

ANNIE. (*Savagely polite.*) Don't get up!

KELLER. Where are you going?

ANNIE. Don't smooth anything else out for me, don't interfere in any way! I treat her like a seeing child because I *ask* her to see, I *expect* her to see, don't undo what I do!

KELLER. Where are you taking her?

ANNIE. To make her fill this pitcher again!

(*She thrusts out with HELEN under her arm, but HELEN escapes up the stairs and ANNIE runs after her.*)

KELLER stands rigid. AUNT EV is astounded.)

AUNT EV. You let her speak to you like that, Arthur?
A creature who works for you?

KELLER. (*Angrily.*) No, I don't.

(*He is starting after ANNIE when JAMES, on his feet with shaky resolve, interposes his chair between them in KELLER'S path.*)

JAMES. Let her go.

KELLER. What!

JAMES. (*A swallow.*) I said—let her go. She's right. (*KELLER glares at the chair and him. JAMES takes a deep breath, then headlong:*) She's right, Kate's right, I'm right, and you're wrong. If you drive her away from here it will be over my dead—chair, has it never occurred to you that on one occasion you might be consummately wrong?

(*KELLER'S stare is unbelieving, even a little fascinated. KATE rises in trepidation, to mediate.*)

KATE. Captain.

KELLER. (*He stops her with his raised hand; his eyes stay on JAMES' pale face, for a long hold. When he finally finds his voice, it is gruff.*) Sit down, everyone. (*He sits. KATE sits. JAMES holds onto his chair. KELLER speaks mildly.*) Please sit down, Jimmie. (*JAMES sits, and a moveless silence prevails; KELLER'S eyes do not leave him.*)