

MRS. VAN DAAN. Mmmm. Delicious. Too bad there's so little of it.

MR. FRANK. I believe we know someone in common, Mr. Dussel.

MR. DUSSEL. Ah?

MR. FRANK. Dr. Kinzler. We were friends back in the old days in Frankfurt — (*Mr. Dussel goes white.*) What? What is it?

MR. DUSSEL. Dr. Kinzler was taken last month. Beethovenstraat.

They took the whole block. (*Mrs. Frank gasps.*)

MRS. VAN DAAN. Mr. Dussel. What is happening outside?

MRS. FRANK. Tell us. (*Anne moves closer, sits on the floor before*

Mr. Dussel.)

MR. DUSSEL. All over Amsterdam, Jews are disappearing ... torn out of bed in the middle of the night ... My God, the screams.

Children come home from school — their parents are gone. Women come back from shopping — whole families ... vanished. It's impossible to escape unless you go into hiding. Thousands are being taken away. Deported. The Blumbergs, Professor Hallenstein —

MRS. VAN DAAN. (*Falling back.*) Oh God, no.

MR. DUSSEL. You have five minutes to get ready. Bring only what you can carry in a rucksack. Herded into the Jewish Theatre for days, weeks sometimes, and then ... Westerbork. The transit camp. From there, every Tuesday, like clockwork, a train leaves for ... the East. (*A moment of stunned silence.*)

ANNE. Mr. Dussel, do you know the Goslars? Their daughter Hanneli and I — we've been friends since we were four. They ... they didn't come for them, did they? (*Mr. Dussel looks at Mr. Frank, then back at Anne, silent. She leaps up.*) Not Hanneli! It can't be! (*In tears she moves away, Margot following, comforting her.*)

PETER. There's a family by the name of —

MRS. FRANK. (*A sudden cry.*) No!

MR. FRANK. I'm sure Mr. Dussel needs to get settled before supper.

(*To Mr. Dussel.*) I'm sorry we can't offer you your own room. I trust

you won't mind sharing one with my daughter.

MR. DUSSEL. Forgive me for upsetting you.

MRS. FRANK. No. You had to tell us. We had to know.

MR. FRANK. Anne, why don't you show Mr. Dussel your room?

MR. DUSSEL. (*As Miep starts to leave.*) Miep. Thank you for everything.

MARGOT. All he said ... so terrible, so different from what Mr. Kraler's been telling us.

MR. VAN DAAN. (*Quiet.*) I like it better the way Kraler tells it. (*Mrs. Frank follows Miep down a few steps. At the bottom step, Miep*

turns.) Mrs. Frank stares down at her.)

ANNE. (*Coming into her room with Mr. Dussel.*) Well, here we are.

MR. DUSSEL. Ah. (*Looking around.*) It isn't very big, is it?

ANNE. I've never shared a room with a man before. I hope I'll be a suitable companion. (*He stares at her, taken aback.*) I know you'll miss the woman you live with terribly.

MR. DUSSEL. Charlotte and I have never been apart. It all happened so quickly. I couldn't tell her where I was going. I didn't know myself.

ANNE. You weren't supposed to. None of our friends knew — it would have been too dangerous. Not just for us. For them and ... for Charlotte.

MR. DUSSEL. You're a very bright young lady. I hope you'll bear with me.

ANNE. I hope you'll bear with me! (*Cheerfully.*) I seem to irritate everyone around here. (*Coming closer.*) What's she like ... your Charlotte?

MR. DUSSEL. Charming. Beautiful. You would like her. (*A moment.*) She's not Jewish, you know.

ANNE. (*In a rush.*) Oh I know. Miep told us. That's my bed. And that's Margot's, where you'll sleep. I know it's small and dark in here, but if you peek through the blackout curtain you'll see the most beautiful chestnut tree in the world. I can't wait till it's in blossom, though I hope the war will be over by then and we'll all be home. (*He backs away. She pauses.*) I was wondering ... about the room ... Margot always had it in the afternoons and I had it in the mornings. Would that be all right with you?

MR. DUSSEL. Actually, I'm not at my best in the morning.

ANNE. Then you take the mornings, and I'll take the afternoons. Did you bring your dental equipment? (*She reaches for his little*

black bag, which he instantly picks up.) I can't wait to see it! I love those little mirrors. Will you fill all our cavities?

MR. DUSSEL. It's very hard, being a dentist, you know. Children don't understand that.

ANNE. What do you mean?

MR. DUSSEL. No one likes going to the dentist. Everyone makes fun of dentists but, believe me, it's no fun for us. Everyone hates us.

ANNE. That's awful.

MR. DUSSEL. Tell me something. When you're in here, where do I go? In there, with all those people?

Anne

Mr. Dussel

ANNE. *(Sitting down on Mr. Dussel's bed.)* And Mouschi.

MR. DUSSEL. Who's Mouschi?

ANNE. *(Laughing.)* Peter's cat.

MR. DUSSEL. Cat! No one mentioned a cat to me. He has it here?

ANNE. Oh you'll love Mouschi. He's the sweetest cat in the world.

MR. DUSSEL. I hate cats! They're terrifying. They give me asthma.

ANNE. Don't worry. Peter keeps him in his room all the time.

MR. DUSSEL. Let us hope so. *(Anne, taken aback, looks away.)* By the way, Mr. Kraler spoke of a schedule.

ANNE. It's mainly about when we have to be quiet, and when we can use the W.C. You can use it now if you —

MR. DUSSEL. No. Thank you.

ANNE. You don't know how important the W.C. can be when you're in hiding ... especially when you're scared.

