

P A M



*Pam*

A Play

by



Maurice Rowdon

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No.....

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*In Three Acts*

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S C E N E.

An apartment in London. Spacious, airy and rather sophisticated---professional people---on the top floor.

On the left is a door leading into the lobby. Facing us---so that we look straight into these rooms---are the kitchen and PAM'S tiny bedroom. The doors of these rooms are open throughout the play. We can see PAM'S bed, with a large teddy bear on it; a chest of drawers covered with photographs, ash-trays, letters, scissors, coloured thread, pieces of cloth. PAM'S Bathroom leads off her bedroom---we can only see the door.

The kitchen is untidy but clean---up-to-date

CHARLOTTE sleeps in the big room---there is a double divan-bed covered with cushions to the right of PAM'S door.

Between the kitchen-door and PAM'S door there is a table with two cream-coloured telephones, and here we see signs of the professional life---some files (under the table there is a box of them)---business letters---a used cup and saucer---a coffee pot---a typewriter---CHARLOTTE is as untidy as her daughter. Two upright chairs on either side of this table.

There are two armchairs in the middle of the room and a long coffee table knee-height.

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## C H A R A C T E R S .

CHARLOTTE MANNHEIM, a powerful and hearty but not necessarily big woman: emphatic, a great bluffer but with something curiously hesitant now and then. She has a sort of blunted and puzzled wisdom. Also a dark, superstitious side. She loves company---anything for a laugh---let's get together! She will help anyone, this is what people say about her. But she doesn't go all the way: the creature with the stunted wisdom is there at the bottom all the time, observant, even watchful, and not hearty---lonely, certainly alone.

PAMELA, her daughter, is a bright blonde teenager who cackles with laughter and has inherited the basic character of her mother, not the hearty side.

CLIFFORD BRIGHT, a remote, observant, thoughtful, self-involved young man with a kind of inherited sense of responsibility which he isn't really aware of yet.

All three are American, but only CLIFF by birth. CHARLOTTE is German by birth and went to America when she was in her early twenties, a refugee from Nazism. PAM was born a German but has lived most of her life in New York.

They work in London temporarily. By choice CHARLOTTE and PAM would be in New York now. Only CLIFF seems to like it here---but more by way of revolt from his own country.

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1.

CLIFF is alone, reading a newspaper in one of the armchairs. One of the telephones begins ringing. He pays no attention. Enter CHARLOTTE, in outdoor clothes, rushing.

CLIFF: (without taking his eyes off the paper) Hi, Charlotte!

CHARLOTTE (picking up the phone with a mighty heave) Hullo, Quick Translations Limited! Well, you don't say! (Laughs) I'll never get used to that 'Limited!' Why do the English want to limit everything? (Laughs again.) You did? Well, that's fine! Oh, not too bad! There's a big job on the way, the chemical industry, dead easy! Why, she's fine, yes! You do? I'll tell her that! Oh, sure, is she ever without? I can't keep up with the names! (CLIFF looks up for a moment) She's a mess! That's what I always tell her, you're a mess, Pam! Well, that's it, all you have to do is call Charlotte-the-harlot and she'll put you right! Now listen here--- (Laughs) Well---I call that familiarity! Good bye, Helga, honey! (Slams down the phone and takes off her coat) Bitch! Hi, Cliff! Been here long?

CLIFF: See what it says here? There'll be vast machines poised in the air, invisible to the earth, like stars, ready to conduct war at a moment's notice, watching every movement on the earth! You won't have armies or even aeroplanes! There won't be any need. It'll all be fought out in the upper air like a game of chess---done by machines---and winning on a points-system!

CHARLOTTE: What's that? (to and fro from the kitchen.)

CLIFF: It makes earth a peaceful place!

CHARLOTTE: Do you believe that crap? What have you got there, the comic page? How did you get in?

CLIFF: Key.

CHARLOTTE: See Pam this morning?

CLIFF: Yes!

CHARLOTTE: You still in love with that girl?

CLIFF (reflecting) I don't know! You look beat, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE: A hell of a day!

CLIFF: I got a new job!

CHARLOTTE: You did? Where?

CLIFF: S.W.L.

CHARLOTTE: What's that?

CLIFF: Synthetic Warfare Lab. We work in with the English, sort of.

CHARLOTTE: You don't say! Sounds all right!

CLIFF: Well, it's not too bad. Dad's pleased. (Half to himself) He should have been something harmful, that man---like a gun---or a germ spray!

CHARLOTTE: Did you say Synthetic Warfare Lab?

CLIFF: Yes!

CHARLOTTE: What in the name of hell's that?

CLIFF: Synthetic. You know---artificial---artificial warfare!

CHARLOTTE: Government stuff, you mean?

CLIFF: No, it's private. On contract to the Government. The American Government.

CHARLOTTE (approaching him) Are you kidding? Hey, lower that paper! Are you kidding?

CLIFF: No.

CHARLOTTE: It sounds phoney.

CLIFF: Hundred and fifty dollars a week. That's not phoney!

CHARLOTTE: Is that what you get? What happened---you walked right into it?

CLIFF: No. It was dad. He phoned these people from New York.

CHARLOTTE: Oh! (Leaving him again) I thought you didn't like dad!

CLIFF: I don't!

CHARLOTTE: You're nuts! You're both nuts, you and Pam! What's wrong with kids nowadays? They don't make sense!

CLIFF: I figured out it didn't matter what I did! You see, I reckon I'm going to suffer quite a lot---!

CHARLOTTE: Here we go!

CLIFF: That's the real thing---what happens to me in the flesh---not the work!

CHARLOTTE (laughing) What the hell are you talking about?

CLIFF: I thought you'd laugh! (Getting up to follow her) I'm going to take a lot of blows, and it's like the flesh being whipped, do you get me? Pam was the first one, the first whip!

CHARLOTTE: (attending to the kitchen) Listen, you've got to try and forget that!

CLIFF: No, I've got to find out what went on, you see, why she gave me up, what kind of girl she is, I've got to get interested in her, you see, I want to see what's behind all this suffering, what we're made of! We've forgotten what we're made of, you see, Charlotte---!

CHARLOTTE: You're nuts! That's what you're made of---nuts! Pam looked dead this morning?

CLIFF (turning away) Not specially, no!

CHARLOTTE: Did you wake her up?

CLIFF (picking up his paper again) I came round ten.

CHARLOTTE: You shouldn't do that, Cliff! That girl needs sleep! Haven't I told you that?

CLIFF (flopping into the armchair) She was up, more or less!

CHARLOTTE: Want some coffee?

CLIFF: No, thanks!

CHARLOTTE: I have to push her to bed!

CLIFF: That's right!

CHARLOTTE: Did she say where she was last night?

CLIFF: No!

CHARLOTTE: With No. 2. I suppose!

CLIFF: Is it right he's in the air force?

CHARLOTTE: That's what she says! Boy, oh, boy, does that girl worry me!

CLIFF: Is it right Pam's father died in a concentration camp?

CHARLOTTE: Why... (Hesitating) Sure! He died in the war. Sure, he did!

CLIFF: Did he die in a concentration camp?

CHARLOTTE: Is that what she said?

CLIFF: Yes. Didn't you say once he died on the Russian front?

CHARLOTTE: Well, we lost touch! Nobody knows. (Bustling in the kitchen) We heard they pushed him in the army!

CLIFF: That's what I thought. She said he died in your arms!

CHARLOTTE: My what? (Staring at him.)

CLIFF: Your arms! In the same concentration camp!

CHARLOTTE: She's nuts!

CLIFF: That's what she said!

CHARLOTTE (laughing) She's way up in the air, Cliff, you should know better than believe all that stuff!

CLIFF: I didn't.

CHARLOTTE (a little darkly) Well, maybe you shouldn't say too much...She's sensitive about that.

CLIFF: That's what I thought.

CHARLOTTE (with a conventional sigh of relief) I guess the war left its mark, Cliff!

CLIFF: She was born in America, that's no reason for the war leaving its mark on her!

CHARLOTTE: You don't think so? Would you like to lose your father that way?

CLIFF: Well---I wouldn't mind...

CHARLOTTE: That's what beats me with you kids---you don't seem to have hearts, not like my generation!

CLIFF: I was only joking!

CHARLOTTE: About your dad?

CLIFF: Yes!

CHARLOTTE: Is that good?

CLIFF: He jokes about me!

CHARLOTTE: What was that junk you were reading in the paper?

CLIFF: About the satellites. You've heard of satellites, haven't you?

CHARLOTTE: Sure, I have! Why didn't you say satellites in the first place?

CLIFF: The rose would be as sweet...

CHARLOTTE: What's that?

CLIFF: The rose would be as sweet...

CHARLOTTE (Laughing) You're crazy! I give up! Gee, does the spring do Charlotte good! (Shouting from the kitchen) Did you ever see a morning like this morning? That was just like Hamburg when I was a kid! I used to come down the steps of the house, Cliff, and everything used to look white---I guess we had a lot of white statuary around! Do you know what I mean, when the sky looks as if you could go riding on it way out as far as you can see, and it doesn't look like air any more---? Now I'm being crazy!

CLIFF: When was that?

CHARLOTTE: Oh, about the time of the first world war! (Appearing fully again) That always gets you, doesn't it---the magic words---'Hamburg'---'the first world war'?

CLIFF: (gazing before him) Did you have shutters on the windows?

CHARLOTTE: Now why do you always ask that question? Sure we did!

CLIFF: I just like the picture...

CHARLOTTE: My father had about the first car there was in Germany, I reckon! He used to poop-poop all over the country with it!

CLIFF: It must have been a nice city...

CHARLOTTE: Well, they certainly flattened it out since!

CLIFF: People were different, weren't they?

CHARLOTTE: What do you mean?

CLIFF: Europe's different from here? From America, I mean?

CHARLOTTE (turning back to the kitchen) They're different all right! It's all fear, you know what I mean? You get feathers down below in the belly when you go in somebody's office, that kind of thing! It's not like that in America! It's all fear over here! It's father, or your family, or your boss, or you've only got a third-class ticket on the train instead of first, or you haven't got the education, it's something you've got to curtséy to all the time! In America you're---free!--- No-body's got any power over you!

CLIFF: None?

CHARLOTTE: Not if you keep inside the law! Listen, why don't you go over to Europe and live there for six months, that'll cure you!

CLIFF: It might cure me of America, too.

CHARLOTTE: You kids don't know when you're lucky! You're free and you don't like freedom, that's what!

CLIFF: I told you lastnight, I can't get in touch, I want to find out about myself, what's underneath--- I don't even know what's wrong in myself!

CHARLOTTE: It was just now you told me that, not last night! You and Pam sure are the muttiest nuts this side of Manhattan!

CLIFF (perplexed) Was it just now? You should move out of London. It makes me nervous!

CHARLOTTE: You find me the money and I'll go right back to the States and take a house next to your dad's and sit looking across the Sound all day!

CLIFF: You'd be bored.

CHARLOTTE: That's it! (suddenly in a quiet voice) Cliff--- I want to tell you something before she comes! You know what---she wants to go into the church, did she tell you that?

CLIFF: What?

CHARLOTTE: She wants to be sworn in---whatever they do in the Catholic church!

CLIFF: That's why she's wearing a rosary round her neck, with a crucifix as big as my fist!

CHARLOTTE: She says she's been talking to some Father, over at Farm Street church. He baptised Johnny Fergusson. She wants to be baptised, too.

CLIFF: Isn't she baptised?

CHARLOTTE: No. She's a nut!

CLIFF: Well---let her!

CHARLOTTE: What does that mean, can you tell me, Cliff?

CLIFF: Well, she just goes to church, that's all!. She takes communion, she confesses when she feels like it!

CHARLOTTE: That's what I wanted to know---about the confessions. How do they go about that, Cliff?

CLIFF: Well, let's say you've been mean to somebody and the thought won't let you alone---you go along to the priest and he makes you say over a few Hail Maries, a few prayers---it's a kind of punishment, in a way...

CHARLOTTE (really alarmed) Punishment! Like hell they do! They ain't punishing my daughter!

CLIFF: Do you mean to say you never heard of confession, Charlotte? What kind of a world to you live in?

CHARLOTTE: Well, I knew about it, I guess! I just didn't think of it in connection with Pam.

CLIFF: So it wasn't alive until now...

CHARLOTTE: It doesn't seem right!

CLIFF: What?

CHARLOTTE: It's me she should tell it to, she should tell her mother what's on her mind, don't you think so? That priest doesn't know her from Eve! So how can he help her?

CLIFF: He doesn't want to help her!

CHARLOTTE: You're wrong there! She says he does---and so does he!

CLIFF: Yes, but not help in your sense! You just mean to make her feel good. They want her to do good things, do you see what I mean? That might make her feel bad!

CHARLOTTE: How could that be good, then?

CLIFF: Suppose being mean to somebody made her feel good---it'd still be bad! Suppose you wanted her to do something mean, well, that might make her feel good, obeying you---but for them she ought to disobey you, even if it makes her feel bad!

CHARLOTTE (after gazing at him in puzzlement) It's baby-snatching!

CLIFF: Baby-snatching?

CHARLOTTE (shouting) How do they know what she's like? She's just a kid! And they talk as if she'd got forty years of age! Oh, I know that one--- she'll tell 'em, 'Yes, that's right, that's right!' (imitating PAM) and she'll nod her head and they'll think, 'Gee, this kid understands everything!' But she doesn't! She doesn't understand a thing! She's just playing, like she used to play right in front of where you're sitting now, in that Bavarian playpen I used to have! And Kurt and Lisa are the same---'Why don't you let the kid alone?' they say. 'Let her go free!' By God, if I let that nut go free for five minutes she'd have the fire-squad out all over town!

CLIFF: She's free all the time you're at the office.

CHARLOTTE: But she's got to account to me for everything she does! And she knows it.

CLIFF: That's just what she says about you.

CHARLOTTE (stopping) What?

CLIFF: She says, 'I can't let her go free, she's irresponsible!'

CHARLOTTE (bluffing) Oh, I've heard that, too!

CLIFF: I wish my ma could shout like you... She kind of dried up years ago!

CHARLOTTE: She's a fine woman! Don't you know that?

CLIFF: Yes, but I'd give anything to see her shout and cry like you!

CHARLOTTE: She's got nothing to cry over, maybe!

CLIFF: Oh, she has---plenty!

CHARLOTTE (with a laugh) You, for instance! Well, I'll go down the delicatessen!

CLIFF: Not tonight! you won't!---

One of the telephones rings.

CHARLOTTE (answering) Quick Translations Inc: I mean, 'Limited!' (No reply. The other telephone rings. She puts down the first and picks up the second.) Charlotte here, hullo, hullo! Oh, heck, press the button, will you? (She slams down that receiver, too)

CLIFF: I was going to---

The first telephone rings again.

CHARLOTTE (answering again) Quick Translations! Hullo, hullo! Hullo! (Puts down receiver slowly) O.K. Wait for it. (Promptly the second telephone rings) Just what I thought. (Into phone:) O.K. sweetheart, you've had your fun! Come on, talk. (A pause) Pam. I said, talk. Do you hear me? Pam! (Another pause) I know you're there! (Laughing) Now, come on, will you, talk, you crazy nut! (A voice replies at last) You can't fool me! Now, come on, pull yourself together---Pam! Pam! Look, just stop giggling, will you? Cliff's here! You're going to make yourself sick one day, giggling like that! You what? Sure you're coming home! Where are you? Well, come on up! What's that noise behind you? Is that a drug-store? A what? Oh, you've been eating there? I see!

CLIFF: Tell her we're eating out tonight.

CHARLOTTE: Hold on a minute. (To Cliff) What's that?

CLIFF: Tell her we're eating out, the three of us! I'll drive you out to Boulanger's in old Greenwich, I mean, the Duck-and Baby in Slough! Celebrate my job!

CHARLOTTE: Hear that, Pam? Cliff wants to drive us out to that place in Slough where you get American hamburgers! That's right! (To CLIFF) She's ecstatic, the nut! Well, come on up! (Puts down phone) That's a long way, Slough.

CLIFF: We'll start as soon as she's here.

CHARLOTTE (going to the kitchen) Well, I don't know, she had a late night last night---!

CLIFF: There we go!

CHARLOTTE: No, I mean it, Cliff! Maybe we should make it Saturday night, when we're all unwinding!

