father who finally goes far back in the cave where Isaac is afraid to go, and it is his father, the Calvinist "Abraham" who could never lie who *does* lie to save his son. In effect Isaac has never seen anything but the shadows on the cave-wall; for all his cynicism he has lived in fantasy. Has lived there too long, in fact, because the revelations which come to him have the effect of releasing him finally from all human responsibility. When last seen he is on his way to New York, already a famous newsman, ready, as Warren has it, for the "big media."

Jack Harrick. On the surface he appears to be a simple sensual man—a type. He begins by believing that he will live forever, then comes to believe that he is not afraid of death. In fact he has simply frozen the terror inside himself, but he learns the reality of his terror and is driven to wish for his son's death in the cave as a magical substitute for his own. His reaction, however, is the opposite of that of Isaac Sumpter. He passes through a catharsis of acceptance which allows him to see his own death as a part of the human situation, and he ends with a feeling of solidarity with his fellow beings which he never had before. This is—in spite of the epigraph by Plato—the final philosophic theme of the novel; and if it is not new it is certainly substantial.

This is, I think, the end to which all of Warren's books lead; but ofte —and especially here—they take long time getting there, as if Warre were actually worried about the co clusion he is approaching, and cou only reassure himself by getting the through round-about trails and hedging his route with ironies bo great and petty. Irony is a sanctifi literary device, but it should be us to reveal new levels of meaning in action. One sometimes feels that Wa ren uses it to conceal his own involv ment with his social and philosoph themes, as if he were a bit afraid their meanings.

Warren has always suggested readers of his work that he is just abo to become a great social novelist. B even in *All the King's Men,* one the best social novels of the mode period, questions are avoided, crises intellect and will are sometimes blurre and characters turn away from what a pear to be required choices. I have f that there was a revolutionary buri in Warren, but a critical friend giv it as his opinion that, if this is tr Warren himself has done the buryi

Perhaps that is the best way of sa ing it in little. Certainly Warren haunted by the past—so much so th a displaced chunk of it forms an i portant part of most of his novels: t Willie Proudfit Story at the end *Night Rider* for example. Against t grandeurs and simplicities of that pa modern man usually appears we lacking in will, fatally flawed with trospection and indecision. Warren pears to my friend to be in this sit tion himself: like one of the aristocr of past centuries alternately attrac and repelled by revolution and

rking class.

In that case the Lazarus of the revolu-
nary in Warren may never rise; nor
ll the novelist fulfil the promise of
philosophic themes. But, so great
Warren's ability, this is as much a
gedy for American writing as it is
personal failure.

THOMAS MCGRATH

rail of Error

HE TRAGEDY OF AMERICAN DIPLOMACY, by William Apple-man Williams. World Publishing Co. $4.75.

ROFESSOR Williams' stimulating book is devoted to a study of at he calls "the supreme paradox American history," namely the fact t although the United States is "at apex of its power," it finds itself ogressively thwarted in its efforts to pire, lead and reform the world" in own image. He views this frustra-n as a "direct result of the nation's ception of itself and the world in ns of Open-door expansion." He mines the intellectual and material es of this policy which he believes ermined at first the success and, lly, the tragedy of American diplom- from immediately after the Civil r to the present.

An amalgam of Frederick Jackson rner's frontier thesis and the reflec-ns on "America's economic suprem-" by Brooks Adams and other con-poraries such as William Graham nner, John Hay and Henry Cabot dge, the theory of the Open Door formulated to meet the require-nts of nascent monopoly capitalism. lliams maintains that the crisis of the generation following the Civil War was a major turning point in American history. It signalled the close of Jacksonian *laissez faire* and the end of the freebooting Robber Barons so closely identified with the initial development of industrialism in America. "At the same time," writes Williams, "it was the cultural coming-out party of a new corporate system based upon the corporation and similar large and highly organized groups throughout American society."

The Open Door policy was a response to the unrelenting need for continual expansion by a growing corporate capitalism. It was also shaped—after prolonged, many-sided debates on the part of the various ruling groups that struck the die—to thwart revolutions and assure a *Pax Americana* throughout the world. ". . . the policy of the Open Door was designed," Professor Williams states, "to establish the conditions under which America's preponderant economic power [i.e. the corporation] would extend the American system throughout the world without the embarrassment and inefficiency of traditional colonialism." It was to be, in effect, a sort of capitalist "imperial anti-colonialism."

Exposing the subtle and complex relationships between the growing material might of the corporations and the various intellectual modifications and rationalizations that attended that growth and foreign expansion, Professor Williams traces the role of Open Door through several distinct periods: the 1890's when Open Door was formulated, approved and applied in Cuba, the Philippines and China; the role of Wilson and Lodge immediately before and after World War I; the League of Na-

tions, the October Revolution and the abortive uprisings in Europe and Asia; the Great Depression of the Thirties; the rise of fascist Italy, Germany and Japan; World War II; the years immediately following the military victory of the Allies, the independence of India, and the Chinese Revolution; and, lastly, the Cold War up to the eve of the foreign ministers' meeting in Geneva.

Professor Williams destroys quite a few myths that have obstructed a realistic view of American diplomacy. He brilliantly demolishes the "legend of isolationism" that has been built up about the 1920's and demonstrates how business was consciously internationalizing itself throughout this period. Citing figures showing that such corporations as DuPonts, Standard Oil, General Motors, General Electric, and American Tel&Tel expanded their overseas investments from $94 million in 1919 to more than $602 million by 1929, he quotes an official State Department memorandum of the 1940's which lends powerful support to his thesis: "The participation of American corporations in the development of Latin America involves an incalculable corrective to (low) trade figures and implies a distinct and direct American influence in Latin American policies," the State Department memo declared. "Irrespective of the policy at Washington and the personality of statesmen, the operations of such enterprises as the United Fruit Company or the several American oil companies create independent political interests in the territories subject to their economic operation which supplement and often determine official policy both at Washington and in the various Latin American capitals."