MR. DUSSEL. I understand. *(Silence.)* If you don't mind, I think I'll lie down before supper. It helps with the digestion. *(Quickly Anne gets up off his bed, squeezes past him in the small space.)*

ANNE. You rest, Mr. Dussel. I'll try and make you feel at home. *(She touches him lightly. He jumps, taken off guard, then tentatively touches her hand ... Darkness, as Anne gets ready for bed. A broadcast begins.)*

BROADCAST. *(V.O.)* This is Colin Reese Parker with the BBC Radio Europe, November twelfth. Yesterday German forces entered unoccupied France. Acting quickly to counter sweeping Allied gains, Hitler sent armored columns to occupy Vichy, France. The Vichy Regime came to an end, and with it, the final pretense that part of France was a "Free Zone."

ANNE. *(From her bed.)* I couldn't sleep tonight, even after Father tucked me in. I feel wicked sleeping in a warm bed when my friends are at the mercy of the cruelest monsters ever to walk the earth. And all because they're Jews. We assume most of them are murdered. The BBC says they're being gassed. Perhaps that's the quickest way to die. *(As she continues, Mr. van Daan, at the table, tries vainly to light a cigarette butt, burns his finger.)* No matter what I'm doing, I can't stop thinking about those who are gone. All we can do is wait for the war to end. The whole world is waiting, and many are waiting for death. *(She lies down, goes to sleep as, from a distance, marching feet approach. Close, closer. From the street, the Nazi "Horst Wessel-Song" builds to a crescendo. Voiceover, a Barrack Head of Westerbook breaks in.)* BARRACK HEAD. *(V.O.)* Achtung! Achtung! The list for Tuesday's train! One thousand will leave Westerbook tomorrow for labor

service in the East! No exemptions! *(The cattle-car door slides shut. The shattering sound of a train whistle.)*

ANNE. *(Screaming in her sleep.)* No! No! Don't let them take me!

MR. DUSSEL. For God's sake, be quiet!

ANNE. I won't! I won't get on the train!

MR. DUSSEL. *(Bending over her.)* Shhh! You'll get us all killed!

(Mrs. Frank rushes in, takes Anne in her arms.)

MRS. FRANK. Anne, darling. You're here. Safe. *(As Anne comes out of her nightmare.)* It was a dream, my angel. You were having a dream.

MR. DUSSEL. These nightmares, Mrs. Frank, they're getting worse. I don't sleep anymore. I spend half my night shushing her.

MRS. FRANK. Anne. Little Anne.

MR. DUSSEL. Every night, Mrs. Frank, every night. She's putting us all in danger.

MRS. FRANK. Please, Mr. Dussel, go back to bed. She'll be all right in a minute. *(Mr. Dussel leaves.)*

PETER. *(Coming out of his room.)* What happened?

MR. DUSSEL. Another nightmare.

MR. VAN DAAN. It sounded like someone was murdering her.

(Mr. Dussel raises his eyebrows, goes into the W.C.)

MRS. FRANK. Can I get you some water? *(As Anne shakes her head.)* It was a bad dream, wasn't it? Do you want to tell me? Sometimes it helps —

ANNE. No. Thank you, Mother.

MRS. FRANK. Try to sleep now. I'll sit right beside you till —

ANNE. I'd rather you didn't. *(Silence.)*

MRS. FRANK. I see. Good night then. *(She leans down to kiss her Anne turns away.)*

ANNE. *(In tears, her voice muffled, hesitant.)* Would you ask Father to come in? *(Hurt, Mrs. Frank stands still.)* Please. *(Mrs. Frank hurries out as Mr. Frank is on his way in.)*

MR. FRANK. Edith.

MRS. FRANK. She wants you, Otto. She's still trembling. *(He hesitates.)* It's all right. Go to her. *(He leaves. Margot puts her arms around her mother.)*

MARGOT. It's a phase.

MRS. FRANK. You weren't like this.

MARGOT. I'm more like you. It's not that she doesn't love you.

(Mr. Frank goes into Anne's room.)

ANNE. *(Flinging her arms around him.)* Oh Pim, Pim! I dreamt

they broke through the bookcase, took us all away. The train whistle, Pim! The train going to the East! *(He is silent.)* Did I yell terribly loud? Do you think anyone heard outside? *(He remains still.)* I know what you're thinking. But I can't help the way I feel. I just don't love her!

ANNE. We don't get along. We never have. And now — I hate being cooped up with her! I don't get along with anyone here. My nightmares, Pim! Everyone hates me for having them. I can't stop them from coming.

MR. FRANK. We're all having nightmares, Anne. Only you let them out. Your mother has them too. Terrible nightmares. She's having a very hard time.

ANNE. I know. I know, Pim. I'm trying to change. I have another side, a better finer side. But it's as if I'm split in half. What's good, what's bad, Pim? I don't know. I want to be a better person, but not if it means shutting myself off. Hiding how I feel.

MR. FRANK. I understand. We've always understood each other — you and I. *(A pause.)* You know, Anneke, you taught me something the day we came here.

ANNE. Me?

MR. FRANK. Remember when we arrived — your mother and Margot were numb. Couldn't speak. Couldn't move. I was a wreck with worry, but you ... you skipped around the room calling it "an adventure." You showed me you could escape. Now, when I read my Dickens, it takes me to another world. In that world I feel safe. *(A pause.)* You have something too. A diary. You're lucky.

ANNE. Lucky?

MR. FRANK. You can write. You can put all your thoughts, all your feelings, down on paper ... *(The fierce sound of planes overhead. The sound of an air raid siren. Bombs falling. A burst of machine-gun fire. Darkness. Anne clings to her father. The van Daans rush toward Peter. Mrs. Frank and Margot hold each other close.)*

ANNE. The house is shaking!

MR. FRANK. It's all right, Anne. The more planes, the sooner the war will end. *(The sound of the air raid siren blends into voices praying quietly in the attic, as light comes up on Mr. Dussel in the attic, wearing a prayer shawl, swaying back and forth. The voices continue as he prays softly.)*

Anne

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Mr. Frank

MR. DUSSEL. *(In Hebrew.)*

Sim shalom toua v'vrachab

Chain vo'chesed v'rachamin

Olamin v'al kol yisroel amechob.