CLIFF: Oh, come on, Charlotte, I don't get a job like this every day, a job that's going to kill me and break my heart!

CHARLOTTE: Is that what you want to celebrate---heartbreak?

CLIFF: That's right! I feel lonely---do you ever have it come over you---when you go hollow---you feel nothing exciting's going to happen---you don't know anybody---you've got no friends---and the ones you've got don't count? (As if struggling past her to get to the window) Let me jump out of that window, will you?

CHARLOTTE: You and Pam can jump together! She's always telling me how she's going to!

CLIFF (stopping) I do love Pam... I love her because I've got nobody else!

CHARLOTTE: And you'll never get anybody else while you go on moping round her!

CLIFF: Will she come back to me, Charlotte, does she talk about that? Does she ever say she loves me and only wants a rest? Does she talk about No. 2 like she used to talk about me?

CHARLOTTE: That's a lot of questions!

CLIFF (half-seriously) Tell me, save my life!

CHARLOTTE: She loves you in a way, sure. Well, she's full of Johnny Fergusson right now, of course!

CLIFF: She never talks about me?

CHARLOTTE: Yes, she does! She includes you---!

CLIFF: That's what I mean! She thinks of me being here all the time!

CHARLOTTE: Why, sure! You're one of the family for Pam, and how! (A ring at the doorbell) Well, talk of the devil!

She hurries to the door and admits PAMELA.

CHARLOTTE: (yelling joyfully) Now what in the name of hell did you think you were doing on that phone, you're the craziest---!

PAM (with familiar, mild indifference) OK, OK, that's enough, you sure have got a voice! Hi, No.1!

CLIFF: Hi, Pam! Listen to this, I---

CHARLOTTE (to CLIFF, as she helps PAM off with her coat)  
For crying out loud, will you let her take her coat off? You kids are all wound up, all the time!

PAM: Well, listen to who's talking! (Letting Charlotte take her coat away) Got any coffee?

CHARLOTTE: Why, sure! You want some? (Going to the kitchen, PAM following her) Now go and sit down! You look dead-beat, didn't I tell you that last night? You need sleep, girl, you've got to have sleep, and tonight you'll go to kuschi right after we eat, I'll get some stuff at the delicatessen!

PAM (stroking her hair) OK, OK, ma. Don't wanna talk till three in the morning, not like this mornin'?

CHARLOTTE (laughing) Now get off me, will you? You're crazy, you know that?

PAM (in an atrocious accent---nearly a new language!)  
Gehts gut, mutsi-tutsi!

CHARLOTTE: Ya! Aber---! Um Gottes Willen--- diese schreckliche Arbeit, die Kurt und Lisa---! Ach! ich kann nicht---!

PAM: Isht gut, isht gut, mutti--- Du musht nicht so viel arbeiten, und dann wurden wir Alle (Fairy-like) glücklich sein! (To CLIFF) Nicht wahr, Nummer Einz?

CLIFF: Don't get a word! Where's your crucifix, Pam?

PAM (seeing it missing on her chest) Hey! (Darts straight to the phone and dials a number) Is that the kitchen? Yeah, yeah! The kitchen! Mr. Fergusson, quick! Mr. Fergusson!

CHARLOTTE: What's that you said---'kitchen'? Hey, you, what kitchen is that?

PAM (cupping her hand over the phone) It's a downtown place, he's eating there, it's called The Kitchen.

CHARLOTTE: I've never heard of a place called the Kitchen! (winking at CLIFF) Why, do the English eat?

PAM: What the heck an I talking about?---it's called The Soup Kitchen! Hullo, hullo, yeah, is that you, Johnny? Hi, Johnny! (Burlesque-sweet) Why, sure! Hey, listen, have you got my rosary? Rosary! Ros-ar-y! You have? Oh, fine, fine! You know, that's what I'm being received in! What? Round the neck, of course! 'Received,' I said. (To CLIFF with a deliberately inane

grin.) He thought I said 'deceived':  
Again to phone) Now don't let it out of your  
 sight---slip it in your tail-pocket!

CHARLOTTE (to CLIFF) His what? Have you ever heard  
 crazier talk than that?

CLIFF: No, I haven't!

PAM: Yeah, I'll pick it up tonight---!

CHARLOTTE (snapping it out---from long practice) Listen,  
 you're not picking up anything tonight, do you  
 hear that? You're going---!

PAM: SssH! (Sweet again) What's that, honey?  
 Yeah, it's my ma, kind-a got a loud voice!  
 She's sweet when you get to know her, though!

CHARLOTTE: I'll give you 'sweet!'

PAM: Hear her laugh? She certainly don't need an  
 amplifier, do she?

CHARLOTTE: You're a nut!

PAM: OK, honey, good bye! (Puts down phone)

CHARLOTTE: Well, as long as you know you're going to call  
 Mr. Fergusson right back and tell him you can't  
 make it tonight---!

PAM: It'll take me two minutes!

CHARLOTTE (a tremendous volley) To go downtown? Are  
 you crazy?

Silence follows this.

CLIFF: Sit down, Pam.

CHARLOTTE: Yes, si' down! You look dead-beat, have I told  
 you that? Now have you eaten?

PAM (sitting down limply) Sure I have!

CHARLOTTE: What did you eat?

PAM: A couple of sandwiches.

CHARLOTTE: What sandwiches?

PAM: Lettuce!

CHARLOTTE: Lettuce? Who ever heard of lettuce sandwiches?  
 Couldn't you run to chicken or ham?

PAM: I wasn't hungry!

CHARLOTTE: You never are! Listen, kid, you're going to kill yourself if you go on like that! Now you sit right there at the table and I'll grill you a nice piece of steak!

PAM (quietly) You haven't got any steak.

CHARLOTTE: I can get some!

PAM: I don't want any!

CHARLOTTE: What do you want?

PAM (sheepishly). Rice crispies...

CHARLOTTE: Didn't I know it! 'Rice crispies'... OK!  
(She hurries off to the kitchen, quite glad to be getting PAM anything)

PAM (to CLIFF) I'm worried about that rosary.

CLIFF (without interest) You are?

PAM: What are you looking at me like that for?

CLIFF: What the hell does a rosary matter? That's superstition, isn't it? What does silver-plated chrome matter?

PAM: Are you crazy?

CLIFF: Well, just tell me!

PAM: That's a religious symbol!

CLIFF: That's nothing religious at all! That's what Moses got so annoyed at in the desert!

PAM: What's that you said?

CLIFF: Moses.

PAM: What about Moses?

CLIFF: When he caught Aaron worshipping the gilded bull, don't you know about that?

PAM (after a silence) I don't get you.

CLIFF: What don't you get?

PAM: What you just said! 'Aa-ron!--what's that?

CLIFF: You never heard of the guy?

PAM: No!

CLIFF: Well, the holy church should know!

CHARLOTTE (bringing in coffee and a plate of rice crispies)  
It's all crazy about the church, she's taking us all  
for a ride, do you hear that, Cliff?

CLIFF: I heard it.

PAM (as CHARLOTTE puts the plate down before her) Hey,  
now look at that, rice crispies!---Goody-goody!  
What do you know about that? Whoopee!

CHARLOTTE: Just eat it and cut the noise! (Facing her  
squarely) Is this Johnny Fergusson a Catholic?

PAM (to CLIFF) You hear the way she talks? 'This' Johnny  
Fergusson! (To CHARLOTTE) That's something I  
don't like about you. You kind of run over people.

CHARLOTTE (hesitantly) 'Run over'?

PAM: You know what I mean all right. Remember the  
guy who stopped us on the highway? You wouldn't  
have stopped at all if I hadn't made you!

CLIFF: What did he want?

PAM: He needed a hospital. His wife was bad. (To  
CHARLOTTE) And you begrudged the time looking  
for the hospital, didn't you?

CHARLOTTE: Well, maybe you're right... I'm no angel!

PAM: It's something other people notice. Is that  
what the Germans are like?

CHARLOTTE: I said, maybe you're right! I started off a  
German! Maybe that's the reason! (Seriously)  
I know I'm wrong in a lot of things...

PAM: Well, I wish you'd be nicer to No. 2 when he calls!

CHARLOTTE (herself again) Nicer! I talk to that kid with  
gloves on!

PAM: You put the phone down on him last night!

CHARLOTTE (bluffing) Was that Johnny Fergusson? I didn't  
know!

PAM: You knew all right!

CHARLOTTE: I told you, I was dead-beat last night!

PAM: Well, you don't put the phone down on people just  
because you're dead-beat---you don't do it any  
time!

CLIFF (cutting in) Know something, Pam? I got the job!

PAM: You did?

CLIFF: Letter came this afternoon. 150 dollars a week!

PAM: That's swell! (Stopping) Hey, that's quite a sum of money for a kid! Maybe I should have married you!

CLIFF: There's still a chance. I can put you on the list!

CHARLOTTE (also cutting in) Know what Helga said about you this evening?

PAM: What?

CHARLOTTE: She said you were cute to look at, she's always saying that---she said you had big things mapped out for you in life---you had a lot of uncanny wisdom, she said, underneath the cute college-kid!

PAM (chewing uncomfortably) She did?

CHARLOTTE: She wants you to come in the firm.

PAM (after a pause) You hate her, don't you?

CHARLOTTE (with a laugh) Helga? Are you crazy?

PAM: You hate each other. But you live on her translations and she lives on your contracts.

CHARLOTTE: She's a fine translator! I couldn't do better! What do you want me to do, deny it?

PAM: You hate each other but you live on each other. I can't stand to see you two together. She's got that black hair all over her head---!

CHARLOTTE: Are you crazy? (delighted)

PAM: And those big round black eyes! She should have been a spy. She's a hate-maching, that one. I can't stand to see you two making up to each other like a couple of cats.

CHARLOTTE (putting on a solemn face suddenly) OK, that's enough! Do you hear?

PAM (returning to her food) You keep on asking people if they can hear.

CLIFF: It's what you call a rhetorical question.

CHARLOTTE: You want me to whisper?

PAM (to CLIFF) The words you come out with! 'Rhetorical'!

CHARLOTTE: Well, he learned something at college, not like you---!

PAM: Oh, here we go!

CHARLOTTE: Well, it's true, isn't it? You only went to lectures because they were co-ed!

CLIFF: And you tried to elope with the Dean.

PAM (laughing, her pleasant cackle) His name was Dean, screwy!

CLIFF: I thought you said the Dean!

PAM: The Dean was fifty years of age!

CHARLOTTE: Well, anyway, that's no way to behave. And it's going to stop. There's going to be a big change, you're going to find a job, you can come into Quick Translations Inc---!

PAM: I am not coming into Quick Translations Inc.

CHARLOTTE: All right, then stay at home! But you don't get yourself expelled from college and then come home and do the same here---you're in a capital city, girl---you can get yourself into big trouble!

PAM: What are you talking about?

CHARLOTTE: Question---where've you been all day?

PAM: With Johnny.

CHARLOTTE: Where?

PAM (sullenly) Oh, around.

CHARLOTTE: 'Oh, around.' And he's a Catholic, is he?

PAM: That's right.

CHARLOTTE: Have they got a church in the Soho juke-box saloons, because that's where you two've been every Sunday for the last month!

PAM (looking at her sharply) How do you know that?

CHARLOTTE: I've got my spies!

PAM (really interested) No, come on, tell me.

CLIFF: I told her.

PAM: How do you know?

CLIFF: I followed you one Sunday!

PAM: You what? Haven't you got any pride?

CLIFF: That's just what I was trying to get rid of! I was curious but too proud to do it. So I made myself do it!

CHARLOTTE: It's true you were there every Sunday, isn't it?

PAM: Well, what about it?

CHARLOTTE: You worry me, that's all!

CLIFF (getting up) Shall we go, then?

PAM: Sure! Coming, ma? (also rising slowly)

CHARLOTTE: You can hardly keep your eyes open, can you?

PAM: Will you let me alone? (Going towards her bedroom)

CHARLOTTE (to CLIFF) Let's go to Slough another night, Cliff, she worries me sick!

CLIFF (with a tired shrug) OK!

PAM: Listen, I'm going to Slough with Cliff, I'm going to pick up my rosary on the way, and if you don't like it you can stay at home!

CHARLOTTE: I give up!

PAM: Yes, that's what I'm going to do! (going to fetch her coat)

CHARLOTTE (calling out to her) OK, I'll stay up and wait for you, I guess! I've got work to do, I've got the accounts, you don't have to worry about that! (She pulls out the box of papers from under the table) You look after yourself, Pam!

PAM (turning) You were invited, too, ma!

CHARLOTTE (deafening) Didn't I tell you before, you've got to sleep, you can't go on unless you sleep! (To CLIFF) What do you want to help kill her for, Cliff.

CLIFF: OK, let's call it off!

PAM: We're going! (To CLIFF) Don't take any notice---she'll tag along!

CHARLOTTE: I'm sitting right here with these invoices and I'll be here when you come back!

PAM (quietly) That's blackmail.

CHARLOTTE: You call me names, that's all right!  
(pulling on her glasses and settling down at the table)

PAM (caressing her) Now, come on, little Lottelein, come on, be a good ma...

CHARLOTTE (sweeping off her glasses again with a laugh)  
Now let me alone, will you? You're crazy, I tell you I'm not interested in you any more, you're too crazy!

PAM: I tell you what, I'll just go down and get the rosary with Cliff.

CHARLOTTE: You'll get that rosary tomorrow!

PAM (suddenly quiet) Hey! (She sways as if suddenly ill)

CLIFF brings her a chair at once.

CHARLOTTE (jumping up with a bound) Pam! What's the matter? Pam! Are you sick?

PAM sinks into the chair.

PAM (faintly) I feel---kind of sick...

CHARLOTTE (triumphant) Well, that does it! (Striding into the bedroom and tearing the bed-cover off, banging the pillows, tucking in the blankets)  
That really does it! Oh, yes!

CLIFF: What's the matter, Pam?

PAM: I just feel sick...

She suddenly dashes out of the room, past CHARLOTTE, nearly knocking her over, and locks herself in the bathroom.

CHARLOTTE (rushing to the bathroom door) Pam! Let me in! What's the matter? What's wrong, kid?  
(Quietly, turning away) She's being sick. She eats nothing, she never sleeps, she's crazy, and that's why she gets stomach-upsets. Well, Cliff, you sure must like crazy households!

CLIFF: I guess we'll cancel Slough!

CHARLOTTE (with a sigh) I guess we will! (Packing her work up again) You should have been a nurse, Charlotte!

CLIFF: Shall I go down the delicatessen?

CHARLOTTE: Would you?

CLIFF: Sure! It always seems to end that way...

CHARLOTTE: With a nut like that, what do you expect? Fetch three steaks, Cliff. And some ham and maybe pickles.

CLIFF: OK.

CHARLOTTE: Here's the money (looking in her bag) Oh, hell---! (Fiddling about with change)

CLIFF: This is on me Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE: Here's a note! Now take it and bring me the change!

CLIFF: Listen, Charlotte---

CHARLOTTE: TAKE THAT MONEY!

CLIFF: OK!

He goes, deafened, by the left door.

CHARLOTTE: These kids! (Dashing across to the bathroom) Pam! Are you there? (A faint reply) Have you finished? Well, open up! Now come on, open the door!

PAM opens the door slowly and walks out, pale and tired.

CHARLOTTE (quietly, putting her arm round her) Nun, schnuppi-nuppi, was ist los, lieblich? Pammilein!---Komm, komm, leg dich hierhin, mein Kind, leg dich hierher! (Trying to get PAM to lie down on the bed.)

A slight struggle takes place.

CHARLOTTE (sharply) Now, come on! You're going to bed! Pam!

PAM (quietly) Let me go, will you? Can't you see I'm ill?

CHARLOTTE: You've been sick, haven't you!

PAM: Just let me go!

CHARLOTTE (pleading with her again) Pammi, lieblich, komm, komm---

PAM: Und Cliff? Er kommt gleich!

CHARLOTTE: What about Cliff? I'll tell him you're sick!

PAM (walking from the bedroom) Get me some lipstick,  
will you?

CHARLOTTE: OK, have it your own way! (Looking in her bag) Is that the first thing you think of, lipstick? If you were healthy you wouldn't need the stuff at all, not at your age! It's no good putting the health on afterwards, Pam! People can see through that!

However, she gives her a lipstick.

PAM (painting her lips) Oh, sure. They see through me anyway.