Certain liberal-progressive illusio are also discussed, especially the form lation: "We'd never have had the C War if only Roosevelt were aliv Professor Williams shows that, far fr giving encouragement to liberati movements, the New Deal foreign p icy merely gave the Open Door a libe tone.

Well before the termination of Wo War II, the policymakers of the N Deal had resolved that Open Door pansion must perforce go on. Its co tinuance was further based on t assumptions (both later proven inc rect, and in Williams' view "tragic" first, that there could "never be a me ing of the minds" between the So Union and the United States; and, s ond, that American atomic suprem would guarantee virtually unlimi Open Door penetration.

The determination to apply Op Door "throughout the world," wri Professor Williams, "led directly the policies of 'total diplomacy' a 'negotiations from strength'" (the partisan design of Acheson and D les); and then to "containment," " "back" and "liberation." (Kennan h self was later to admit that containm and liberation are "the two sides the same coin.") Other aspects of Open Door were revealed in the M shall Plan and the Truman Doctr Just as in the 1890's so even more in the post-World War II era, profitability of America's corporate tem depended upon overseas econo expansion." Open Door in 1946 indeed "an intellectual continuity . . . thought with the frontier th and the policies of John Hay, Wo row Wilson, Herbert Hoover

Franklin D. Roosevelt. . . .

The futility of the calculations based upon the Open Door policy are unquestionable: one has only to think of the development of the Soviet Union and of China, not to speak of the tides of liberation rising in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

While Open Door succeeded in terms of profit and achievements for some—namely its direct class beneficiaries in the United States—it has long pointed toward ultimate failure. "After fifty years of the Open Door Policy," Professor Williams writes in appraising its endemic limits, "twenty-five years of the Good Neighbor Policy and more than a decade of a crusade against communism, conditions throughout the free world did not verify either the assumptions, arguments or promises of the policy of the open door."

"The Open Door Policy has failed," he also notes, "because, while it has built an American empire, it has not initiated and sustained the balanced and equitable development of the areas into which America has expanded."

Looking to the decent, humanitarian traditions and achievements of progressive America, Professor Williams notes that "The tragedy of American action is not that it is evil, but that it denies American ideas and ideals. This is a most realistic failure as well as an ideological and moral one; for in failing to make the American system function satisfactorily without recourse to open-door expansion (and by no means perfectly, even then), it suffers by comparison with its own claims and other approaches. *Not only does it fail economically for its own citizens ad other peoples tied to it, it does not produce military security.*" (My emphasis.)

Therefore, Williams concludes, the extension of Open Door to war is today an "unthinkable, impotent" alternative and we must turn to other courses. While not dealing, for this reader at any rate, in really concrete enough terms with these alternatives, Professor Williams nevertheless puts the case for them magnificently in describing where Open Door had carried its last, great formulator, John Foster Dulles who recognized only near his final days that negotiations with the Soviet Union seemed unavoidable.

"For a growing number of Americans," writes Williams, "were beginning to join millions of others throughout the world in a reassertion of the elementary fact that man was born to achieve and exercise his self-knowledge in more fruitful endeavors than a cold war which persistently threatened to erupt in nuclear horror. Dulles apparently failed to realize that he felt anxiety for the wrong reasons and was pursuing a policy that had now become a denial of the spirit of man."

Professor Williams' book is an extremely important, exciting and useful work which deserves the widest possible reading and consideration. In some respects, though, I found it to be deficient. In his discussion of the ways in which we can free ourselves of the stranglehold of Open Door, he seems to rely too much on the corporate system "changing its mind" through the thinking of its appointed apologists. Imperialism is not so lightly disposed of.

A smaller quibble: one wishes that the publishers had supplied an index and a more detailed bibliography.

CHARLES R. ALLEN, JR.

Coming in October!

MANSART BUILDS A SCHOOL

By W. E. B. DU BOIS

It is a major publishing event that Book Two of W. E. B. Du Bois' great trilogy, THE BLACK FLAME, is to be published in October under the title, MANSART BUILDS A SCHOOL. Following the publication in 1957 of the first volume, THE ORDEAL OF MANSART, the new volume depicts on a vast canvas the sweep and drive of the heroic, stubborn, many-sided struggle of the Negro people for equality during the years between 1912 and 1932.

Across the stage of this massive and brilliant historical novel, a literary form deliberately chosen by Dr. Du Bois because it enables him to penetrate deep into the motivations of his real, flesh-and-blood characters, move such distinguished figures and personalities as Booker T. Washington, Tom Watson, Oswald Garrison Villard, Florence Kelley, Joel Spingarn, John Haynes Holmes, George Washington Carver, Mary Ovington, Stephen Wise, Paul Robeson. Maintaining the continuity of the novel's theme and action through his main protagonists, Manuel Mansart (born at the moment his father, Tom Mansart, was lynched by a mob of racists) and his three sons and daughter, and the key Baldwin, Scroggs and Pierce families, the author brings his story up to the disastrous 1929 stock market crash and the Great Depression that brought Franklin D. Roosevelt into the Presidency of the United States, and with him such men as Harry Hopkins, Harold Ickes and many others.

It is a gripping and deeply meaningful work of literary art that will endure.

Mainstream Publishers, $4.00

New Century Publishers, 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.