(Light comes up on Anne at her desk, writing. She looks up, speaks directly to us.)

ANNE. Tonight, after the radio broadcast, Pim asked what was the first thing we wanted to do when we're liberated. I'd be so thrilled I wouldn't know where to begin. I long to be back in school with my friends, ride a bike, whistle, laugh so hard it hurts. I wonder if anyone will ever not think about whether I'm Jewish — just a young girl badly in need of some good plain fun. Margot said ...

MARGOT. I want to go dancing! Learn the latest step and fly all over the room in a new pair of dancing shoes.

PETER. The movies! I'd love to go to a movie. A Western! If they ever decide to let us in again.

MRS. FRANK. I'm longing for a real cup of coffee ... with cream. And sugar. No — a whole potfull!

MRS. VAN DAAN. A bath. A hot bath ... in a bathtub. Lying there luxuriating for hours, and then Putti comes in and soaps my back.

ANNE. And Putti said ...

MR. VAN DAAN. Cream cakes! First thing out of here, I'm going to Berthoff's for cream cakes.

MR. DUSSEL. Charlotte. Just to look at her. Listen to her. For hours. MR. FRANK. You know what I want? To pack a picnic lunch and take my family to the seashore ... for the whole day. *(... Hanneke.)* The first night. December 1942. Standing around the kitchen table, they admire the wooden menorah Mr. van Daan has made.

MARGOT. What a beautiful menorah, Mr. van Daan! *(Peter lights the two candles.)*

THE WOMEN. *(In Hebrew.)*

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai

E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ba-o-lam

a-she-ki-de-sha-nu be-mits-vo-tav

ve-ti-va-nu le-bad-like neir

shel Cha-nu-ka.

EVERYONE. Amen.

MR. DUSSEL. *(Taking off his yarmulke.)* That was very moving.

ANNE. It's not over yet. There's still the song. Presents!

MR. VAN DAAN. *(As Anne rushes out.)* Not this year.

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MR. VAN DAAN. Keep still.

MRS. VAN DAAN. (*A whispered panic.*) And wait till they drag us away? Do something!

MR. VAN DAAN. Will you keep still! (*He half lifts her up, makes her sit down.*)

ANNE. (*Unable to stand the silence.*) Someone get Papa.

MR. VAN DAAN. Quiet!

PETER. I'll go.

MR. VAN DAAN. Sit down.

ANNE. Please. Please go.

MR. VAN DAAN. Quiet! Everyone! (*The sound of footsteps on the stairs. They wait, rigid. Mr. Frank appears. Anne and Margot rush to him, hold him tight.*)

MR. FRANK. It was a thief.

MR. DUSSEL. How do you know?

MR. FRANK. He took the cash box, ran off so fast he left the front door wide open. The noise must have scared him away. (*As Mrs. Frank turns on a light.*) The danger's passed. We're safe.

MR. DUSSEL. Maybe. But we're in even greater danger now.

MR. FRANK. Mr. Dussel. Please.

MR. DUSSEL. (*Pointing at Peter.*) Now someone knows we're up here.

MR. VAN DAAN. Why are you pointing at him? It was an accident. It could have happened to any one of us.

MRS. VAN DAAN. (*Quiet.*) You mean to tell me a thief is going to go to the police and say "I was robbing a place the other night and I heard this noise above my head?" You think a thief is going to say that?

MR. DUSSEL. Yes. I do.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Well, you're crazy.

MR. DUSSEL. I think someday he'll get caught and make a bargain with the police. If they let him off, he'll tell them where some Jews are hiding. Maybe they'll even reward him. Seven and a half guilders a Jew. (*Silence.*)

ANNE. (*Terrified.*) We can't stay here anymore! Please, Papa. Let's go. Let's just go!

MRS. VAN DAAN. Go?

MR. VAN DAAN. Where would we go?

MRS. FRANK. Into the street?

MR. FRANK. No one's leaving. We can't panic. If we panic, we're lost. We've survived here for six months together. We're going on. Margot, Anne. The song. Please. (*Margot and Anne hesitate, then falteringly begin to sing.*)

MARGOT and ANNE. Ma-oz tzur ye-shu-a-si
EVERYONE. (*Slowly joining in, some humming, some singing the words.*)

Le-cha nuw-eh lisha beryah

Ti-kon beis te-fi-la-si

Ve-shurn to-daw

n-zau-bei-ach

Let takhin matbe'ach

Mitzar hammabeh' —

(*Margot suddenly breaks down, takes off her glasses, sobbing silently. Mrs. Frank rushes to her. The others stop singing, move even closer, as Mrs. Frank rushes to her.*)

ANNE. Sometimes I see myself alone in a dungeon, without Father and Mother, or I'm roaming the streets, or the Annex is on fire, or they come in the middle of the night to take us away, and I know it could all happen soon. (*The members of the Annex linger together, shaking hands, embracing.*) I see the eight of us in the Annex as if we were a patch of blue sky threatened by menacing black clouds. We're surrounded by darkness and danger, and in our desperate search for a way out we keep bumping into each other. (*Mr. Dussel slips into the W.C. The two families separate — the van Daans with Peter go into their room, Mrs. Frank and Margot into Anne's room. Mr. Frank, the last to leave, holds Anne close to him. She remains alone.*) We look at the fighting below and the peace and beauty above, but we're cut off by the dark mass of clouds and can go neither up nor down. It looms before us, an impenetrable wall. I can only cry out and implore, "Open wide. Let us out!" (*The families cry out and implore, "Open wide. Let us out!"*)

(*Margot, Anne rushes to her. The two families cling to each other. The house lights come up, as the light on the stage slowly dims.*)