CHARLOTTE: What do you mean? They think you're a swell girl, you heard what Helga said!

PAM: Oh, sure!

CHARLOTTE (after a pause) That's the second time you've been sick this week. (No answer from PAM---a long silence)

CHARLOTTE stands watching her closely.

PAM: What do you mean?

CHARLOTTE: Tell me. Come on.

PAM (her head sunk down) Yeah. I'm having a baby.

CHARLOTTE: Oh, Christ and all the angels... What are you going to do next, Pam?

PAM (after a pause) Marry.

CHARLOTTE: Who?

PAM: Johnny, of course!

CHARLOTTE: Is it Johnny Fergusson's?

PAM: Yes.

CHARLOTTE: And I haven't even seen him!

PAM: You will.

CHARLOTTE: Does he know?

PAM: Yes.

CHARLOTTE: You're sure it's a baby? (PAM nods)  
You went to a doctor?

PAM: Yes.

CHARLOTTE: What did he say?

PAM: Just that.

CHARLOTTE: Nothing wrong?

PAM: No.

CHARLOTTE: Where does he work?

PAM: Johnny?

CHARLOTTE: Who else?

PAM: Here's the lipstick. (Hands it back calmly)  
I told you before, he's in the air force.

CHARLOTTE: You said he worked in a newspaper office.  
But that was a week ago!

PAM: An air force newspaper!

CHARLOTTE; What as?

PAM: Oh, some kind of editor!

CHARLOTTE: Wouldn't he be kind of young for an editor?

PAM: Well, I don't know. Something like that.

CHARLOTTE: And what's he doing with you in the juke-box  
dives every Sunday if he's in the air force?

PAM: He's finished his service.

CHARLOTTE: So he's not in the air force?

PAM: He's on long leave, he's waiting to go back,  
he's thinking of signing on for another two  
years, maybe more.

CHARLOTTE: He's on long leave in England, Pam?

PAM: That's what he told me! He's here for me---  
I suppose...

CHARLOTTE: He wants to be an airman all his life?

PAM: Maybe.

CHARLOTTE: And what do you say about that?

PAM (with a shrug) It's OK. He might get stationed here for good.

CHARLOTTE: You want to stay in England for good—are you crazy?

PAM: What's crazy about that?

CHARLOTTE: I give up!

PAM: Anyway, he's young yet, he's---

CHARLOTTE: OK, OK, don't give me that forty-year old stuff! (After a pause) And what does he say about the baby?

PAM: He wants to marry me.

CHARLOTTE: 'Marry'! You're just out of school!

PAM: You asked me what he said.

CHARLOTTE (half to herself) If that doesn't take the cake! And what am I going to tell Kurt and Lisa?

PAM: The truth.

CHARLOTTE: And I'll get the blame! 'We could see it was going to happen!'---that's what they'll say! You certainly do land me in some nice problems, Pam!

The doorbell. CHARLOTTE goes and admits CLIFF in silence.

PAM (quietly, to make talk) What's it like down there?

CLIFF (taking out the provisions) Oh---the streets are crowded. It seems like an important city. For an American airbase, anyway!

CHARLOTTE (to PAM) It's all in your mind! That's all the trouble!

CLIFF: Pardon me?

CHARLOTTE: I was talking to Pam.

CLIFF: How do you feel, Pam?

PAM: OK.

CLIFF: Been sick?

PAM: Just a bit.

CLIFF: I'll make you some broth---shall we start cooking, Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE: I guess so!

CLIFF: Is something wrong?

CHARLOTTE: Is it ever right with my daughter?

CLIFF: What's she done?

CHARLOTTE: She's having a baby.

PAM (flaring up) Let me tell my own secrets, will you?

CLIFF: Well! (He goes and sits down slowly)  
How do you know?

PAM: The doctor.

CLIFF: Who's dad?

PAM: It's OK, No.1, you don't have to worry!

CLIFF: I wasn't worrying! I think babies are wonderful!

CHARLOTTE: Oh!

A pause, during which he gazes at her.

PAM: It's Johnny's.

CLIFF (crestfallen) I see...

PAM: I believe you're sorry!

CLIFF: Well...

CHARLOTTE: That's what Kurt and Lisa always said---'It's written up in Neon lights what she's going to do one day!' And now they'll say, 'There, we told you, remember?'

PAM: Why worry what they think?

CHARLOTTE: It's all the talking I've got to do!

PAM (watching her steadily) No, it's because they keep you alive.

CHARLOTTE (indignantly) And why not? How do you think we'd live without Kurt and Lisa, where do you think I'd get the contracts? I sent you to college, Pam, I never tried to push you into a job---was that wrong?

PAM: I didn't mean that!

CHARLOTTE: Sure I depend on Kurt and Lisa!

PAM: But what's wrong if I get married?

CHARLOTTE: Oh, quit that! You've been engaged to be married since you were fourteen years of age!

PAM: Well, it's serious this time.

CHARLOTTE: It certainly is serious!

CLIFF: What does Johnny think?

CHARLOTTE (turning on him) What the hell does it matter what Johnny thinks! He most likely doesn't know!

PAM (disregarding her) He likes the idea.

CHARLOTTE: Well, it's some situation and I don't know how we're going to get out of it, I don't, not this time!

CLIFF: What sort of fellow is he?

PAM (reverting to a strangely pleasant conversational tone)  
Oh, you'd like him. He's nice.

CLIFF: Tall and blond?

PAM: Yes! How did you guess?

CLIFF: Well, I'm dark, and that's the usual rhythm, from dark to light.

PAM: Hey, but you said you saw us together along Broadway!

CLIFF: I---I only had eyes for you.

CHARLOTTE: He's signing up for two more years in the air force, Cliff, and staying in England, can you beat that?

PAM: I didn't say for sure, did I?

CLIFF: He's a pilot?

PAM: Well, it's a kind of danger-job.

CHARLOTTE: What?

PAM: Will you let me talk? (To CLIFF) He doesn't say too much. He gets special pay and all that. For the danger.

CLIFF: What sort of danger?

PAM: He won't say. They call him squadron-leader, that's all I know.

CLIFF: What can you do that's dangerous up in the air? short of throwing yourself around or jumping out---something like that?

PAM: Don't ask me! He certainly looks a gentleman in his uniform! I reckon my baby'll take after him---I always picture a boy!

CHARLOTTE: You haven't had it yet!

PAM: I'm going to!

CHARLOTTE: All right, but don't build too fast, that's all! You and me are going round to the doctor's tomorrow, and then we'll see if there's a baby or not, but I'm not taking anything you say! That's right! (Going to the kitchen) Your stomach's been empty too long, that's why you were sick, most likely!

PAM (to CLIFF) Who's crazy now?

CHARLOTTE: I may be crazy but we'll find out all about it tomorrow morning and in the meantime we'll defer our marriages and our babies with blond hair, and our danger-service in England!

PAM (to CLIFF, quietly, while CHARLOTTE slaps about in the kitchen) He told me once he drops by parachute, a sort of human bomb.

CLIFF: Oh! That sounds quite dangerous!

PAM: It's funny. I can handle him just like a baby, he's soft, but he's the terror of his men!

CLIFF: How?

PAM: Well, there's no democracy in a danger-squad, he says. You can say what you like to your men, and that's the agreement when they come in, they've got to take the insults! You can treat 'em like dirt!

CLIFF: Does he do that?

PAM: It's funny---I can't imagine him doing it---you know, he's such a gentleman! But that's what he says!

CLIFF: Oh!

PAM: That's where he's fascinating, you see---he doesn't go out to people (hesitates!)

CLIFF: How do you mean?

PAM: He lets people come to him. He isn't nice in that way, if you see what I mean. He doesn't look at you friendly. And that seems to fascinate his men---like it fascinates me! He told me they tremble when they come in his room! He can see their hands shaking!

CLIFF: He sounds horrible, Pam. I can't understand you!

PAM: But you would if you knew him. You'd be fascinated like me!

CLIFF: And you're going to marry him?

PAM: I hope so!

CLIFF: Well! I'll have a lot to think about!  
(Rising) You know---it's the first time I felt like---

PAM: What?

CLIFF: (with a smile) Crying. I think I'll eat at home. Do you mind?

PAM: Did I upset you, Cliff?

CLIFF: No, I'd just like to walk---you know how I am... (Going to the door) Good night Charlotte!

There is no reply.

CLIFF: Tell your mother good night, will you?

PAM: Sure! (Puzzled) Call me in the morning?

CLIFF: As usual! Good night!

PAM: 'night, ' No.1!

Exit CLIFF. She sits gazing before her.

PAM: You should have said good night to Cliff!  
(No reply again) Aren't you going to put this lipstick away? (Puts it in her mother's handbag) She then walks over to the bedroom  
Well, you sure have made a mess of this bed!

Why didn't I get a tidy mother? (In the lack of a reply she walks slowly round to the kitchen and, as she suspected, her mother is weeping silently, her back turned) Hey, now, come on... (Trying to touch her mother)

CHARLOTTE: (at the top of her voice) Le' me alone! What've I ever done to you! You dirty---rotten---!

PAM (quietly) OK, let it come out.

CHARLOTTE: What did you want to do it for? (Banging her hands on the table) What did you want to do it for?

PAM: Let the words come out, say what you want to, ma.

CHARLOTTE: You dirty---rotten---low---mean---whore! Oh, Christ, what have I got this daughter for? Oh, Christ!

She weeps on PAM, who puts her arm round her in a motherly way.

CHARLOTTE: Oh, Pam! What have you done?

PAM: Easy, ma, easy!

CHARLOTTE: Oh, Pam! (Slowly stops crying)

PAM: Let me get in here (meaning the kitchen). I'll make some coffee. Come on, ma, go and sit down.

CHARLOTTE: You just go to bed!

PAM: You certainly made a mess of that bed!

CHARLOTTE (sniffing) I'll get it straight---right now!

She goes across to the bedroom and begins pulling bedclothes vigorously together. Silence, while PAM prepares coffee.

PAM: That was a pretty bad name you called me.

CHARLOTTE bangs the pillows together in answer, her lips pursed.

CHARLOTTE: Well, I expect you know I didn't mean it.

PAM: Oh, I know that! But you must have a pretty funny picture of me, just the same!

CHARLOTTE: It's the true one, for all that!

PAM: Did you never make a mistake, then?

CHARLOTTE: Sure, I made mistakes!

PAM: Well, that's all I've done!

CHARLOTTE: I told you, it's a mistake that's been up in neon-lights for the last two years!

PAM: What do I do, then, slit my throat?

CHARLOTTE (suddenly alert) What's that?

She then strides round to the kitchen.

PAM: Shall I slit my throat?

CHARLOTTE: (bellowing) Now that's not the right talk for a girl your age! Look at me! Look me in the face! (Pulling PAM round to face her) You're crazy enough to do it, too!

PAM (quietly) Well, give me one good reason for living.

CHARLOTTE: Now quit that talk! Do you hear me? And how many times do I have to tell you not to make coffee that way? Have you never heard of filter-papers? Now, just get out of my way!

She takes over the coffee-making.

CHARLOTTE (putting down the coffee-things suddenly) And that reminds me! (She goes straight to the telephone and dials a number) Hullo, is that Dr. Steiner's surgery? Does Dr. Steiner happen to be there? Would you tell him it's Mrs. Mannheim? Thanks! (A pause) Ach, Herr Doktor, wie geht es Ihnen? Hier spricht Charlotte Mannheim! Ya! Es geht mir SWELL, danke shon! Nein! Ist das Wetter heute nicht schon? Und der first day of spring! Ya---es ist wegen meiner Tochter! Konnte ich morgen Fruh mit ihr zu Ihnen kommen? Ya? Gut! Um zehn uhr bin ich im office---konnte ich um halb zehn kommen? Ya! Sehr gut! So--- aufwiedersehen, Herr Doktor! (Puts down phone) So that's that! Half past nine tomorrow morning! And meantime, bed! Do you hear me?

PAM: OK! (She slouches to the bedroom) I found a picture of Otto today. What was he doing in Nazi uniform?

CHARLOTTE: What was that? (with a little menace in her voice) Say that again, will you?

PAM (quietly) You heard. He was handsome, like you said. He must have been fair, like Johnny Fergusson...

CHARLOTTE: You're crazy! That's not your father! Are you mad?

PAM: It looks like the other pictures.

CHARLOTTE (entering the bedroom) Where is it?

PAM: Right here.

CHARLOTTE (snatching photo and laughing) That! It's a burlesque! He was always getting up in clothes like that! He used to hate the Nazis!

PAM: It looks serious to me.

CHARLOTTE: That was before they really came to power! In the early days it was just a joke!

PAM: I don't know when you met him, where, what my own father talked about...

CHARLOTTE: I can't help it, Pam... If I can't talk---? How would you feel?--?

PAM: OK, OK! (Turning away) Let me get to bed, will you?

CHARLOTTE: Let you? That's where I've been wanting you for the last hour!

PAM: I'm tired! (Leaning back) Tired!

CHARLOTTE (taking off PAM's shoes and putting them on the floor) You know something? I ought to have called you Ottolein! My little Otto! Maybe as a second name! (Kissing her) Sucha pretty little face! Du bist meine kleine angel-face, die schonste, beste little nut die immer war, nicht, nicht? (PAM puts her arms round her mother) Mein bested Kind, mein Ottolein!

PAM: Hey, you're ticklin'!

CHARLOTTE: Now, come on, it's a long day tomorrow, we're going to see Dr. Steiner, and he's not going to see little Pam's eyes all screwed up, no, sir, sie ist mein bestes, bestes, bestes, bestes--- (tickling her)!

PAM (with her cackle) Can it, will you?

CHARLOTTE (serious again) Is that really a baby?

PAM: Sure! (After a pause) I suppose so!

CHARLOTTE: You suppose so! And didn't I tell you a hundred times, didn't I plead with you, 'For God's sake, Pam, be careful! Be careful!'

PAM: I didn't mean to do it! (Turning away)  
In a way, I did... (With a sigh) I don't know!

CHARLOTTE: You don't know anything!

PAM: Ma---(touching her again) when are we going back to New York?

CHARLOTTE: Soon, I hope! Just as soon as I get this company going! But you know what the English are like! (Frowning and looking down)  
That wouldn't have happened in New York.

PAM: What?

CHARLOTTE: The baby! You need your own country! Your own kind of people! I know it's my fault but money's money! One day, Pam---(radiantly) we'll have a place like Cliff's dad---a nice old wooden house painted white with those funny old chimneys---and chipmunks in the walls---squeak! (tickling her again) squeak! squeak! We'll go surf-riding in the summer and grow black tulips on the lawn---do you like black tulips?

PAM (with a yawn) Never seen 'em!

CHARLOTTE: You love 'em, you know it! You picked a handful in Los Angeles your first day of college---!

PAM: What a day that was!

CHARLOTTE (sharply) It seems to me you look for trouble wherever you go---you've got an eye for it!

PAM (loudly) You showed me up, that's what!

CHARLOTTE: There's no need to shout!

PAM: Shout? Can't you hear yourself?

CHARLOTTE: I'm your mother!

PAM (laughing) You're crazy! (Pinching her suddenly)

CHARLOTTE: Now, Pam! Hey, that hurts!

PAM (kissing her) You was just born with a loud mouth, mum. And if you ever closed it up I'd fade away quietly and slowly, just fade into nothing all out of sadness... (She lies back sleepily)

CHARLOTTE: I'd like to know how I showed you up, that's all...

PAM: By making me out a kid! The first day of college, that's important! Not to be a kid in front of all those other kids!---it's a game you should have played just for me, just for one afternoon! But you didn't!

CHARLOTTE: Didn't I?

PAM: No! You kept telling me to pick up my feet and not stare round at the boys and why didn't I clean my nails before I came out? I reckon I lost more friends that first day than all the year afterwards! That's what started me off bad!

CHARLOTTE: Oh! I started you off bad! Well---! It seems to me that Mr. Dean made you a friendly enough gesture---anyway, they threw you out of college for it!

PAM (with a confidential look of disgust) Jim Dean was screwy... Real screwy!

CHARLOTTE: In what way?

PAM: Well, you know, he'd put a hat on, that kind of thing!

CHARLOTTE: What?

PAM: Yeah---when he was kissing me up! He had to have a hat on!

CHARLOTTE: Well---!

