

RITTER. [*Preparing to rise*] Where do you do this thing, here?

MRS. R. [*Turning to him and indicating the general arrangement*] Yes—just the way we have it fixed.

RITTER. [*Rising briskly and crossing to the table below the piano at the right, while Mrs. R. continues to the center-door and stands looking toward the front door. Jenny appears in the left hallway.*] I think I'll beat it upstairs.

MRS. R. [*Turning to Jenny*] I guess that's some of the people, Jenny. [*She comes forward towards Ritter again.*]

JENNY. Yes, mam. [*She passes back of Mrs. Ritter and along out into the right hallway to answer the door.*]

[16]

MRS. R. Won't you wait and see the rehearsal, Fred? [*He is gathering up the telegrams from the table, where he left them earlier.*]

RITTER. [*Turning and going up towards the center-door, thrusting the telegrams into his inside pocket*] No, I think I'd rather wait and see the show. [*He passes her, to her left.*]

MRS. R. [*Turning and trailing up towards the center-door after him*] It's really very interesting.

MRS. PAMPINELLI. [*Out at the front door*] You see how considerate I am of you, Jenny, letting myself in? [*Mr. and Mrs. Ritter stop in the center-door and look toward the front door.*]

JENNY. [*At the front door*] Oh, that's all right, Mrs. Pampinelli.

MRS. R. [*Turning quickly to Ritter at her left*] You can't go up now, Fred, she'll see you.

MRS. PAMPINELLI and RITTER, together.

MRS. P. Well, I daresay you'll have to open this door quite often enough tonight without my troubling you.

RITTER. [*Coming back into the room with a slight gesture of annoyance*] I don't want to have to listen to her gab. [*He goes over to the mantelpiece at the left and takes up his position there, while Mrs. Ritter, with a movement to him to be silent, drifts down beside the piano at the right.*]

[17]

MRS. PAMPINELLI. [*Coming into view from the right hallway*] Well, I suppose I'm still the shining example of punctuality. [*She sweeps thru the center-door, carrying a large black-bear muff, a fan of black ostrich-plumes, and a note-book and pencil.*] How do you do, Mr. Ritter,—[*She goes towards Mrs. Ritter.*]

RITTER. [*Nodding*] How do you do.

MRS. PAMPINELLI. I'm glad to see you.

MRS. RITTER. [*Moving towards Mrs. P.*] Hello, Betty.

MRS. PAMPINELLI. Hello, Paula child,—[*Kisses her*] how are you, dear? [*Mr. Spindler hurries in from the right hallway, carrying several books. Mrs. P. steps to the table below the piano.*] Will you give those things to Mrs. Ritter, Mr. Spindler, she'll set them down somewhere. [*She sets her own encumbrances down on the table, and Mrs. Ritter passes back of her to Spindler.*]

SPINDLER. [*Standing in the middle of the room, toward the back*] Certainly, certainly.

MRS. RITTER. Good evening, Mr. Spindler.