End of Act One

Anne

MR. DUSSEL. Let's pray it will.
 MR. VAN DAAN. Here's the knife, Petronella. Now, how many of us are there?
 MIEP. None for me, thank you.
 MR. FRANK. Oh, but you must.
 MR. VAN DAAN. Well, that leaves seven.
 MR. DUSSEL. Eight! Eight! The same number it always is.
 MR. VAN DAAN. I took it for granted Margot wouldn't have any.
 ANNE. Why not?
 MRS. FRANK. I don't think a piece of cake would harm her.
 MR. VAN DAAN. I don't want her to start coughing again. Eight, eight — all right, eight!
 MR. DUSSEL. And please, Mrs. Frank should cut the cake. *(Silence, as they all look at him.)* Mrs. Frank divides things ... better.
 MRS. VAN DAAN. What are you saying? Don't I always give everyone exactly the same?
 MR. DUSSEL. Yes, yes. Everyone always gets exactly the same. *(As Mrs. van Daan starts to cut the cake.)* Except Mr. van Daan always gets a little bit more.
 MRS. VAN DAAN. *(Throwing down the knife.)* Now just a minute —
 MR. FRANK. *(Taking Mrs. van Daan's arm.)* Please, please! Miep, you see how a little spice cake goes to our heads?
 MR. VAN DAAN. *(Handing Mrs. Frank the knife.)* Here, Mrs. Frank. You cut.
 MR. FRANK. It looks delicious, Miep.
 MRS. FRANK. *(Dividing the cake into tiny, even pieces.)* Oh, that smell Miep, you're sure you won't have a piece?
 MIEP. No, thank you. I have to leave in a minute. *(Mr. van Daan passes out the plates with the cake. For moments, they all eat blissfully.)*
 MR. VAN DAAN. *(Groaning with pleasure.)* Ah, Miep. Miepchen. Jan is lucky to get a woman who can bake like this.
 ANNE. Jan! Tell us about Jan.
 MIEP. Jan's taking me to a party tonight.
 ANNE. A party! Oh Miep! Remember everything so you can tell us about it tomorrow.
 MARGOT. Everyone you dance with —
 MIEP. Jan. Only with Jan. *(As they laugh.)* Oh, I seem to have forgotten something ... for someone. *(Facing Anne, she holds out the ficelle.)*
 ANNE. Me? *(She looks into the ficelle, throws her arms around Miep.)*

MRS. VAN DAAN. What? What is it? Come on. I can't stand the suspense. *(Everyone watches as Anne takes a pair of red leather high-heeled shoes from the ficelle. She slips off her shoes. Mrs. Frank helps her put on the red ones.)*
 MRS. FRANK. Oh my ... Miep, where did you find them?
 MR. VAN DAAN. You can't even get a slipper on the black market these days.
 MRS. VAN DAAN. *(Eating her cake.)* Look. They match! Incredible. *(Taking a step, Anne totters, almost falls. They laugh, as Anne, awkward and graceful, moves around the room in her first pair of high-heeled shoes.)*
 MR. FRANK. All grown up! Ready for Hollywood.
 MIEP. Enjoy them, Anne. *(She starts to leave.)* And don't worry. I'll give you all a full report tomorrow.
 MR. VAN DAAN. Miep. There's something I'd like you to do for me. *(Mrs. van Daan gets up.)*
 MRS. VAN DAAN. *(Taking her fur coat.)* What? What are you talking about?
 MR. VAN DAAN. You know what I'm talking about. *(He moves toward her.)*
 MIEP. What is it?
 PETER. He wants to sell her fur coat.
 MRS. VAN DAAN. *(Moving away, clutching her coat. Quiet.)* No, Putti. Don't do this to me. This is my coat. I've had this coat for seventeen years. My father gave me this coat. You have no right. Don't you dare! Let go.
 MR. VAN DAAN. You have to give it up.
 MRS. VAN DAAN. Let go of it. Please.
 MR. VAN DAAN. You can't hold on to a fur coat when people are in such desperate need of warm clothing. *(To the others.)* Besides we're broke. We've been running out of money for months. *(To his wife, gently.)* I have to sell it. *(Taking the coat from her hands, he gives it to Miep, who starts for the stairs.)* Mrs. Frank follows Miep down a few steps, *(Petronella step Miep turns back. Mrs. Frank is staring at her.)*
 MIEP. *(Coming back up the stairs.)* Mrs. Frank?
 MRS. FRANK. Oh Miep. I remember when a New Year was something to look forward to.
 MIEP. Mrs. Frank. You mustn't give up hope.
 MRS. FRANK. There's no hope to be had. I know that. I knew it the night Hitler came to power, when that voice came screaming

Miep

43 Mrs. Frank

out of the radio. I sat there paralyzed. And now in London, what is the Dutch Queen doing? What are they all doing? They're not even mentioning the word Jew. The trains are still leaving. Why don't they bomb the tracks? (*Miep is silent.*) I can't talk about this with the others, Miep.

MIEP. I understand, Mrs. Frank.

MRS. FRANK. I know they're making plans, counting the days till the war is over, but I have to tell you ... I feel the end will never come. (*Pause.*) Sometimes ... sometimes I want to give myself up.

MIEP. Forgive me, Mrs. Frank, but you must try and take things a little easier. They need you. The children need you.

MRS. FRANK. I'm ashamed to feel this way. I know you and Mr. Kraler have it just as hard.

MIEP. No, Mrs. Frank. We don't.

MRS. FRANK. Thank you. For listening to me. (*At the table, Mr. Dussel studies French with Anne, Peter works on Math.*)

Dussel busies herself in the kitchen as her husband watches.
MR. DUSSEL. "Non, non, ce n'est pas ce que tu penses." (*He pronounces "penses" incorrectly, rhyming with "senses."*)

ANNE. (*Correcting him.*) "Penses," Mr. Dussel. "Penses." (*From penser.*) To think. (*He puts his head in his hands.*) *Ce que vous ne faites pas beaucoup.*

MR. DUSSEL. What?