PAM: He was screwy all the way through, that one! And he got me screwed-up as well! You know what?---he pinned ten-dollar bills together and made a tablecloth out of them, can you beat that?

CHARLOTTE: He must have had plenty!

PAM: He did! Oh---he spent the tablecloth all right---he tore a piece off every day'. But isn't that a screwy thing to do?

CHARLOTTE: It certainly is!

PAM: You know, ma---?

CHARLOTTE: Yes?

PAM: When I think of all the kids I know over there---they're all crazy---male and female--- they've all got a tick or a twitch or something missing or a funny side you only get to know after a time! I reckon I'm about the only sane one!

CHARLOTTE: You're not so sane!

PAM (smiling) You say that to your own daughter?

CHARLOTTE : You're all nuts---that's what I tell you all the time and you don't believe me! You needn't be nuts but you all are---just for something to do! Now if---!

PAM (putting her hand over her mother's mouth) 'If's a naughty word, ma! 'If I had a talkin' picture of yew---w---w!' Remember that song? Screwy Dean used to collect all the old songs from his dad's time! Remember that one?

CHARLOTTE: I was a German, Pam, a little German girl with long blaits!

PAM: Didn't you have songs?

CHARLOTTE: Not that kind!

PAM: Not 'You're the cream in my coffee!' ---'Tea for two, just me and you, Two for tea, just you and me!' (She burlesques each song in a wild way, pulling out her hair and making enormous faces) 'Have you ever seen a dream walkin'? Well, I did!' Yow! (Pinching her mother again) 'A pretty girl is like a mel-od-y, she haunts you night and day-y-y!'

CHARLOTTE: Now, come on, (laughing) chuck it---! (She stops suddenly) Hey---just look at me. (Turning PAM's face towards her)

PAM: What's up?

CHARLOTTE: You're not having a baby.

PAM: What are you talking about?

CHARLOTTE (still holding her face) I can tell by your eyes. There's no baby in your eyes.

PAM (really puzzled) What are you saying?

CHARLOTTE: You're not having ababy! (Beginning to laugh) Pam---! It's too damned silly--- you having a baby---a kid just out of college--- how could I ever believe it? (Laughing easily and pleasantly) You come out with some good stuff---you really do! (Wiping the tears of laughter out of her eyes) You come out with some real good stories! Oh, Christ Jesus--- I---can't stop---laughing! Oh, help me!

PAM (Smiling) You're going crazy, mum.

CHARLOTTE: I sure am! I sure am! (Wiping her eyes again) Because I've got the craziest daughter anybody ever had by a natural process! (They laugh together at this) And she's--- making me crazy as well! I'm going crazy--- (helpless) by contamination!

PAM: You'd better get yourself disinfected!

CHARLOTTE: I certainly should! (Recovering slowly) Oh! Oh! Pam---you make me laugh! Really laugh! My insides ache!

PAM (quietly) Well, it's good to see you laugh, mum. I wouldn't change you for a palace of gold, you know that?

CHARLOTTE: Well---(wiping her eyes finally) I hope not!

PAM: Will you let me sleep now?

CHARLOTTE: Let you? Listen to that!

PAM: You sat talking on this same bed till four o'clock this morning, Frau Mannheim!

CHARLOTTE: I did?

PAM: Oh, I don't say I don't like it---!

CHARLOTTE: Well, then!. (Looking round the room) Gee, what a tidy girl you are!

PAM: Glad you think so!

CHARLOTTE (looking at her suddenly again) And who said it was a baby?

PAM: The doctor!

CHARLOTTE: An English doctor?

PAM: Sure!

CHARLOTTE: They're hopeless! (Rising in a final way)  
They're known all over the world for being  
hopeless! (Clearing up the mess on the  
chest-of-drawers) If you go to them with  
cancer they say it's nerves!

PAM: Listen, ma. I'd like to go over and see Kurt  
and Lisa.

CHARLOTTE (turning round to stare at her) What?  
(Doubtfully) Are you crazy?

PAM: Tell me why that's crazy.

CHARLOTTE: Because Germany's a long way off---

PAM: Germany?

CHARLOTTE: You've never been there! That's what!  
They'd never understand that crazy accent of  
yours, for one thing! (Slamming things  
down on the chest-of-drawers) I just don't  
like the idea and there's no reason for it,  
there's nothing to see Kurt and Lisa about!

PAM: They keep us alive!

CHARLOTTE: I keep us alive---just you get that straight!  
They send me the contracts and I send back  
the work! It's hard work, too!

PAM (with a sigh) OK, OK...

CHARLOTTE: Don't you get the idea they keep a charity  
organisation, that's all!

PAM: If I'm having a baby, I'd---

CHARLOTTE: You're not having a baby! I can see it in  
your eyes! Now tomorrow you're going to  
see a real doctor and we'll hear the truth!

PAM (with quiet insistence) But just suppose I'm  
having a baby, can I go and see Kurt and  
Lisa then?

CHARLOTTE: I told you, Pam, we'll hear what the doctor  
says!

PAM: But just suppose. Will you let me?

CHARLOTTE (looking at her daughter closely and then  
sitting down on the bed again) What's so  
important about it?

PAM: I'd like to get away, ma. You can understand it---I'm sure you can---you know, I'm German--- I was born a German---but I've never been there--- I'd like to go there to clear things up---I don't know why exactly---I just want to find out about myself---(She pauses) Can you understand that?

CHARLOTTE (after gazing at her seriously) I can understand that, honey, yes.

PAM: If I'm having a baby---just if---and if there's going to be a big change in my life---well, I want to go there---I want to see the people--- to find out who I should marry---does that sound funny?---I want to know what kind of a person I am underneath, that's all!

CHARLOTTE: Well, if it clears anything up, you can go---I suppose! (with a shrug) If it gets something out of your mind!

PAM (hesitantly) You won't go, mum?

CHARLOTTE: Me? Are you crazy?

PAM: Why not?

CHARLOTTE (with a sigh) Some day I might! When the Nazi nightmares stop.

PAM: Fifteen years are a long time!

CHARLOTTE: I know! But I'd still see a Nazi on every street-corner!

PAM: But---just the two of us? Couldn't we go, ma?

CHARLOTTE: One day. (She thinks) One day I'll show you the country where I was born, I'll show the pine-forests and the lakes, and the funny velvet trousers the carpenters wear in my home-town, and I'll take you to the North Frisian islands, that's really wild and you hear the larks wheeling high-up in the sky all day and there's sand-dunes everywhere... A trip south---when there's snow on the mountains!

PAM: You always make it sound so far away!

CHARLOTTE: It is far away! It's far away from everybody!

PAM: And Kurt always said, if I was in trouble, to come to him...

CHARLOTTE (her attention returning to PAM slowly) Pam, tell me the real reason you want to see Kurt.

PAM: If I have to bring up the child, if I can't marry straightaway---you know what I mean?---he might give me an allowance---he's got the money, ma! (CHARLOTTE doesn't speak) Ma!

CHARLOTTE: OK...

PAM: What's wrong with that?

CHARLOTTE: Nothing. Only it's not quite right...

PAM: Taking money?

CHARLOTTE: Oh, no! By-passing your mother all the time--- that's not right!

PAM: By-passing you?

CHARLOTTE (rising) That's it! Whenever you're in trouble---you get thrown out of college--- you lose your first job---you fall in love--- it's always, get in touch with Kurt and Lisa! Well! (Tucking PAM up in bed) I don't mind, honey! Kurt's my brother and he's the finest guy in the world!---but---! It's hurtful!

PAM (getting under the sheets) I don't mean to hurt!

CHARLOTTE: I realise that!

PAM: It's because I need a father---I dare say!

CHARLOTTE: I realise that, too!

PAM: It's just the sound of his voice. It makes me go calm... You know, I used to cry at college if I saw a girl with her dad?

CHARLOTTE: I know!

PAM: You must feel lonely sometimes...

CHARLOTTE (bending down and kissing her) Not with you around, honey. You make up for everything! Well---! (Rising) We'll see what the morning brings!

PAM: OK!

CHARLOTTE switches out the light in PAM's bedroom and comes back into the sitting room.

PAM: You're not going to eat?

CHARLOTTE (pulling the cushions off the double divan and taking out pillows) No, I'm dead beat!

PAM: You talk to me about eating! You'll crack up one day!

CHARLOTTE: I'm old and half-dead anyway! It's not so important!

PAM: Good-night, ma!

CHARLOTTE: Good-night, honey!

Silence, while CHARLOTTE prepares for bed. After a time she tiptoes to PAM's door and gazes in. It seems that PAM is already asleep. The curtain slowly falls.

11.

CHARLOTTE is in the kitchen washing up, PAM is sitting at the table---which is perfunctorily spread for breakfast.

There is a half-filled suitcase in the bedroom: PAM has been packing.

CHARLOTTE (calling out from the kitchen) Now will you eat your breakfast?

PAM (motionless) I told you! I'm nervous.

CHARLOTTE: You're what? (PAM sighs, picks up the paper lazily, stares at it and throws it down again)  
What? (Clattering with the dishes)

PAM: I'm nervous, I said!

CHARLOTTE (leaving the kitchen) Why, sure you're nervous! Who wouldn't be flying a thousand miles into nowhere?

PAM (sullenly) You lived there most of your life! And it's only 500.

CHARLOTTE (drying her hands) It's nowhere as far as you're concerned! A big nowhere! There are two people you know on the whole continent of Europe and that's Kurt and Lisa!

PAM (screwing up her face) OK, OK, I can hear!

CHARLOTTE (snatching up the newspaper) And look at that! Look at it! It's full of crisis! Get that into your nut! What happens if the Reds start?

PAM (sighing) What are you talking about?

CHARLOTTE: Suppose the Russians start a war, ever thought about that?

PAM: Well, I guess I'll come back!

CHARLOTTE: You think it's as easy as that? You know what country you're going to?

PAM: Germany, so the ticket says!

CHARLOTTE: Well, you know that much! So let me tell you, the Russians are right next door and they might step across the frontier and start a war--- they're like that! Then what happens to Pamela Mannheim?

PAM: I come back, I told you!

CHARLOTTE (suddenly pleading) Listen, honey, why don't you wait for this to blow over? Let the Russians cool off a bit!

PAM: I got the tickets. Now, come on, ma, help this once, will you? I'm having a bad time---you've got to help me!

CHARLOTTE (trying a more quiet tone) It isn't only me, schatz, it's what Dr. Steiner says as well. He says---you shouldn't have that baby, you're not ready for it, it'll break you down.

PAM (sharply) He never said that!

CHARLOTTE (shouting again) That's what he told me!

PAM: He said to take it easy, that's all!

CHARLOTTE: So you go flying off to Europe!

PAM (rising) I'll pack!

CHARLOTTE (suddenly) And I'm going to phone Kurt and Lisa!

She steps across to the phone.

PAM (dashing to stop her) Don't you do that! How long are you going to persecute me? How long? I told you, Kurt and Lisa want to talk things over with me, I've got to get away from you, I don't see things straight while I'm here, I want my own life, I want my own life, I'll kill myself, I'll slit my throat---! (She screams frantically, one incoherent, deafening yell after another)

CHARLOTTE (very frightened) OK! OK, Pam! I won't phone Kurt and Lisa. Gee, you frighten me! (Embracing her)

PAM (slumped) You shouldn't do it...

CHARLOTTE: I'm wrong, I know it! I can't help it, Pam! (Also in tears) It's not because I'm bad. It's because I love you, Schatz. I've got nothing else!

- PAM: I know, I know. But just leave me alone this once. Just a few days in another country. Another world.
- CHARLOTTE: But I'm afraid about that child, Pam, I'm afraid Lisa'll want you to have it, and it's not right for your health. I don't want you a cripple all your life---you'll be cutting yourself off too young---that's what I say, you're only a kid and you're going to be a mother before you've even taken a look round, it's not right, you need life like anybody else---you don't seem to realise, I'm thinking of you!
- PAM: I told you, my mind's not made up. I'm going there to find out, Kurt and Lisa'll tell me what to do!
- CHARLOTTE: They don't know you, honey...
- PAM: That's why I'm going!
- CHARLOTTE: They don't know your tricks and your crazy stories, they'll take it all like God's truth! Well! (Going back to the kitchen) Go your own way! I've done all I can! And take that woollen undershirt! Hamburg's like an ice-box! (She stops) Hey! (She walks into the room again---PAM is about to go on with her packing) How do I know you're not spoofing? Let me see those tickets! (Fascinated by the idea---but PAM doesn't move) You hear me? Christ in heaven, she's kidding me! (Beginning to laugh) She's kidding---! Well, of all the---
- PAM slowly pulls out an air-travel wallet from her suitcase, and shows the tickets in silence to her mother. CHARLOTTE stares at them and her smile fades.
- PAM: Satisfied?
- CHARLOTTE: When did the money arrive?
- PAM: Yesterday.
- CHARLOTTE: I didn't see a letter from Germany!
- PAM: They sent it to a bank. They probably know your tricks if they don't know mine! Remember the letter you kept in your bag once, by accident?

CHARLOTTE: I get tired of your crazy boyfriends, that's all!

PAM: That's no reason to steal other people's letters!

CHARLOTTE: 'Steal?' He couldn't even spell the word 'love'! (Returning to the kitchen)  
'Romance' with a 'z'!

PAM: He was simple, that's all...

CHARLOTTE: He was stupid! Listen---suppose you do get caught in a war over there, how do you think I'm going to feel, that'll be my fault, and other people'll let me know it, too!

PAM: I'll be with Kurt and Lisa.

CHARLOTTE: I tell you, Europe's going to be a morgue if war breaks out! The first thing you do is get your name on the books at the American Consulate, so they know you're there! Do you hear me? And listen---are you listening?

PAM (at her packing) Yeah!

CHARLOTTE: If there's an emergency---do you know what an emergency is?

PAM: A kind of a war, you mean?

CHARLOTTE: Yes---'a kind of a war!' Well, if 'a kind of a war' breaks out just you wave your American passport about until you're on a plane, that passport'll blow holes anywhere, do you hear me? That's if you can't get to the American Consulate, do you hear me?

PAM: Yes, I hear you! Cliff says people puke when they see an American passport. He got it from a guy in the State Department.

CHARLOTTE: To hell with that rubbish! Just do what I say!

PAM: OK!

CHARLOTTE: And, listen, no nightspots. Do you understand?

PAM: I'll be with Kurt and Lisa!

CHARLOTTE: Never mind Kurt and Lisa! I'm talking about you! Hamburg's crawling with nightspots! There's a street called the Reperbahn---now don't go near it!

PAM: What did you say it was called?

CHARLOTTE: The Reperbahn!

PAM (flippantly) Sounds interesting!

CHARLOTTE (with a half-smile) I thought you'd say that!

PAM (kissing her) Now, come on, ma, don't look so sad!

CHARLOTTE: I guess I can't laugh about the morgue...

PAM: The what?

CHARLOTTE: That's what it is for me over there, a kind of morgue! I suffered too much, Pam---! I had my hair cut off---they dragged a crowd of us through the streets---children as well---!

PAM: Ma. (Stopping her packing with a sigh) Just try and forget. I've told you before.

CHARLOTTE: I'll try, I'll try! (with sudden emphasis) I tell you, I don't want my daughter flying over there and talking that language, I don't want my daughter knowing about it! (She stands with her feet planted astride in a curious strained and haunted way, like someone repeating a terrible dirge) It's a dead world, I tell you, a dead world, it's dead, dead, and we're new, we're alive, we're alive---! We're alive, we've got a new civilisation, we've got no fear over there in America, we're new, we're making a big, new life over there---! Oh, Pam, Pam, don't go! For God's sake, don't go!

PAM: Ma, ma... Kurt and Lisa are over there. (Tired) They suffered, too. They say it's all right.

CHARLOTTE: But it isn't all right for you! You've been brought up different. Anyway, you should have me to show you around! You should have your mother with you. It's your first big trip. That's not right! You'll go through all those places like it was a lot of junk, you've got to know about it, you've to go to the museums and all the castles, you've got to see Salzburg, that's in Austria, there's a town right by Hamburg called Luneberg, it's a real historical town, you've got to have a guide! It's no good walking through Europe like the Grand Central Station!

PAM: I've got Kurt and Lisa...

CHARLOTTE: They're too busy! They'll have breakfast with you, and then the day's yours. And that's what I don't like!

PAM: You going to work this morning?

CHARLOTTE: OK, I've said enough! Have it your own way! But don't blame me after----.

PAM: OK, OK!

CHARLOTTE (taking up her handbag and coat resolutely)  
I guess I won't see you till you come back!

PAM: What? (Staring) You're not coming to the airport?

CHARLOTTE: I told you, Pam, I can't make it! I would if I could! That's about the worst time at the office! (Preparing to leave, her lips tight closed)

PAM: Oh!

CHARLOTTE: It's a bad week!

PAM: So don't come---it's OK! (On the verge of tears)

CHARLOTTE: Have a good trip and I'll see you in a week's time!

PAM: Good-bye, then.

CHARLOTTE: Are you crying? (She steps towards PAM from the door, peering)

PAM: No!

CHARLOTTE: You are!

PAM (in an outburst) You squeeze out the last drop, don't you? You're cruel! Real cruel!

CHARLOTTE: I told you---! All right, have it your own way---maybe you'd better slip up to the office round lunchtime and see if I'm free.

PAM (as CHARLOTTE goes) And maybe I won't, too!

CHARLOTTE: Don't forget the woollen undershirt! I think you're a fool for going but---it's your own life! Good-bye!

She leaves. PAM stares before her. Picks up the newspaper again, tries to read it, throws it down. The phone rings.

PAM:

Yeah? (Brightening) Hullo, Johnny! Getting tired of drawing off coffee? (Laughs) Oh, honey, I wish I could, yes, I do love you, you know that, you know I'm Mrs. Fergusson deep down inside! You'd what? Yeah, I'd swim round the stars for you, too--- and get up on the moon---twinkle my toes in space--- circle your orbit for all time! (Laughs again in a stagey way) I wish I could! I told you, honey, I'm off to Germany! Today. No, for sure! This afternoon! Oh, you know---some sort of television thing! These agents are vague, didn't I tell you that? Oh, that won't be the only thing! I'll be visiting my father's grave as well! Sure! (Her voice softening sentimentally) Yes, that'll be quite something! Sort of ceremony! There'll be wreaths from all over the world, so they tell me. He was some guy, dad! That's what you call a real warrior, you know that? He held out till five minutes before the Americans got there---can you believe that? Just five minutes and he'd have been all right! They're giving me the freedom of Lunenburg, can you beat that? At the graveside. That's a real historical town, Johnny. He was born there. They're all golden-haired like me! I guess, it's a kind of nostalgia drawing me back. Racial! Some day---maybe we should go there, to live maybe! I think there's a family house. Big? I'll say it's big! The grounds are about as big as Central Park. So you can guess the size of the house! That's where the Americans relieved dad. The servants are still around, so ma says. You know, they're real simple people, they really look up to us like kings and queens! They almost don't get any pay at all, but they're satisfied! Dad used to give parties---they could see the lights twenty miles around! So there'll be me---getting the freedom of the town while my future husband draws off coffee! (Dropping her voice again---stage-solennity) No, honey, you'll get your break. (Stage-bright again) Oh, well, after that I guess there'll be a walking tour through the Black Forest? Well, I feel I know it like the back of my hand just from ma's descriptions! Sure it's black! It's like night-time inside even when the sun's shining! Sure you've got to have lights! I'll say! (Tiring) Well, honey, I'm blowing you a kiss down the wire, be good, see you when I get back! Good-bye, honey! Good-bye! What's that? Who---Cliff? Are you crazy? I sent him away a month ago with his tail between his legs! You should have seen his face! He said he was going to shoot himself but we haven't heard the bang yet! Good-bye, honey!

Puts the phone down with a look of perfect self-disgust and once more stares before her disconsolately, worn-out. For some time she doesn't move. Then she picks up the phone again and dials a number.

PAM: Hullo? Could you give me reservations?  
 (Pause) Hullo, I'm booked for flight 103 to Hamburg, Germany, this afternoon. I'd like to cancel the reservation, if you please. Mannheim. Flight 103. That's right! Thanks a lot.

She puts the phone down again. The doorbell rings. She goes to the door and admits CLIFF.

CLIFF: Hi!

PAM (hardly looking at him) Hi, No.1! Not working today?

CLIFF: Sure! I'm on my way now. I met your mother downstairs!

PAM: You did?

CLIFF: She looked eaten up. The first defeat of her life, eh? (Looks in at the bedroom) Finished packing?

PAM: No.

CLIFF: What's the matter, Pam?

PAM: I cancelled the trip.

CLIFF: You what? What did you do that for?

PAM: I just did it! I just felt like doing it.

CLIFF: It's funny. I sensed it! That's why I dropped by!

PAM: I can't stand it when she's like that!

CLIFF: Like what?

PAM: When she closes up. She snaps her mouth closed and she knows I'd rather have her screaming.

CLIFF: What are Kurt and Lisa going to say?

PAM: Oh, they'll blame her---they always do!

CLIFF (taking hold of her enthusiastically) Listen---  
why don't you go? Make the reservation  
again! Pam---come on!

PAM (turning away) It's---not there any more... I  
don't want to go! The paper's full of crisis.  
She says there'll be a war over there.

CLIFF: Do you believe that?

PAM: No!

CLIFF: What about the baby? Weren't Kurt and Lisa  
going to help you decide---?

PAM: Oh! Well, I guess I have it.

CLIFF: You guess? I thought you said it was your  
lifebelt or something, you couldn't live  
without it?

PAM: Well, that's true! I saw Dr. Steiner again.  
He said it wouldn't be good for my health.  
I'll have to be careful round the third month.  
She's dead against it!

CLIFF: But it's your baby!

PAM (listlessly) Where'd I get the money---without her?  
There's the baby-clothes and the schooling and  
all the special baby-food! She hates Johnny  
Fergusson, that's what.

CLIFF: But she doesn't know him!

PAM: That don't matter, she hates him!

CLIFF: Well, you make it difficult---why fall in love  
with a flying ace?

PAM: He's no flying ace. He serves coffee round  
at the PX!

CLIFF (gazing at her in astonishment) What was all that  
about staying in England, then, and being a  
human bomb?

PAM: Well, he wants a break! He's got dreams  
(Awkwardly) It wasn't just talk. He'd like  
to sign on for good!

CLIFF (fixing her with his eyes) I don't even believe  
he serves at the PX!

PAM (indifferently) Well, he does.

CLIFF: No wonder Charlotte looks eaten up sometimes!

PAM: Yeah, no wonder! (Going to the kitchen)  
Want some coffee?

CLIFF: No, thanks!

PAM (from the kitchen) You always go to work this late?

CLIFF: No. (Almost to himself) But they've got my whole life---so they're not worried about an hour or two!

PAM: We don't seem none of us free, do we?

CLIFF: No! I get good money. That's what dad says. I get good money. Over the long-distance phone. Get good money. That's one thing---I get good money. I get good money. (Like a puppet)

PAM: You're screwy! (With a cackle) Do it again!

CLIFF: Then you fade out---20 or 30 years before you're old! You never look old. Because you never had the life to age the tissues. No conflicts or feelings. (Suddenly) You know, you're the biggest liar I've ever met. You're such a big liar you're not one any more. You cancel yourself out! There wasn't any truth to start with. There's just no truth. So how can there be lies?

PAM (with a kind of agreeable leer) Thanks.

CLIFF: That's all right. It's funny, I don't even believe in that child! I can see a little bulge but it's a kind of ghost-child. It's probably another lie, even if it's there! That's it, I've just realised, Pam, you've got no soul!

PAM (without interest, at work in the kitchen) Boy, you're a comfort this morning. You say the sweetest things!

CLIFF: But it's a new kind of freedom. Do you want a soul?

PAM: Why, sure! What is a soul? That's why I went to church for a couple of weeks! And wore the crucifix! But nothing happened!

CLIFF: A soul means carrying somebody else inside you. He frowns when you tell a lie.

PAM: I haven't got that...

Silence.

CLIFF: So Europe's off? What was all that build-up for a couple of weeks, Pam? About Kurt and Lisa giving you the money to keep the child? and they were going to find you a nice nursing home, and they told Charlotte just to keep her nose out of it this time? Did they send the money for the ticket?

PAM: Sure.

CLIFF: Did they? Wait a minute. (Approaching her, intrigued) Have you got that air-ticket? Let me see it. (A pause) Do Kurt and Lisa exist? Have they really got money? Where's that air-ticket, Pam?

She gazes at him in silence, her face unmoving.

PAM: That's just what ma asked me!

CLIFF: You haven't got it, have you?

PAM: I don't know!

CLIFF: You don't know?

PAM: No!

CLIFF: Which world do you live in? You pack your clothes, (glancing in at the bedroom again) everything's so neat, just like a dream. And nothing happens! (He stands looking at the suitcase)

PAM: Look in the flap.

CLIFF: (turning to face her) What?

PAM: Look in the flap, go on!

CLIFF (taking out PAM's wallet from the suitcase) There's a kind of---!

PAM: Look inside.

CLIFF (finding the air-ticket) Well, you're not that crazy, after all! Pam---I wonder---she makes you crazy, doesn't she? You're OK in yourself! She stops you doing things! So all you can do is dream! Like now. She'll stop you having the baby. But if you force yourself to have the baby, that'll be something real, you'll have something for the first time in your life, this dreaming'll stop!

- PAM: I told you. I'm having the baby.
- CLIFF: But she doesn't want you to have the baby, Pam, so you won't! I'm telling you, you won't! Remember we went down to Florida and you kept calling on the long distance?--- you need her, Pam! She didn't call you! You've got to fight for your own life! Do you see what I mean?
- PAM: I'm tired. (Slumping in a chair)
- CLIFF: Pam, why don't we go away together? I've got the money---!
- PAM: Like I said. I don't love you any more. Just that.
- CLIFF: How do you know?
- PAM: I---.
- CLIFF: You don't know! Kiss me!
- PAM: OK! (She does so) Hey, you wear the same scent!
- CLIFF: That's after-shave.
- PAM: Oh, boy! (She kisses him again) I could eat you this morning!
- CLIFF: It's funny---this town! We're all strangers. We all talk logical, it all looks sensible. But underneath everything swims around like a nightmare. Why don't you go to Germany and find out---find out what's underneath? You might get there and think, 'I'm a real person! I'm staying here to have my baby!' You might find you love me!
- PAM: You know, I don't hate Germany. I never did. Even in the war when I was a kid. I could stay there---!
- CLIFF: Well, then! What are you going to do? Stay here?---she'll murder your baby, Pam! I know she will! Think of him when he's six or seven, and he's got flaxen hair, and that lovely olive skin German boys have sometimes, and he's running about like a little god! You couldn't murder him, could you? Well, it would be murder, wouldn't it? If you murder him in the womb or six years later, it's still murder---his life's still not there! There's still a murder on your conscience! And it's your own child. In your own body. Listen---how do you know there isn't something German in her---coming out--- they killed all those people in the concentration

camps! How do you know she isn't like that underneath?

PAM: She didn't kill me!

CLIFF: You were hers! But your baby's different! What I mean is, if you've got this murder behind you, if you murder a little boy with flazen hair, you'd never forgive her later, would you, you'd never love her the same, you'd have to go on dreaming and dreaming all your life and never get down to anything, you'd lose your sex, Pam, you'd lose your appeal for men, you'd go all empty! Whereas all your life you'll have this little boy, to show you could do one thing, to prove your character! Think of what it'll feel like being called a mother! Why don't you go to Germany? Pam! Pam! Why don't you get on that plane? I'll talk to her afterwards. I'll drop by this evening and talk her round. You know, she takes notice of me!

PAM (gazing at him) Why are you so interested in me?

CLIFF: Well---! It's a change from germ warfare, I suppose!

PAM (with a movement of interest towards him) Do you know, that's the first thing you've said that makes me feel I'll go?

CLIFF: What?

PAM: When you said you'll talk to Charlotte. I feel different. Suppose I went, would you come over every evening and talk to me?

CLIFF: Sure!

PAM: Every evening while I'm away? Don't let her out of your sight until she's yawning her face off ready for bed! Agreed?

CLIFF: Agreed!

PAM: I won't go unless you do it. I'll never speak to you again if you miss a night. Do you understand? I'll go to Germany if you come here straight from the airport this afternoon and talk to me, and stay with her until she looks like she's dropping! Do you hear?

CLIFF: (gazing at her) You sure love her, don't you? Which of you is the child, can you tell me that?

PAM: Come on, do you agree?

CLIFF: I said so, yes! I'll come over every evening and keep her laughing and talking until her eyes close up!

PAM: That's it! Keep her laughing! Keep her laughing for a couple of weeks until I come back!

CLIFF (as a joke) Then you'll marry me?

PAM (seriously) I'll think about it.

CLIFF (starting a little) Shall I make the reservation, then?

PAM: Yes!

CLIFF (picking up the phone) You'll never get away from her, Pam... Have you got the number?

PAM: It's right in front of you.

CLIFF (dialling) This is your last chance. Yes or no? Have you decided?

PAM: Yes, I'm going! (He still gazes at her in doubt) I'm going. It's OK!

CLIFF: Hullo? I'd like to make a reservation. (To PAM) What's your flight number?

PAM: 103.

CLIFF: I'd like to reserve a seat on flight 103 to Hamburg, it was cancelled earlier this morning by error... That's right. The name is Mannheim... It is? Oh, fine! Thanks a lot. Good-bye. (He puts the phone down) It was still in your name. Well, you've done it, Pam!

PAM (rising) I guess I'll finish packing. It's funny, I don't feel nervous any more.

The phone rings.

PAM (before picking up the receiver) You know who this is? Ma. She always knows when I've decided something.

PAM: Hullo? Hullo, there, ma! Am I what? Sure! Sure I'm going! What? No! I told you, I'm going! What's that? Oh, heck, won't she have towels? How am I going to carry all that stuff?

OK, OK! Anything for a quiet life! No, the woollen ones... Yes, two overcoats... The beige. Yes. No. Oh, ma, come on, they weigh a ton! High heels. What, to the airport? You're crazy---I told you, they weigh a ton! OK, OK. That's right. Well, good-bye for now. Yes, yes. Now come on, ma, I've got things to do, good-bye! (replacing the receiver) Can you beat that, she wants me to wear my walking shoes to the airport!

CLIFF: Why not?

PAM: They're like mountain boots! I'll have to take another suitcase!

CLIFF: How did she sound?

PAM: Oh, fine!

CLIFF: You're one person, not two!

PAM (at her packing again) It can't be all that cold over there! Don't they have spring in Europe?

CLIFF (in a strange wry way) Sure, I think so! Sometimes, anyway. Of course, they don't have the full four seasons like we do over here. It's done on a kind of lease-lend. (PAM packs busily) We give them a summer one year, an autumn next, and so on. France complained she only got one spring in four years, Western Germany was getting the whole lot, so it's going up before the State Department for discussion. They'll discuss it, sure they will, and don't you believe that the result won't be right and fair because it will, this is a democracy, and we believe in the small man!

PAM (quietly) Why don't you go to work?

CLIFF (looking at the paper) It says here, some guy, he's the president of the United States or something, he says there's going to be a war if somebody doesn't watch out, and two lines down he says there isn't going to be a war! What do you make of that?

PAM: It's funny (discomfited by any straight talk) You're like an old man...

CLIFF: Why?

PAM: The way you talk sideways all the time.

CLIFF: Sideways?

PAM: Yes, you seem to be talking about something else---about something you're hurt about, but you don't say what it is. You seem to be talking from a long way off, like an old man---do you know what I mean? An old man looks at things from a long way off, he talks quiet like you do. You ought to be shouting and screaming, and talking about your own life, where it hurts, but it doesn't come out like that, it's all quiet stuff about democracy and the president and all that. Do you see what I mean?

CLIFF: I think so!

PAM: You're weak. My father used to bang the table and shout, so ma says, then he'd forget about it. But you seem to be mumbling to yourself all the time. That quiet talk isn't natural.

CLIFF (intrigued by her analysis) Who did hurt me, then? You tell me, Pam! What's really on my mind?

PAM: I don't know who hurt you, honey!

CLIFF: Nor do I! That's why I talk in circles. I don't know who to fight! It isn't dad! He's a nice guy! I'll be worse than him if I have kids!

PAM: Your father's a man, he may be wrong but he doesn't sit being funny about life. You talk like in a prison all the time. Why don't you do something about it?

CLIFF: I can't see the prison bars, I don't know where they are, I can't see who the warders are! I don't know where to break out---which wall!