ANNE. *Ce que vous ne faites pas.*

MR. DUSSEL. You're going too fast.

ANNE. *Oui. Je sais.*

MR. DUSSEL. (*A pause. Looking up, smiling.*) *Je sais.* I know that one. ANNE. *Bon. Continuons. La page suivante, sil vous plait.*

MRS. VAN DAAN. I just don't understand. I would never ... never have done anything like that to you.

MR. VAN DAAN. The coat was seventeen years old, for God's sake! Those skins had definitely seen their day.

MRS. VAN DAAN. That's not the point and you know it.

MR. VAN DAAN. I know we need the money. We have no money — can you get that through your head?

PETER. Don't talk to her like that.

MRS. VAN DAAN. You've never understood. Anything.

MR. VAN DAAN. Oh God, here we go again.

MRS. VAN DAAN. That coat was the last thing. A whole world gone.

MR. VAN DAAN. Well you've still got us, haven't you?

MRS. VAN DAAN. You took the last memory of my father away.

MR. VAN DAAN. (*Rising, banging the table.*) Do we have to hear about your father again? If you hadn't been so attached to your father, your coat, the apartment with all our goddamned possessions, we'd be in America by now!

PETER. It's not her fault.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Oh please. It was you too, you know. You didn't want to —

MR. VAN DAAN. I only stayed because of you! Believe me, I knew which way the wind was blowing.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Oh. Sure. You always know everything.

PETER. Mother. Please. Stop.

MR. VAN DAAN. Your mother will never listen.

ANNE. (*Coming over to Mrs. van Daan. Quiet.*) If I could just say one thing.

MRS. VAN DAAN. No, you cannot! You say too much already and it's none of your business anyway. (*Anne retreats to her room in tears.*)

PETER. You shouldn't have said that, Mother.

MRS. VAN DAAN. (*Choked.*) What?

PETER. You hurt her feelings.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Oh. Well. I apologize. All right? I apologize — to everyone! (*She goes into the W.C., slamming the door behind her. Peter picks up Anne's cake and goes to her room.*)

PETER. You left this.

ANNE. (*Hiding her tears.*) Thank you. (*Peter starts to leave, turns back, stands there awkwardly.*)

PETER. I ... I'm sorry for what happened in there. I wish I could have said something. But they make me feel so ... I can't stand it when they ... Sometimes I wish I didn't belong to them at all! I just hope I never turn out like them.

ANNE. You won't. I know it.

PETER. Like him. What if I'm like him?

ANNE. You're not. Believe me.

PETER. All I can say is if it wasn't for you ... I mean ... You ... (*Blurring it out.*) You're always a big help to me.

ANNE. I am? How?

PETER. When you're cheerful it ... well ... it keeps me from being depressed. (*Mr. Dussel opens the door, looks from Peter to Anne, backs out.*)

ANNE. I'm not always so cheerful, you know ... inside.

PETER. Really?

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MR. VAN DAAN. The coat was seventeen years old, for God's sake! Those skins had definitely seen their day.

MRS. VAN DAAN. That's not the point and you know it.

MR. VAN DAAN. I know we need the money. We have no money — can you get that through your head?

PETER. Don't talk to her like that.

MRS. VAN DAAN. You've never understood. Anything.

MR. VAN DAAN. Oh God, here we go again.

MRS. VAN DAAN. That coat was the last thing. A whole world gone.

MR. VAN DAAN. Well you've still got us, haven't you?

MRS. VAN DAAN. You took the last memory of my father away.

MR. VAN DAAN. (*Rising, banging the table.*) Do we have to hear about your father again? If you hadn't been so attached to your father, your coat, the apartment with all our goddamned possessions, we'd be in America by now!

PETER. It's not her fault.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Oh please. It was you too, you know. You didn't want to —

MR. VAN DAAN. I only stayed because of you! Believe me, I knew which way the wind was blowing.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Oh. Sure. You always know everything.

PETER. Mother. Please. Stop.

MR. VAN DAAN. Your mother will never listen.

ANNE. (*Coming over to Mrs. van Daan. Quiet.*) If I could just say one thing.

MRS. VAN DAAN. No, you cannot! You say too much already and it's none of your business anyway. (*Anne retreats to her room in tears.*)

PETER. You shouldn't have said that, Mother.

MRS. VAN DAAN. (*Choked.*) What?

PETER. You hurt her feelings.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Oh. Well. I apologize. All right? I apologize — to everyone! (*She goes into the W.C., slamming the door behind her. Peter picks up Anne's cake and goes to her room.*)

PETER. You left this.

ANNE. (*Hiding her tears.*) Thank you. (*Peter starts to leave, turns back, stands there awkwardly.*)

PETER. I ... I'm sorry for what happened in there. I wish I could have said something. But they make me feel so ... I can't stand it when they ... Sometimes I wish I didn't belong to them at all! I just hope I never turn out like them.

ANNE. You won't. I know it.

PETER. Like him. What if I'm like him?

ANNE. You're not. Believe me.

PETER. All I can say is if it wasn't for you ... I mean ... You ... (*Blurring it out.*) You're always a big help to me.

ANNE. I am? How?

PETER. When you're cheerful it ... well ... it keeps me from being depressed. (*Mr. Dussel opens the door, looks from Peter to Anne, backs out.*)

ANNE. I'm not always so cheerful, you know ... inside.

PETER. Really?

ANNE. It's hard. If you want to cry or something. There's nowhere to go.

PETER. It's easier for me, I guess. When there's a fight ... you know, with my parents ... I just duck into my room.

ANNE. You're lucky you have a room of your own.

PETER. Well, at least you can talk to your parents.

ANNE. Not really. I never discuss anything serious with Mother. She just doesn't understand. I can talk about everything with Father ... except Mother. I don't think you can really ... really be intimate with someone if they hold something back, do you?

PETER. I think your father's terrific.