PAM: Then why don't you just sit still? Stay there?

CLIFF: I can't do that, either!

PAM (out of patience) Well, just go to work, it's late! You've got me all jammed up in the head, like you always used to!

CLIFF (on his way out, but stopping) Have Kurt and Lisa got a house?

PAM: Sure! Ma says it's by the river, you can pass by on a steamboat, it's got iron balconies and a lawn in front, down to the water, and weeping willow-trees hanging into the river!

CLIFF (studying her) Is that true?

PAM: It's what ma says!

CLIFF (Testing her) What's the river called?

PAM: The Elbe.

CLIFF: Good. What's the road they live on?

PAM: The Bismarckallee.

CLIFF (with a laugh) You're the funniest kid in all creation!

PAM: Why?

CLIFF: You're telling the truth! Because I'm No.2! I don't count any more! You only lie for Johnny Fergusson! Pam, listen! (He goes to her) Haven't you got a little lie for me? Just me? Don't you love me a little tiny bit?

PAM (discomfited also by his burlesque) Now, come on, honey, I've got to pack!

CLIFF: Your lies are like big fruity kisses!

PAM (laughing) You're a nut!

CLIFF (trying to embrace her) Come on, Pam, just one lie! Just one big little juicy lie! Haven't you got one, for old time's sake? Remember when you told me your mother was related to the Battenbergs and she had two flunkies and a maid just to curl her hair in the morning? That was real love---I bet she never even had a pet dog! Remember when you told the hotel-proprietor on Martha's Vineyard Island that we had two children and they were at school in Switzerland, and how you missed them, and, boy, what a handful they were! Remember how you told me you played Scarlatti on the piano and you can't play a note? That's love, Pam! (Kissing her in a burlesque way) And the way you went to the NBC television studio every day for a week for rehearsals that didn't happen in a play that didn't exist through an agent you'd never met? Oh, Pam! Come on, give me one more sweet little lie, one sweet spring-lie to make me happy with!

PAM: Hey---look at me! Are you serious?

CLIFF (trying to kiss her in earnest) Pam!

PAM: What's the matter?

CLIFF: For Christ's sake! I think about you all the time! (She tries to pull away) That's what's on my mind!

PAM: OK, cool off, honey... Cool off!

CLIFF: I guess I'd better go...

PAM: I didn't know it was that bad, Cliff.

CLIFF (hoarsely) It's bad all right.

PAM (screwing up her face with puzzlement) And you can see what sort of person I am? and it doesn't make any difference?

CLIFF: No!

PAM (thoughtfully) I guess that's my mistake---thinking it'd make a difference!

CLIFF (facing her suddenly) Is that baby mine?

PAM (at once) No!

CLIFF: You've only known Johnny a couple of months!

PAM: Three months!

CLIFF (with a tired smile) If that's a lie, Pam, it's just what I asked you for, isn't it? A sweet little lie! After all, a liar can't announce a lie, can she?

PAM (returning to her packing) Well, that one's the truth. For one thing, I'd be after you for maintenance, don't worry about that! You've got the money---Johnny hasn't!

CLIFF: Does Johnny even know?

PAM: About the baby? Sure!

CLIFF: That was a lie.

PAM: Well, I haven't told him yet... He's a kid. He needs a break---

CLIFF: You know what I ought to do? Throw up everything and come over to Germany! How about that? I'd find a job! Look at the way we talk together, Pam---we know each other,

isn't that the truth? Look what we could do in Europe---there's time over there for talk, we could take a boat along the river, you know what I mean, this weight'd lift off! It's like a wall---we can't get together properly---we don't count enough, as people---the love-part's all wrong---it comes out in bursts, but over there we could live in it, we wouldn't be ashamed, life's more easy-going over there, isn't that so, isn't that what Charlotte says---

- PAM: It sounds fine. But I don't love you any more, Cliff.
- CLIFF: Why not?
- PAM: I just don't! God switched off the current! It's when you started analysing me, I guess.
- CLIFF: Analysing you?
- PAM: You know what I mean---all this talk...
- CLIFF: What does Johnny do?
- PAM: He just sits! We just---have fun!
- CLIFF: Oh! (Silenced by this)
- PAM: Cliff... (He doesn't reply) Cliff!
- CLIFF: Yes? (He is hurt and she sees this)
- PAM: Don't be like that!
- CLIFF: Like what?
- PAM: Don't go dumb. You did it before, over Johnny. Cliff, don't sort of---give it all to me. I can't deal with it. Talk to me.
- CLIFF (abstractly) I will.
- PAM: I don't know myself! Perhaps I don't love Johnny! You see through me. That's what I can't stand!
- CLIFF: I see through to where you're good, Pam, that's all.
- PAM: That's what I can't stand! It makes me go all funny!
- CLIFF: Funny?
- PAM: Sort of disgusted!

CLIFF: I disgust you?

PAM: No. I just feel it. Partly you do disgust me---because you can love me! It doesn't feel good, someone looking right inside...

CLIFF (sadly) Yes, I understand.

PAM: What do you understand?

CLIFF: I get the idea now! (Moving away)

PAM: It's a mess!

CLIFF: OK, Pam. (Going to the door) I'll keep her laughing for a fortnight. She'll laugh so much her sides'll burst!

PAM: You will?

CLIFF: I'll pick you up about five---for the airport!

PAM: OK!

CLIFF: And don't cancel that seat again.

PAM (following him to the door) What do you understand, honey?

CLIFF (with a shrug) Just, what you said---I understand what you said, that's all!

PAM: You seem switched off all of a sudden...

CLIFF: Wouldn't that be better for me?

PAM: Is it true---are you switched off?

CLIFF (turning away) No.

PAM: Are you trying to be?

CLIFF: No. Why? Pam---why? (Suddenly looking at her) Why should you be interested?

PAM: It's---! No, maybe you'd better go!

CLIFF (wearily) Just an ebb and flow, like wrecks on a seashore!

PAM: Cliff---(suddenly kissing him again) don't go quiet again!

CLIFF (about to embrace her again) Pam!

PAM (keeping him off gently) Leave it for a week,  
honey. Give me a week!

CLIFF (brightly) Pam---I'll give you a month! Stay  
a month! Pam!

PAM: Honey!

They kiss hurriedly.

CLIFF: I'll give you all the time you want! Come  
back with---Europe all over your shoulders---  
like a queen! So long!

PAM: So long, Cliff!

He leaves.

She stands there humming  
to herself. Then she  
skips in the air.

PAM: Europe! Ya-hoo!

The sound she makes is  
wild and pathetic.  
There isn't real joy.  
And she seems to stand  
and listen to it---to its  
echo---in a puzzled way as  
the curtain falls.

111.

CHARLOTTE and CLIFF.  
CHARLOTTE is working at  
her accounts.

CHARLOTTE (bursting out) I'd like to kill Helga  
sometimes! Maybe I should do all the work  
myself! Talk about nuts---I'm surrounded  
with 'em! (Slamming papers down)

CLIFF (quietly, after watching her at work) You  
certainly hate Helga, don't you?

CHARLOTTE: I certainly do! I hate her black hair and  
I hate her smile and I hate the dirt in her  
fingernails. I hate every bit of her gristle  
and bone!

CLIFF: Why don't you let Pam say so, then?

CHARLOTTE: Because she ought to have more respect, that's  
why! She ought to know where her bread and  
butter comes from!

CLIFF: So she shouldn't say the truth. That seems  
crazy to me!

CHARLOTTE: A lot seems crazy when you're kids.

A pause.

CLIFF: When should we tell the truth, then?

CHARLOTTE: There's a time and a place. You know it and  
I know it!

CLIFF: Like when?

CHARLOTTE: Like when you call me over to your house for  
a meal, say you're a poor man, and I say, no,  
thanks, I'll just have a cup of coffee, I've  
just had a meal big enough to last me a month!  
That's a lie maybe, but you do it for him!

CLIFF (perplexed by this) Oh!

CHARLOTTE: Out of consideration. Did you ever think of that side of it?

CLIFF (still puzzled) Which side?

CHARLOTTE: Other people's side! It's a side you kids don't seem to care for!

CLIFF: What's that got to do with Pam saying you hate Helga? How does her bread and butter lose, I mean?

CHARLOTTE: To hell with it! You've got me all mixed up! (Returning to her accounts) If I could do this alone I'd do it! If I had a daughter who loved me just a tiny bit I could do it, too---she'd give me a hand. Not that one!

CLIFF: You'd never trust her. You know it!

CHARLOTTE: And maybe you're not far wrong, either! She did the accounts once and it took us a fortnight to straighten 'em out! So maybe you're right!

She works again.

CLIFF: I passed by the PX, did I tell you?

CHARLOTTE (still working) The PX?

CLIFF: Where Johnny Fergusson works!

CHARLOTTE: You did? What's he like?

CLIFF: Well, he's dumpy and small---she said he was tall, remember? And she said he was blond---well, he's got black hair. Jet black!

CHARLOTTE (laughing) The nut! Sometimes I think she just hates people, she has to turn them all round---!

CLIFF (enthusiastically) That's right! She hates the world---she has to give it different colours! If he was tall and blond, she'd have to say he was dumpy and dark and powerful! She's got to make it all a dream!

CHARLOTTE (gazing at him in silence) What do you have to think about her so much for? Cliff, you've got to change your compass bearings!

CLIFF: She says I seem old. Is that why she gave me up? (CHARLOTTE shrugs) I'd like to let off steam sometimes---I wish I could get up and shout and scream like you two! That's what I

mean by European. Dad taught me to keep tight shut and look where I'm going all the time. He uses his brain to pick up signals, it's like navigating ship. It seems wrong to me! We never seem to get lost, Charlotte...

CHARLOTTE (trying to sound business-like, as she works)  
Do you want to get lost? You're the same as Pam!

CLIFF: I'd like not to know where I was going, just for a couple of minutes!

CHARLOTTE: What about twenty years? That's how long I didn't know where I was going!

CLIFF: And now you do?

CHARLOTTE: That's right!

CLIFF: Since you came to the States?

CHARLOTTE: Dead right!

CLIFF: Like dad, he can see so straight ahead you wouldn't think there were circles anywhere. That's where Pam's dreams come from---because you see so straight ahead! Life isn't straight!

CHARLOTTE (laughing) You're nuts!

CLIFF: Like Pam said to me last week, she said, you don't talk straight, you don't seem to be looking at things straight on, you're just making noises under your breath, you're not putting up a real fight! Life's too underneath---none of it's allowed to come on top---so... it's in the shadows all the time. I'm fighting shadows... (A pause) Do you get me?

CHARLOTTE (quietly) You'd better be careful you don't float right away, Cliff. Keep to your feet.

CLIFF: That's why I like Pam. We're in the same boat! She's the only person I can really float away with, in the same boat! We can float away! Because we're both liars! (radiantly) I'm a liar in my work---I don't give a heck for it! Lies are instead of being alive! They're dreams. And you can't live unless you've got a dream... You can't have a real dream unless you've got a life, a lie...

CHARLOTTE (trying to go deeper in her work, as if to deliberately not understand him) Well, I shouldn't float away too much, you and Pam, unless you want to end in the hatch...

CLIFF (very quietly, gazing at her) I wouldn't mind that.

CHARLOTTE: I don't think you would, either! (Suddenly looking up, with attempted authority) You've got a hell of a good brain, Clifford Bright, and it's all tucked inside so as nobody else can see it, is that right?

CLIFF: Would you be proud of breeding germs?

CHARLOTTE: I might---! I might! If I loved my country enough!

CLIFF: Oh!

CHARLOTTE: I knew you'd groan! What's wrong with loving your country nowadays---is it so bad?

CLIFF: Not if you know what your country is! But I don't! I've never had a chance to find out, because it never stops talking! I'm immobile, Charlotte---that's why that word 'country' stings---it's what makes me immobile! It's sitting on top of me all the time---it stops me being natural! Natural like you are. Or like you used to be...

CHARLOTTE: When I was European, I suppose!

CLIFF: If you like!

CHARLOTTE: Well, one visit to Europe'd cure you, son, and that's the truth! They all get the same idea at first---wise old Europe, human old Europe, natural old Europe! Crap! And they find it's crap on the first visit! They realise we've got the answers to all the modern questions!

CLIFF: You think so?

CHARLOTTE: I certainly do! They've had two wars over here in fifty years, and we got them out of both! Yes, sir!

CLIFF: There's nothing unusual about wars.

CHARLOTTE: There is if it gets a habit!

CLIFF: What's my job, then? Isn't that war?

CHARLOTTE: Sure! We're still fighting out the problem!

CLIFF: Oh, so war's a problem! Then Europe started on the problem before we did!

CHARLOTTE: But we're going to solve it! Because the people are in charge over there!

CLIFF (bitterly) Oh! Democracy!

CHARLOTTE: You're not a democrat?

CLIFF: No!

CHARLOTTE: What are you, then, a Nazi or something?

CLIFF: No, all I say is, government by most people isn't the best necessarily! It might be the worst!

CHARLOTTE: What's the best, then?

CLIFF: Government by the best people! And they're always a minority!

CHARLOTTE: Like in ancient Greece, I know! Well, you've got a long way to go!

CLIFF: Meanwhile I've got my germs. (They pause breathlessly, as if much unspoken bitterness had passed between them) Know what happened today?

CHARLOTTE: No? (without looking at him)

CLIFF (with bitter irony) The boss came up to me and said, Listen, Cliff, son---he always calls me Cliff-son---listen, Cliff, son, he said, I want you to concentrate on something lethal like that proxydoxydiddledidoola that finished the rabbits off, know what I mean? Something we can drop on the Russians and it'll spread by itself, over, say, a couple or three years. Sure, I said, that's as easy done as said, how many'd you like to exterminate, and he said, well, Cliff, son, he said you know the way I think, I always think big, I'm thinking in millions, Cliff, son. Then there's the after-germ, he said. The after-germ? I said. He said, yes, sure, you need something to clear up with, something to stop it spreading, we don't want it spreading across the Atlantic, he said, no, sir, ha, ha, he laughs like that, ha, ha, maybe you'd better find somethun that can't swim, ha, ha, can't swim the Atlantic, that'll cook 'em all, ha, ha! (He pauses, looking at CHARLOTTE) You're not laughing, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE: (half-offended) No.

CLIFF: That's a pity. I promised Pam to make you laugh.

CHARLOTTE: It's a kind of bitter humour, Cliff. I'd be laughing at your life if I did! Listen, if you don't like your work, why don't you get out?

CLIFF: Because I---!

The phone rings.

CHARLOTTE (answering) Hullo? Well, hullo, what a surprise! (She makes a face at CLIFF) How are you, Helga? Sure! I'm working on them right now! They're fine, just fine... Nothing I can see---why, got a bad conscience?--- ha, ha, ha! You what? When?... You're kidding! (With sudden astonishment to CLIFF) She's just seen Pam. (Again to phone) Where? Oh, that nut... Are you sure, Helga? It couldn't have been a girl just like her? Did you see where she was going? Oh, well, that's something! (To CLIFF) On her way home. (Again to phone) Well, thanks, Helga, thanks a lot, it looks like trouble's coming my way! Good-bye! (Puts down phone) She brings you news like a rat in her mouth!

CLIFF: You said Pam?

CHARLOTTE: That's it! At the airport, half an hour ago. (Jumping up) Well, here it comes, Charlotte, get your fall-out suit on!

CLIFF: I'm trembling all over!

CHARLOTTE: You're trembling! (Rushing to the kitchen, with a peculiar suppressed joy) I'm running a temperature!

CLIFF (approaching CHARLOTTE) Do you think she came back early because of me? (Youthfully) How does she know that baby isn't mine? Suppose she knows it is? and she's coming back to have it? (Trying to dance CHARLOTTE round the table) She's coming, Charlotte, she's coming!

CHARLOTTE (laughing) Now let go, will you? Now stop it! Oh, boy, do I wish I lived alone!

CLIFF: You're happy, Charlotte! I can see it in your eyes! You're---!

The phone rings again.

CHARLOTTE (answering) Hullo? Hullo? Hell!  
 (She finds it must be the other phone and puts  
the first one down, speaking into the second)  
 Hullo? Hullo? (First phone rings again)  
 Now what the---? Hullo? Hullo? (Quietly)  
 Ok, OK, I think I know who that is...