ANNE. He likes you too.

PETER. (*Looking up quickly, blushing.*) You think so?

ANNE. I can tell from the little things he says. (*She pauses.*) It's funny, isn't it?

PETER. What?

ANNE. Well, we've been living here for almost a year and a half and this ... this is the first time we've really talked.

PETER. I know what you mean.

ANNE. You know something, Peter?

PETER. What?

ANNE. I ... I've never really had a friend. Someone I could truly confide in. (*She is still, looking at him. He smiles.*)

PETER. Me neither. (*A moment. Suddenly.*) Smile for me.

ANNE. Why?

PETER. You have dimples when you smile.

ANNE. Dimples — the only mark of beauty I possess.

PETER. That's not true. You're pretty.

ANNE. Me? (*Peter nods.*)

PETER. Yes. (*Quiet.*) You. (*Anne looks down. A pause. She looks up at dazzling smile. Moments pass. They smile at each other. Still looking at her, Peter starts to go, almost trips, catches himself, leaves. Anne continues to smile. Chopin's Nocturne A-flat major, Op. 32, No. 2 begins over the BBC dinner concert, as light brightens on Anne joyously dancing around the table in the main room. Lost in a blissful reverie, she is unseen by the others, who are getting ready for supper. But even they seem transformed by Anne's happiness, as the simple household activities — setting the table, the worn tablecloth ballooning out as it is put down, bringing in the plates, laying the silverware — all become a kind of ritual.*)

ANNE. (*Directly to us.*) The sun is shining, the sky a deep blue, there's

a magnificent breeze, and I'm longing — so longing — for everything! I walk from room to room, breathe through the crack in the window frame, feel my heart beating as if to say, "Can't you fulfill this longing at last?" I long for every boy, and to Peter I want to shout, "Say something, don't just smile at me all the time, touch me, so I can get that delicious feeling inside." I feel spring within me, I feel spring awakening, I feel it in my entire body and soul. I'm utterly confused, don't know what to read, to write, to do. I only know ... I am longing ... (*Anne joins them as they sit down at the table. Mrs. Frank and Mrs. van Daan serve a supper of kale and potatoes.*)

MR. VAN DAAN. What is it tonight?

MRS. VAN DAAN. Don't ask.

MR. VAN DAAN. I have to. I have to be prepared.

MR. DUSSEL. My God, I can't eat this again! Pickles, kale, and rotten potatoes — every night for weeks now.

MR. VAN DAAN. Something wrong, Mr. Dussel? You try cooking for a change, instead of insulting my wife.

MR. FRANK. I think you prepared the kale very well, Mrs. van Daan. I don't know how you do it.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Mr. Frank. Always the soul of politeness.

MR. FRANK. Every night another miracle. (*Mr. Dussel hastily gets up from the table, lurches toward the W.C.*)

MR. VAN DAAN. Careful, Mr. Dussel! We don't want to clog the pipes like last week.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Putti, please.

MRS. FRANK. You're not eating, Margot. (*Margot is still.*) Eat.

You have to eat.

MARGOT. I'm not hungry.

MR. VAN DAAN. If she doesn't want it, Peter will eat it.

MR. FRANK. Come, Margot. Just take a bite.

MARGOT. (*Giving Peter her plate.*) I can't. I just can't.

MRS. VAN DAAN. She eats like a bird. Look at her. Every day a smaller bird. Margot, I'm doing the best I can.

MARGOT. I'm sorry, Mrs. van Daan. I just —

MRS. VAN DAAN. Anne's eating. Peter's eating.

MARGOT. How do you do it, Anne?

ANNE. I pretend it's delicious, don't look at it, and before I know it, it's gone.

MR. FRANK. Very wise, Anneke.

PETER. I eat because I'm hungry. (*Silence. Anne laughs — a tender*

flirtatious laugh. Mrs. van Daan looks from her to Peter.)

MR. FRANK. You've got to force yourself, Margot. You're too thin.

MR. VAN DAAN. She's not the only one. We're all famished. *(Silence, except for their spoons scraping their bowls.)*

MARGOT. Will this war ever be over?

MRS. VAN DAAN. This war would be over a lot sooner if the goddamned British would start the invasion.

MR. VAN DAAN. Please. Not tonight.

MR. FRANK. The British are fighting for their lives.

MR. VAN DAAN. They'll do something when the time is right.

MRS. VAN DAAN. When we're dead and buried, you mean. It's

amazing how strong those Germans are.

MR. VAN DAAN. Oh, it's amazing. Those Germans are so strong

they're going to win the war — is that what you're saying?

MRS. VAN DAAN. They might. They very well might — if the

British don't get moving.

MR. VAN DAAN. They're moving, for crying out loud! Three thousand tons of bombs dropped on Hamburg last Sunday — isn't

that enough for you?

MRS. VAN DAAN. No.

MR. VAN DAAN. How many bombs do you need?

MRS. VAN DAAN. *(Rising.)* Enough so we don't have to worry about going to Poland! *(Margot, gagging, leaps up, rushes to the W.C.)*

MRS. FRANK. *(Following her.)* Hurry up, Mr. Dussell Margot's waiting!

MR. FRANK. *(Overlapping.)* Mr. Dussell!

MRS. VAN DAAN. *(Overlapping.)* For God's sake, hurry!

PETER. *(Overlapping.)* She can't wait any longer!

ANNE. *(Overlapping.)* Please, Mr. Dussell! Come on!

MR. VAN DAAN. Mr. Dussell, the line is forming again.

MR. DUSSELL. *(Emerging from the W.C.)* You think I like spending my life in there? *(The piercing sound of the buzzer. They freeze. Mr. van Daan in the stairs.)*

MR. FRANK. Mr. Kraler!

MR. KRALER. I'm sorry to come at this hour. But something's happened.

~~MR. VAN DAAN. (Overlapping.)~~

MR. KRALER. I must ask you all to be more careful. More quiet.

MR. FRANK. What's happened?

MR. KRALER. A man in the storeroom — a few days ago he

asked me, "What do you hear from Mr. Frank?" I said I'd heard a rumor you were in Switzerland. He said he'd heard that too, but thought I might know something more. And then today, signing some invoices, I looked up and saw him staring at the bookcase.

MRS. FRANK. *(Almost inaudible.)* My God.

MR. KRALER. He said he thought he remembered a door there. Then he said he wanted more money. Ten more guilders a month.

~~MR. VAN DAAN. (Overlapping.) Mr. Frank in tears.~~

~~MR. VAN DAAN. (Overlapping.)~~

MR. FRANK. Ten guilders? Very modest blackmail.

~~MR. VAN DAAN. (Overlapping.)~~

MR. FRANK. What did you tell him?

MR. KRALER. I said I had to think about it. Should I pay him the money? Take a chance on firing him, or —

~~MR. VAN DAAN. (Overlapping.)~~

MR. FRANK. Offer him half. We'll find out if it's blackmail or not.

MR. KRALER. Listen. Maybe he knows nothing. But it's more dangerous out there every day. No one can be trusted. You must be quiet. Quiet! *(Silence, as they all look at him. Anne, who has noticed her mother leaving, goes out.)* I'll offer him half then.

MR. FRANK. *(Shaking his hand.)* Thank you, Mr. Kraler.

MR. KRALER. We'll hope for the best.

~~MR. VAN DAAN. (Overlapping.)~~ *(Mr. Frank in tears sits at Anne's desk. Anne, at the door, watches her.)*

ANNE. Mother. Please. Don't be upset. *(Mrs. Frank wipes her tears away.)* I can't bear it ... seeing you this way.

MRS. FRANK. I'll be all right, Anneke. You go back to supper. *(Slowly Anne sits down on the bed.)*

ANNE. I'd rather stay here. With you. *(For moments Mrs. Frank is still. Then she goes to Anne, tenderly strokes her hair. The light dims on them both and comes up on Mrs. van Daan in the W.C., looking at herself in the mirror. She touches her face. Hurriedly, silently she pulls the door shut. Light comes up on Peter, getting dressed in his room, as we hear the end of a song on the BBC.)*

BROADCAST: *(VO.)* And now, from London, a message from the Dutch Minister of Education, Mr. Gerrit Bolkestein.

BOLKESTEIN. *(VO.)* History cannot be written on the basis of official documents alone. If our descendants are to understand what we as a nation have endured during these years, we need simple, everyday pieces — a diary, letters from a forced laborer in Germany ...

Mr. Frank

49 Mr. Kraler

(Light instantly reveals Anne, sitting at her desk in a slip, her diary before her.)

ANNE. *(Overlapping, speaking out.)* I can't believe it! Did he really say "a diary"? I'll start revising it tomorrow! Maybe one day I could even publish a novel. *The Secret Annex* — based on my diary! *(A pause.)* Unless you write yourself, you can't know how wonderful it is. When I write I shake off all my cares. But I want to achieve more than that. I want to be useful and bring enjoyment to all people, even those I've never met. I want to go on living even after my death! *(Light comes up on Mr. and Mrs. Frank and Mr. and Mrs. van Daan playing cards in the main room, as a fierce whispered argument goes on between Margot and Mr. Dussel, impatient to get into his room. As Margot comes in, Anne quickly puts her diary away, picks up a comb, and begins combing her hair.)*

MARGOT. Mr. Dussel is getting awfully impatient out there.

ANNE. *(Continuing to get dressed.)* Let him! I'm always waiting for him.

MARGOT. *(Watching her.)* Are you going up to the attic with Peter again? *(Anne is silent.)* You've already spent so much time there today. ANNE. I went up exactly twice. Once to practice French together and once to get the potatoes for supper.

MARGOT. But you know Mrs. van Daan. She's got a comment for every little thing.

ANNE. She can't help herself. It's in her nature. I don't think it's Mrs. van Daan that's upsetting you. *(She puts on the red shoes.)*

MARGOT. I'm not upset.

ANNE. You're not jealous? Of Peter and me? *(Margot is still.)* I'd be insanely jealous if it were you instead of me.

MARGOT. Yes, I imagine you would be. But I'm not.

ANNE. Aren't you, Margot? Tell me the truth.

MARGOT. Who wouldn't want someone to visit every night, have deep serious conversations with ... and who knows what else. Yes, I'm jealous. But not of you and Peter. I'd just like someone of my own. I'm happy you have someone.

ANNE. You mean it?

MARGOT. *(Taking Anne's hand.)* I want you to have a good time tonight. Every night. You've already missed out on so much here.

ANNE. Oh Margot, you're such a generous person! Anyway, there's nothing to be jealous of. We don't do anything! *(They both laugh. And it's suddenly quieter.)* He's never even kissed me.

MARGOT. The kiss will come.

ANNE. I'm not sure I want it to.

MARGOT. *(Grimacing.)* Oh, you do. I know you. You can't help yourself. *(She gives Anne a little push.)* It's in your nature. *(Anne pushes her back. They giggle, then look at each other, silent. As Anne turns to go, Margot picks up the comb.)* Wait. Let me fix your hair. *(Quickly she combs Anne's luxuriant hair, turns her around, looks at her lovingly.)* There. Now you're ready. *(Anne smiles. Gently, Margot pushes her out. She stands still for a moment, then quietly folds Anne's clothes.)*

MR. DUSSEL. I presume I may finally get back into my room.

ANNE. Our room, dear Mr. Dussel. And yes, you may return.

MR. DUSSEL. Thank you so much. *(Anne curtsies.)*

MRS. FRANK. Anne. Again?

MRS. VAN DAAN. Again ... and look at her.

MRS. FRANK. *(To Anne.)* It's cold in the attic. You'd better bundle up.