CLIFF (with real happiness) It's Pam...

CHARLOTTE (picking up both receivers and bellowing into  
them) OK, you can talk! I've got 'em both  
 in my hand! Didn't I know it! (Laughing)  
 Pam, Pam---! (To CLIFF) It's Pam all right!  
 She's home! Pam, Susse, Susse---und wie geht  
 es meinem Kindchen?... (Suddenly stopping)  
 Pam? Are you OK? Pam? Pam? What's that?  
 Well, talk louder, will you? Where are you?  
 (To CLIFF) She just whispers! (To phone  
again) Where? Well, come on up! What are  
 you doing down there? Come on up! Pam, are  
 you coming? Well, hurry! (She puts the  
phone down again, puzzled) She sounds---dead.  
 Maybe it's just the journey...

CLIFF: Well, keep your fingers crossed!

CHARLOTTE (after a pause, abstracted) What?

CLIFF: Keep your fingers crossed!

CHARLOTTE: Who for?

CLIFF: Me!

CHARLOTTE: Oh! (Busying herself in the kitchen again)  
 If I kept my fingers crossed for all Pam's  
 boyfriends I'd have permanent knots in my hands!

CLIFF: Do you think the baby's mine? Come on, you've  
 got instincts, Charlotte---is it mine?

CHARLOTTE (turning on him with sudden fury) I've told  
 you, Cliff, and I'm telling you again, that  
 baby shouldn't be born!

CLIFF (stung with equal suddenness) Isn't that murder?

CHARLOTTE: To hell with murder! It's murder, murder,  
 murder on your lips all the time! It'll  
 murder her if she has it, I can tell you that!  
 And she's not going to have it! She's under-  
 nourished, she won't eat, she never sleeps---  
 how do you think a kid like that can take a  
baby? She's only a baby herself!

CLIFF: She seemed all right to me...

CHARLOTTE: To you she did, but not to Dr. Steiner!  
 You can talk about murder, Clifford Bright, but  
 you're not murdering my child! And if she's  
 still talking about having that baby, I'll go  
 and see a psychologist and get a certificate to  
 say she can't have it---Dr. Steiner said you  
 could do that--- I'll do it all myself, don't  
 you worry about that, she's not having that  
 baby because of a bunch of kids and that's flat!

CLIFF: Suppose it's my baby?

CHARLOTTE: Suppose it is? She's under age and she's  
 in my hands!

CLIFF: You really play low when you're cornered,  
 don't you?

CHARLOTTE: I fight, that's what---for sanity!

CLIFF: Sanity! Is that what you call it?

CHARLOTTE: Yes, and I heard her on that phone just now,  
 she's dead beat, I tell you, she's finished,  
 because that baby's taking it out of her!

CLIFF (trembling) Perhaps I wouldn't like Germany so  
 much...

CHARLOTTE: And you can cut 'out that Germany-theme!  
 You're a kid, all Americans are kids, they're  
 big spoilt kids who need a couple of wars to  
 bring 'em level with the rest of mankind!  
 Just keep off that Germany-theme!

CLIFF: You're frightened...

CHARLOTTE (hysterically) Leave me alone, for Christ's  
 sake leave me along! (In tears) Jesus, if  
 that girl isn't enough! I've got strangers  
 coming in and---telling me---! Just leave me  
 alone!

CLIFF: Charlotte!

CHARLOTTE: Just because I watched over her eighteen  
 years---I kept her like a diamond ring---I got  
 her out of Germany in a suitcase---I drilled  
 holes in it for air!

CLIFF: But---Charlotte, you don't think I'm a stranger,  
 do you?

CHARLOTTE: I've got one person in the world and that's Pam!

CLIFF: What does one do to be your friend, then?

CHARLOTTE: Be nice!

CLIFF: And agree all the time?

CHARLOTTE (flaring up again) I told you, didn't I---  
this is my life, Pam's my girl, and this is  
my home! Do you dispute any of that?

CLIFF: No!

CHARLOTTE: Well, then! (Suddenly) You want to hear  
something honest?

CLIFF: What?

CHARLOTTE: You're always talking about how you've got  
to be honest---you're always twining these  
little moral problems round your fingers---  
I'm glad you've got time for that, you're  
luckier than me!

CLIFF: Well?

CHARLOTTE: Well! Mannheim was a Nazi.

CLIFF: Who?

CHARLOTTE: 'Who'? 'Who'. (Imitating him) You should  
set up as a preacher! 'Who'? Pam's father,  
that's who! Herr Mannheim! He was a Nazi  
he was black right through to his boots!  
What do you think of that? He was in the party,  
he had a uniform, he went to all the meetings---  
and I loved him!

CLIFF: Oh!

CHARLOTTE: 'Oh'! How does that square out in your moral  
needlework? Have you got me fixed up yet?  
Will you talk to me any more or not? Just  
think it over! Sleep on it! And tell me in  
the morning how I'm fixed up morally, where I  
come in the moral needlework, and I'll say, oh,  
thanks, Cliff, I'm glad to know how I am in front  
of the judgement seat, I'm glad you found out  
what the Almighty thinks, because you being  
American and inheriting the earth, sort of thing,  
of course you've got the whole moral needlework-  
system of the universe worked out! And, why, if  
you decide you can't talk to me any more, I'll  
still feel cleansed, because a little American  
boy from Long Island was thinking about me, and  
that sure was a compliment for a soap-opera  
European!

CLIFF: I haven't said anything yet, Charlotte...

CHARLOTTE (in tears again) And I loved him so much---!  
I did! He didn't even stop me getting arrested!  
He didn't help me get across the frontier!

CLIFF: I'm sorry...

CHARLOTTE: 'Sorry! be damned! Who are you to be sorry for me? Just listen to this---you've got to have a life to use big words, it takes more than a needlework brain to handle pain and dirt---and shame...

CLIFF: If I could share the pain, Charlotte, I---I---!

The door-bell rings.

CHARLOTTE (going to the door wiping her eyes) /ell,  
here it comes... (Opening the door)

PAM comes in, pale and haggard. It seems she can hardly even walk. CHARLOTTE gazes at her in stunned silence.

CHARLOTTE: Liebling... (Following her) What's wrong, Pam? Tell me what's wrong?

CLIFF: Pam!

PAM: Hi!

CLIFF: Anything wrong, Pam?

PAM (sinking into a chair) I'm just---dead-beat, that's all!

CHARLOTTE (hardly able to talk) I've never seen you look so bad...

PAM: I told you, I'm just tired!

CHARLOTTE (suddenly, panic-stricken) Pam, Pam, is it kicking?

PAM: No! No! I'm OK.

CHARLOTTE: You certainly are not, kid---!

PAM: Got any coffee?

CHARLOTTE: Sure, sure! (Hurrying to kitchen)

PAM: I didn't sleep too much last night, either.

CLIFF: Want a cushion?

PAM: Thanks.

He puts one behind her head.

CHARLOTTE: Did you catch something in Germany?

PAM: No. I tell you, I'm OK!

CHARLOTTE: Well, I wish you looked it! Black or milky?

PAM: Black!

CHARLOTTE: Did it take you all that time to get upstairs?

PAM: I stopped.

CHARLOTTE: What?

PAM: I stopped down below a time...!

CHARLOTTE (peering at her) Listen, Pamela Mannheim, do you want me to call a doctor?

PAM: No. Please ma. I'm OK!

CHARLOTTE: Darling! (Embracing her) Haven't you got a kiss for your ma?

PAM: Sure! I'll be OK in a second! It was just the journey---

CHARLOTTE: Have you been sick in the mornings?

PAM: No, I've been fine! I tell you, it's just the journey!

CHARLOTTE (getting the coffee) Well, I just hope that's the truth, that's all! Now, drink this!

PAM (as CHARLOTTE puts the coffee down) Is this fresh?

CHARLOTTE: It's not fresh but it's hot! Drink it, you're chilled right through, I can see that! Then I'll get you a nice cup of fresh coffee!

PAM: OK...

CLIFF: What did you come home a week early for, Pam?

PAM: I got rid of the baby.

They stare at her for a long time in silence.

CHARLOTTE: You what?

PAM: I got rid of the baby.

CHARLOTTE: Where, for Christ's sake?

PAM: In Germany.

CHARLOTTE: In Germany? Pam! (Shaking her) Pam, look at me, for God's sake!

PAM (passively) I did.

CHARLOTTE: Why? Why?

PAM: I just---did!

CHARLOTTE: Why?

PAM: I don't know!

CHARLOTTE: I've been through a lot, but you can scare me, Pam... You scare me!

PAM: I thought you'd be---! (Peering at her for a moment with a quick, vanishing interest)

CHARLOTTE: What?

PAM: I don't know. I thought you'd be glad!

CHARLOTTE: Glad? Of nearly killing yourself? Pam!

PAM: I don't know---I didn't think anything...

CHARLOTTE: How was it done, baby? Who looked after you?

PAM: Oh, Kurt arranged it!

CHARLOTTE: Kurt?

PAM: He saw my mind was made up.

CHARLOTTE: But what made you do it, Pam? Over there?

PAM: I was alone...

CHARLOTTE: You talked to Kurt and Lisa? Let's get that straight first.

PAM: Yes.

CHARLOTTE: About the baby?

PAM: Yes.

CHARLOTTE: What did they say?

PAM: They said do what you like. If you want it, have it. If you don't, don't. Well, I didn't. I thought I didn't. So I told Kurt. He said had I made up my mind? I said yes.

CHARLOTTE: And he got you a doctor?

PAM: Yes.

CHARLOTTE: And what happened then?

PAM: He did it. Two days ago. I kept on losing blood.

CHARLOTTE: Oh, Pam!

PAM: But it was OK. They wanted me to stay. But I couldn't.

CHARLOTTE: How do I know he hasn't wrecked your inside, Pam? some crazy German doctor?

PAM: He was American.

CHARLOTTE: American?

PAM: Kurt found him.

CHARLOTTE (with relief) Oh!

PAM: You're glad underneath. When I said 'American.' I could see it. In your eyes.

CHARLOTTE: Don't talk like that, Pamela!

CLIFF: Didn't you like it over there, Pam---before?

PAM: I felt lonely. It was all---empty there. I looked out of the window. There was just willow trees. And the river... It all felt funny. The language sounded funny. The way they did things!

CLIFF: What do you mean?

PAM (gloomily) It was so funny. I wanted to laugh, too, sometimes. At the way the lift worked. I got the giggles. I was all alone. It all seemed---funny. And the smells. The sausages. And the black bread. The coffee---you don't get American coffee... Not the way I like it. (Passively, in tears) Am I like a queen, Cliff?

CHARLOTTE: What does that mean?

CLIFF: No, Pam... What did you do it for?

PAM: I don't know. It didn't seem real. I didn't feel I was---anywhere!

CHARLOTTE: Liebling... You're home now!

PAM (still to CLIFF) Did you think about me?

CLIFF: I dreamed about you. Well, I daydreamed. I thought of your hair. And then the Black Forest. And people talking German. And those little fairy castles along the Rhine. And our children would speak both languages.

CHARLOTTE: 'Our children?'

PAM (to her mother) 'What's wrong with that?

CHARLOTTE (angrily) Oh, I just thought somebody else was involved, by the name of Fergusson!

PAM: He can still say it!

CHARLOTTE: Oh, sure, he can say it!

CLIFF (awkwardly, to change topic) Shall I get your bags?

PAM: You want to? They're with the janitor.

CHARLOTTE (as CLIFF goes to the door) I don't know what you wanted to do it for!

PAM: For you, maybe...

CHARLOTTE (flaring up) For me? So as you could put it on my conscience for the rest of your life! You were scared, is that it---? Scared!

PAM: No, I---I---!

CHARLOTTE: 'My mother made me kill my child!'---and you can sit back and remind about it every time you look across the table!

PAM: OK, OK...

CHARLOTTE (in tears) You certainly give me plenty to think about!

PAM (to CLIFF) Found another girlfriend yet, Cliff?

CLIFF (turning at the door) What's that?

PAM: You found a girlfriend yet?

CLIFF: Why, sure---sure!

PAM: Is that true, ma?

CHARLOTTE: I don't know! (Wiping her eyes) He's been around here every night, that's all I know! (To herself) With crazy talk... They're all crazy!

PAM: Who is she?

CLIFF: She's dead.

PAM: What?

CHARLOTTE: Listen to it!

PAM: Dead?

CLIFF: Yes. She committed suicide.

PAM: Oh...

He leaves.

CHARLOTTE: That's the kind of crazy talk I've been getting for a week! Now are you losing blood?

PAM: No!

CHARLOTTE: Are you?

PAM: No! It's OK, I tell you. The doctor examined me and he said it's OK.

CHARLOTTE: The American doctor?

PAM: Yes, the American doctor.

CHARLOTTE: And he said to take it easy?

PAM: For a bit. But I'm OK.

CHARLOTTE: You don't look it! You look fit to die!

PAM: I have died... Just like Cliff said!

CHARLOTTE: Now you can just drop that talk, do you hear me?

PAM: It was his baby, you see...

CHARLOTTE: What?

PAM: It was Cliff's baby.

CHARLOTTE: Pam... You're really mad, I'm afraid for you, kid! You don't know that! You don't do you?

PAM: Sure! I never let Johnny Fergusson get too close! So I know. There's nobody else.

CHARLOTTE: But what did you tell him---?

PAM: I don't know! I don't understand these things! But that's why I did it! I wouldn't have done to Johnny's baby---! It's because I'm close to Cliff--- I couldn't stand it, you see! I don't know these things, mum... I just did it. And I knew he was waiting...

CHARLOTTE: Don't you tell him a word! Do you hear?

PAM: I wonder if he knows? You know, that's the last time he comes to this place. I can see it. He's finished. I'm right alone now...

CHARLOTTE: You're home and you can just quit that talk!

PAM: There's a couple of letters from Lisa.  
(Looking in her handbag)

CHARLOTTE: I am afraid for you, Pam...

PAM (handing them to her) She'll tell you how I am.

CHARLOTTE (opening one of them, but still looking at PAM)  
You know what? I wish you was a bigger liar than you are---even bigger! so I could read now, in this letter that you didn't do it--- you just felt homesick, and she's sending you home...

PAM: I don't even wish I hadn't done it...

CHARLOTTE (reading) Well... (Looking up after reading a few lines) You always tell the truth about the terrible things... They're always true!

PAM: Well, they are! They're most of what happens!

CHARLOTTE: Only you do 'em!

PAM: Sure!

CHARLOTTE: But why?

PAM: I don't know! Now leave me alone, will you?

After an impatient glance  
at her CHARLOTTE reads on.

CHARLOTTE: She says something about an engagement party...

PAM (beginning to rise) I think I'll go to bed.

CHARLOTTE (like a shot) Don't you move! What's this she says? What's this engagement party?

PAM: You can read, can't you?

CHARLOTTE: And she got a cake! Icing on top and two tiers! About twenty guests. Some of our old friends. The American doc. Whose engagement party?

PAM: Mine.

CHARLOTTE: Y----? (Staring at her) What are you talking about?

PAM (uncomfortably) Well---it was a party Kurt and Lisa rigged up...

CHARLOTTE: I know that! They 'rigged it up' all right, it sounds expensive to me! But engaged to who? Pam---who? Pam---(suddenly scared by a thought) not---not the---American doctor?

PAM (nearly smiling) No!

CHARLOTTE: Well, with you you've got to think of everything.

PAM: I told them I was engaged, that's all!

CHARLOTTE: Who to?

PAM: Cliff.

CHARLOTTE: Cliff?

PAM: Well---I started thinking---on the way across---

CHARLOTTE: But Cliff---and you've just---! You know, I think you need some kind of mental doctor---! Pam, you're not telling me a bunch of lies--- just new ones---to break me in again---are you? Honey! Pam, you're joking!

PAM: No. I mean it! Cliff!

CHARLOTTE: But that was finished six months ago!

PAM: I know.

CHARLOTTE: What made you say Cliff, then?

PAM: It was a sort of---accident!

CHARLOTTE: Oh!

PAM: We were sitting round---

CHARLOTTE: Who?

PAM: Kurt and Lisa, and the American doc, and some other people---they're all connected with Quick Translations Inc---they all know you...

CHARLOTTE (impatiently) OK, OK! And what happened?

PAM: Well, this American doc. said he knew some of the guys in S.W.L.

CHARLOTTE: What's that?