MRS. VAN DAAN. *(As Anne goes into her parents' room for a sweater.)* In my day it was the boys who called on the girls.

MR. FRANK. Young people like to feel they have secrets. The attic's the only place they can talk.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Talk? That's not what they called it in my day.

MR. VAN DAAN. I think a little romance may be developing in our little Annex.

MRS. VAN DAAN. *(As Anne comes back.)* If we're here much longer, we may even have a little Annex wedding.

MRS. FRANK. *(Suddenly facing the van Daans.)* Frankly, I can't stand this stupid chatter another minute! *(Mr. Frank and the van Daans stare at her. Anne flashes her a grateful smile.)* Anne! Don't forget to be down by nine. *(Anne and Peter go up to the attic, Anne stumbling in her red shoes.)*

ANNE. They're so old-fashioned! I guess they don't realize how much more advanced we are. *(The van Daans return to their card game, Mr. Dussel comes out of the W.C., Mrs. Frank mends a skirt, Mr. Frank and Margot read together.)*

PETER. You look nice.

ANNE. Really?

PETER. I like the shoes. I've always liked the shoes. *(Anne holds out her feet.)*

ANNE. Miep always does everything just right.

PETER. She likes you a lot.

Margot 50 Anne

MR. DUSSEL. How many days will it take them from Normandy to the Netherlands?

MR. FRANK. *(Taking Mrs. Frank in his arms.)* Edith, what did I tell you.

MR. DUSSEL. *(Placing the potatoes on the map to hold it down as he checks the cities.)* Cherbourg. Caen. Pont-l'Évêque. Paris. And then ... Amsterdam! *(Mr. van Daan breaks into a convulsive sob.)*

MRS. VAN DAAN. Putti.

MR. FRANK. Hermann, don't you hear? We're going to be free ... soon. *(Mr. Dussel turns on the radio. Amidst much static, Eisenhower's voice is heard from his broadcast of June 6, 1944.)*

EISENHOWER. *(V.O.)* People of Western Europe, a landing was made this morning on the coast of France by troops of the Allied Expeditionary Force.

MR. FRANK. *(Wiping tears from his eyes.)* Listen. That's General Eisenhower. *(Anne pulls Margot down to her room.)*

EISENHOWER. *(V.O.)* *(fading away.)* I have this message for all of you. Although the initial assault may not have been made in your own country, the hour of your liberation is approaching.

ANNE. *(Hugging Margot.)* Home, Margot — can you believe it? We could be going home.

MARGOT. I don't even know what home would be like anymore. I can't imagine it — we've been away so long.

ANNE. Oh I can! I can imagine every little detail. To be outside again. The sky, Margot! To walk along the canal. To ... everything!

(They sit on Anne's bed.)

MARGOT. I'm afraid to let myself think about it. To have a real meal — *(They laugh together.)* It doesn't seem possible. Will anything taste the same? Look the same? *(More and more serious.)* I don't know if anything will ever ... be the same again. How can we go back ... really. *(Looking at Anne's wistful face.)* You know what I've decided? To be a nurse. For newborns. Go far, far away.

ANNE. How far?

MARGOT. Maybe ... I don't know ... Maybe to Palestine. *(Hugging Anne.)* Maybe you'll go back to school in October ... September even. Wouldn't that be something, Annelke! *(They kiss each other, half laughing, half crying.)* Margot leaves, Anne gets into bed, as light comes up on Mrs. van

table. Mr. van Daan lies on his bed, disconsolate.)
MRS. VAN DAAN. Putti? *(A pause.)* You know what I was just thinking? You won't believe this, but I was thinking about that first

day we met, when you were buzzing around with the rest of the boys in Bremerhaven. I picked you out right away, you know. You were the one who made me laugh. And laugh ... *(She laughs, full-throated, deep.)* That afternoon you took me out on the ferry, first you made me laugh and then you started to kiss me. And kiss me ... And the kisses were even better than the laughter — remember? You gave me so many, the ferryman kept watching us and the ferry went off course, and then you made me laugh even more. When we got back, you had such a ravenous appetite you made that little restaurant open its doors and you ordered almost everything on the menu. "What an appetite!" the waiter kept saying. "The man can really eat!" *(She stands up, moves toward him.)* We'll go back on that ferry one day, Putti. I promise. It won't be long now. And soon I'll be cooking all your old favorites — sauerbraten with red cabbage, latkes with your cherished applesauce. We'll even go to Berthof's for cream cakes! But in the meantime, Putti, if you're hungry, hold on to me. Oh Putti, please. Just hold on to me. *(They embrace ... Darkness. Alone in her bed, Anne wakes with a start, her shadow, enormous, illuminated on the wall. She speaks out.)*

ANNE. Just as I was falling asleep, my friend Hanneli appeared, dressed in rags, her face thin and worn. She looked at me with such sadness in her eyes I could read the message in them: "Oh Anne, why have you deserted me? Help me, help me, rescue me from this hell!" If only I could. Why have I been chosen to live, and you to die? Oh Hanneli, Hanneli, if you ever return, I'll take you in, share everything I have with you. Are you still alive? I keep seeing your enormous eyes, keep seeing myself in your place. You're a reminder of what my fate might have been. *(Light comes up on Mrs. Frank on her knees, silently scrubbing the kitchen floor.)* What will we do if we're ... no, I mustn't write that down. But the question won't go away. It looms before me in total absolute horror. *(Light fades away. The chimney of the Annex is highlighted. A moment. Smoke begins to billow out of the chimney. Over the radio we hear a deep voice, contralto or baritone, singing the last verse of "Wenn dein Mütterlein" from Mahler's Kindertotenlieder.)*

BROADCAST. *(V.O.)*

Wenn dein Mütterlein

tritt zur Tür herein

Mit der Kerze Schimmer

ist es mir, als immer

Mrs. Daan

(probably won't do it all)