PAM: That's where Cliff works.

CHARLOTTE: And what about that?

PAM: Well, it was over drinks, you see, and I said I had a good friend worked in S.W.L. too, and this doc. said---you know, with a funny kind of little smile---'The way you talk about him, it sounds like your fiancé!' And everybody else smiled. And---I said, 'Well, yes, it is!'

CHARLOTTE: Oh!

PAM: And Lisa said, 'We haven't heard anything about this---I can see you and me are going to have a little private chat afterwards!', with a little twinkle in her eye! And everybody smiled again. And they made me feel important, you see. It seemed important being engaged to Cliff. More so than with Johnny Fergusson. It's funny---somebody says something and wham, you find out about yourself!

CHARLOTTE: You certainly do!

PAM: And when I had the private chat with Lisa, I couldn't go back on it, could I?---it all seemed settled... And she made me feel excited with the idea, just asking me questions. She said she wanted us to marry in Germany. We'd do it in style. You'd come over, too.

CHARLOTTE: Well! You certainly don't stand still, do you, Pamela Mennheim! So you had an engagement party!

PAM: Yes.

CHARLOTTE: And now you've made the mess how are you going to get out of it?

PAM: Why should I try?

CHARLOTTE: What do you mean by that?

PAM: I don't mind being engaged to Cliff!

CHARLOTTE: You don't mind the idea of marrying him?

PAM: No!

CHARLOTTE: Not after all you said about how he gets your mind all twisted up and you can't sleep afterwards? You said that every day till my ears were sick of it! How are you going to live with that for fifty years---twining little moral problems round his fingers all day?

PAM: He's got standards, that's all! They're something for me to live up to!

CHARLOTTE: Who said that? You didn't!

PAM (with an uncomfortable glance at her) What do you mean?

CHARLOTTE: It sounds like Kurt to me! (Before PAM can speak) All right, don't say 'no'---your face told me 'yes'! Well, well!

PAM: Anyway, I told Cliff I'd think it over. The day I took the plane. I must have known something like that was going to happen.

CHARLOTTE: So he said.

PAM (eagerly) What did he say?

CHARLOTTE: Oh, he just talked---about you! That's the only reason he came around!

PAM: He could make me good if we married! That's what I started to think!

CHARLOTTE (tidying the table to occupy herself) You're crazy!

PAM: But then---! It happened afterwards---I didn't realise till afterwards...

CHARLOTTE: What?

PAM: I didn't know I loved him till after I'd killed his baby!

CHARLOTTE: There's no need for that 'killing' talk! Leave that to him! You didn't kill anything! The doctor would have done it if you hadn't done!

PAM: That's why I say you're glad...

CHARLOTTE: Glad! (But she knows she is)

PAM: I want to marry him, ma! I know it now!  
What's wrong with it if I know and I'm sure?

CHARLOTTE: Nothing! Nothing at all, I guess! But  
don't come crying to me afterwards, saying  
he twists your mind up in knots, that's all!

PAM: I won't. You needn't worry about that.

CHARLOTTE: You don't even know what you're going to feel  
in half-an-hour, let alone half-a-year! And  
if you're engaged to Cliff, you've certainly  
got a funny way of showing it---you didn't  
even look at him when you came through that  
door! As for telling him!

PAM (unable to explain this) I---!

CHARLOTTE: All you do is talk about queens---crazy talk!  
Well, that's in his style all right!

PAM: I couldn't---face him... I meant to give him  
a kiss. I love him---

CHARLOTTE: Oh, don't pull that, Pam!

PAM: I do! I couldn't look in his eyes. Life  
can change like that---a week away and wham...

CHARLOTTE: Yours can change all right! Shall I tell you  
something? You don't know who you love!  
That's why it can change just like that---just  
because an American doc. smiled at you and says  
the first thing that comes into his head! Is  
that love?

PAM: I told you, I realised---I---!

CHARLOTTE: Shall I tell you something else? Do you re-  
member that day you were sitting right there  
talking to Cliff about Johnny Fergusson? And  
I was in the kitchen? Do you remember what  
you said about him?

PAM: No.

CHARLOTTE: Well, I do! And that was why I made you think  
I wasn't listening. Shall I tell you why?

PAM (with a flickering interest) Yes?

CHARLOTTE: Because I couldn't believe my ears! You know  
who you were describing? Because it wasn't  
Johnny Fergusson! He's not tall and blond.  
Shall I tell you who was. Your father!

PAM (watching her) What about that?

CHARLOTTE: You described your father! You never saw your father, you never heard me talk about him, I've never talked to a living soul about that man, all you've got is a faded old photograph, but you described that man, you described his character, just as he was! You described him so well I had to hang on to the sink, I thought, 'She must know him! He must still be around!'

PAM: What?

CHARLOTTE: Sure! You described him exactly as he was! 'He looks a gentleman in his uniform,' you said. That wasn't Johnny Fergusson, he's dumpy and dark and small! And you said you could handle him like a baby---that's what I used to feel about your father! 'He's the terror of his men'---isn't that what you said? It frightened me, Pam, listening to you! And you said he wasn't nice with people, he wasn't friendly, he let them do all the friendly talk! And that's what fascinated you, you said... Now how could you have meant that about Johnny Fergusson?

PAM: You're crazy... I was just dreaming, I guess...

CHARLOTTE: And then you said---just what he told me once--- his men used to tremble---!

PAM: No!

CHARLOTTE: When they came in his room---he could see their hands trembling!

PAM: No!

CHARLOTTE: How how did you know it, Pam? How did you know they still loved him, they loved him for not being nice, for shouting at them and telling them just what to do every minute of the day! How did you know it?

PAM: I didn't know anything... It's too crazy! I must have dreamed it!

CHARLOTTE: How could you dream the truth?

PAM: I was just---saying what came in my head... Like I do sometimes...

CHARLOTTE: What I mean is, you don't know who you love, I didn't know who I loved, I got fascinated once, the same dream got hold of me...

PAM: What do you mean?

CHARLOTTE: I say---you don't know who you love! I didn't. I thought I was in love with somebody else. I thought I ought to be in love with him. Then this man came along, he was tall and blond...

PAM (with a kind of defeated firmness) I love Cliff OK.

CHARLOTTE: You think you do!

PAM: I love him, and if he wants to marry me I'll say OK!

CHARLOTTE: Well, don't say I haven't told you!

PAM: What have you told me, exactly? We're the same? I'm going to have your life?

CHARLOTTE: I'm saying I heard you talk that day, just be careful you marry the right guy---!

PAM: Who should I marry?

CHARLOTTE: I'm not saying you should marry anybody! But just be sure---! That's all!

PAM (pondering) That's a funny thing to happen...

CHARLOTTE: Well, we've got the same blood in our veins!

PAM: He sounds like a Nazi!

CHARLOTTE: Now quit that talk! (Going to the bedroom to arrange PAM's bed) And you can come to bed---right now!

PAM (levering herself weakly from the chair) I'm coming.

CHARLOTTE: Can you even walk? (Rushing across to help her) Liebling, was hast Du getan? Aber warum, mein Schatz, warum? (Helping her towards the bedroom) I'll get the doctor right away!

PAM (suddenly hysterical) It's OK, I tell you---if you get the doctor I'll scream! I really will, I'll---!

CHARLOTTE (frightened at once) OK, OK, take it easy!

PAM: Just let me get back---slow...

CHARLOTTE: OK!

PAM (with a sigh, lowering herself on to the bed) Well, I certainly needed that! My own bed!

CHARLOTTE: Of course you did---you should never have gone!  
Like I told you before!

PAM: Do you think Cliff'll marry me?

CHARLOTTE (impatiently, returning to the kitchen) I  
don't think---that's the trouble with you,  
thinking---it's the trouble with the other  
one, too! And I'll tell you something---  
he started you on all this---all this  
European stuff---Germany! He put you on  
that plane more or less---I know!

PAM: Remember that photograph?

CHARLOTTE: What photograph?

PAM: In Nazi uniform?

CHARLOTTE: I told you, didn't I---?

PAM: Who cares if he was a Nazi? I don't!  
That's history!

CHARLOTTE: It's not history to me, that's all! Don't  
forget what they did to about six million  
people---that'll never be history!

PAM: No, I mean the uniform's history. It doesn't  
change the blood in his veins. I've got his  
blood in my veins just the same.

CHARLOTTE: Well, that's true!

A pause.

PAM(quietly) He was a Nazi, wasn't he?

CHARLOTTE: I can't tell you what he was, Pam... (busying  
herself in the kitchen)

PAM: Why not?

CHARLOTTE: Because I don't know---I---!

PAM (again calmly) You knew enough to tell Cliff. I  
heard you shouting OK. I stood on the stairs  
waiting for you to finish. I reckon the  
whole of London heard that!

CHARLOTTE (hardly able to speak) Pam. You didn't!

PAM: It's OK. He was a Nazi. You don't have to lie  
any more. Why don't you come on out and show  
me your face? (CHARLOTTE remains in the kitchen)  
Come on out!

CHARLOTTE (walking slowly round to the bedroom) Pam,  
you shouldn't...

PAM (facing her with sudden anger) 'You shouldn't,'  
'you shouldn't'---it's always 'you shouldn't!'  
You tell me what to do! You tell me about  
my boyfriends and how you can't count 'em---  
how they talk crazy---you can't answer the  
phone---and I've got to change! You tell me!  
(with real threatening violence, crouched on  
her bed in a strange, wild way) What did you  
do---what was it, a one-night stand? You tell  
me when to kill my own baby! You call me  
names! Remember that name you called me some  
time back?

CHARLOTTE: (aghast) Pam...

PAM: Remember that word you used? Just you tell  
me---what was it, just a dirty, rotten,  
snatching thing---just a one-night stand---  
you ought to be ashamed---and then you went  
away and had me---and I came out of that---  
a dirty, snatched, one-night stand---!

CHARLOTTE: Pam!

PAM: And all that build-up---telling me your  
'husband' this and your 'husband' that---  
and where he was---and where he died may-  
be---just a dirty---just nothing---just a  
one-night stand! Don't you call me names  
again---(at the top of her voice) do you hear  
it? do you hear it?

CHARLOTTE (completely sunken) Pam... You're right, Pam...  
Oh, Pam...

PAM: Ma? (Astonished to see her mother like this)

CHARLOTTE: Oh, Pam, the pain... You don't know the  
pain... All these years... Pam!

PAM (panic-stricken) Ma! Ma, please! Stop that!  
Oh, ma! Don't be like that! (Flinging  
herself on her) I didn't mean it! Ma,  
don't be like that! Be---strong!

CHARLOTTE: Pam...

PAM: Ma! Ma! Look at me! I can't stand it---  
if you---go like that... It knocks the bottom  
right out of my life! Ma!

CHARLOTTE: OK, OK...

PAM: Don't be ashamed! Never be ashamed again, do you hear? I can't stand that! You've got--to be---strong... (Sinking on the bed again) Don't forget, I just couldn't take that---if you---! It knocks everything--- to pieces...

CHARLOTTE (weakly) I'll get you something to eat. (Sniffing) We're screwed up---both of us! (Leaving the bedroom) You want fresh coffee with your hamburger?

PAM (faintly) Just give me the coffee.

CHARLOTTE: You've got to eat!

PAM: Well---burn the hamburger---like I like it.

CHARLOTTE (still weakly) 'Burn' it! You should eat (sniffing) charcoal.

PAM: I didn't mean any of that, ma!

CHARLOTTE: It's OK. We both said something we shouldn't---so we're quits!

PAM: The words just ran out of my mouth...

CHARLOTTE: Well, that's enough. It's finished now!

A pause.

PAM: Ma.

CHARLOTTE: Yes?

PAM: What do they have that lift for?

CHARLOTTE: Kurt and Lisa? (Attempting to laugh) Isn't it crazy? A house that size with a lift!

PAM: I could have fried eggs on the radiator in my bedroom---it was hot enough to burst!

CHARLOTTE: Well, these people got so cold in the war---they need frying up again---to get human!

PAM: I found 'em---OK...

CHARLOTTE: You did?

PAM: Why not?

CHARLOTTE: Oh, well! I guess you don't see it quite the way I do!

PAM: They're like us---only---!

CHARLOTTE: Only what?

PAM: They don't see outside---they---just kind of know about themselves---not what other people feel like.

CHARLOTTE: Dead right!

PAM: Like you... All you know is what you want, and what you're going to have---!

CHARLOTTE: Thanks!

PAM: And you'll only drop it if somebody knocks it out of your hand... Like a baby.

CHARLOTTE (changing the subject) So you'll marry Cliff?

PAM: That's right!

CHARLOTTE (coming into the bedroom again) Listen, Pam--- you just get back to normal first---stop talking strange! Cut out all the big thoughts and just wait and see. You're not up in the clouds any more, sitting in a plane! You're home---right here! And take your shoes off! How many times have I told you not to put your feet up like that! You certainly beat 'em all! And you're going to marry! Well, we'll see!

She removes PAM's shoes  
with a sweep.

PAM: Now take it easy, will you? You nearly ripped my feet off!

CHARLOTTE: And I'm telling you something else, too! In just about fourteen months from now you and me are going to take a real trip to Germany--- and that'll be your first trip! There won't be any thinking---you won't be coming back here after a week this time---you're going to see everything there is to see from Paris to Bad Gastein---that's a little place your grandfather used to go down to in Austria---you're going to have somebody with you who speaks the language and knows all the tricks, you're going to learn something, not sit and watch the willow-trees outside your window and get yourself in a big mess because you can't keep your mouth shut at the right time! Oh, I know you, Pamela Mannheim!

PAM (happy again) You do?

CHARLOTTE: And you're just taking it easy for a few days! On Friday we're going to Helga for drinks---

PAM (completely the daughter again) Oh, Heck!

CHARLOTTE: Never mind about 'heck,' she keeps you in fancy black underwear---(before PAM can speak) oh, I know, you don't have to worry about fooling me---you took all that black silk stuff across with you, didn't you?

PAM (with her cackle) Ma!

CHARLOTTE: Do you know you haven't given me a real kiss since you came back?

PAM (kissing her) I just hate you, that's why. You know that, don't you, honey? Mumsy? I just hate you! You know what?---Kurt and Lisa sent you lots of presents! About a suitcase full!

CHARLOTTE: They did? Well, I tell you what---we'll eat---have a cup of coffee---then we'll unwrap! How about that?

PAM: OK! But maybe I won't let you have nothing---(playfully) maybe you don't deserve anything at all!

CHARLOTTE: Now quit it! (Tickling her)

PAM: Ma!

A playful struggle.

CHARLOTTE: Even when you look half-dead---(kissing her) mein Schatz---!

The front door opens.  
CLIFF has let himself in with a key. He stands there listening, with a frowning look of disillusion and loneliness.

CHARLOTTE (completely absorbed in adoring PAM) You still look cute---with your (tickling her again) little yellow curls---and your little pale peeping eyes---like when I used to lift you up out of kuschi and say, 'Kuschi all over now, Kindlein!'

CLIFF lowers the bags heavily.

CHARLOTTE (starting up) Is that you, Cliff? Oh!  
(Seeing the bags) You bought the bags up?

CLIFF: I thought I'd say good-night. Are you OK now, Pam?

PAM: Sure, honey!

CLIFF: Well... Oh! (He hands CHARLOTTE the key in his hand) I thought you'd need the key.

CHARLOTTE: Oh, thanks!

CLIFF: Good-night, Pam!

PAM: Good-night, No.1!

CHARLOTTE: Thanks a lot, Cliff! See you soon!

CLIFF: Sure! Good-night!

He leaves, completely  
crushed.  
Silence.

PAM: Ma!

CHARLOTTE (studying the key in her hand) Yes?

PAM: What was that he gave you?

CHARLOTTE: Oh, nothing!

PAM: What was it?

CHARLOTTE: It's a key! That's all! I gave him a key two nights ago---he already had yours---he left it at home---he's just given me one back!

CHARLOTTE remains where  
she is, out of view to PAM.

PAM (staring before her) That's what he said---'She's dead!' She's dead... It's right. He's never coming back!

CHARLOTTE (sinking into a chair) Now quit that talk! Do you hear? Quit that talk---and---get---your pyjamas---on---. It's late...

PAM continues to stare  
before her, as does  
CHARLOTTE;  
There is an awful silence  
which they can't fill.

C U R T A I N .