

~~them at their new farm, just before I died. Perfectly beautiful farm.~~

~~(FUNERAL GROUP is now in place)~~

~~1ST DEAD WOMAN. It's on the same road we lived on, hm-hm.~~

~~1ST DEAD MAN. Aya, right smart farm.~~

~~(The GROUP by the grave sings softly and slowly one verse of "Blessed Be The Tie That Binds.")~~

~~2ND DEAD WOMAN. Always liked that hymn. I was hopin' they'd sing a hymn. (Two beats after the first line of the hymn, EMILY in her wedding dress without the veil emerges swiftly up C. from behind the group; stops after a few steps to look at the DEAD, first with surprise then with understanding; turns to survey the funeral group lovingly, stretches arms toward them, then slowly walks to the chair left vacant for her, and sits facing out. Then she turns to the dead)~~

~~EMILY. (To all DEAD, quietly) Hello!~~

~~MRS. SOAMES. (Looking straight out) Hello, Emily!~~

~~1ST DEAD MAN. (Over) Hello, M. Gibbs.~~

~~EMILY. (Warmly) Hello, Mother Gibbs!~~

~~MRS. GIBBS. Emily!~~

~~(A VOICE in the FUNERAL GROUP mumbles a portion of the funeral service, but the words are inaudible.)~~

~~EMILY. Hello! (Faces front. Pause, she looks out and up,—surprised) It's raining! (She looks at funeral)~~

~~MRS. GIBBS. (Facing front throughout) Yes—They'll be gone soon, dear. Just rest yourself.~~

EMILY. It seems thousands and thousands of years since I— (The prayer over, the FUNERAL GROUP sings Second verse of "Blessed Be The Tie That Binds.") (Pleased) Papa remembered that that was my favorite hymn. (Pause—turns slowly R.) Oh, I wish I'd been here a long time! I don't like being new here. (Leans forward) Oh, ~~how do you do, Mr. Simon?~~

~~SMALL SIMMONS. (Firmly) How do you do, Emily?~~

EMILY. (His tone confuses her a moment) (Settling back for the first time, more at ease. Enthusiastic) Mother Gibbs, George and I have made that farm into just the best place you ever saw. We thought of you all the time. We wanted to show you the new barn and a great long cement drinking fountain for the stock. We bought that out of the money you left us.

MRS. GIBBS. I did?

EMILY. Don't you remember, Mother Gibbs—the legacy you left us? Why, it was over three hundred and fifty dollars.

~~(Starting with those at L. the FUNERAL GROUP breaks up and exits slowly L. A SMALL GROUP only remains at grave,—MR. and MRS. WEBB, GEORGE, and DR. GIBBS, who has no umbrella)~~

MRS. GIBBS. Yes, yes, Emily.

EMILY. Well, there's a patent device on this drinking-fountain so that it never overflows, Mother Gibbs, and it never sinks below a certain mark they have there. It's fine. (Her voice trails off and her eyes return to the funeral. Sadly:) It won't be the same to George without me, but it's a lovely farm. (Looks front again, sits forward, struck by a new realization) Live people don't understand, do they?

MRS. GIBBS. No, dear—not very much.

EMILY. They're sort of shut up in little boxes, aren't they? I feel as tho I knew 'em last a thousand years ago— (*Sits back, again at ease, easily*) My boy is spending the day at Mrs. Carter's. (*Turns to 1ST DEAD MAN*) (*The CROWD is now off*) Oh, Mr. Carter, my little boy is spending the day at your house.

~~1ST DEAD MAN. I do?~~
EMILY. Yes, he loves it there. Mother Gibbs, we have a Ford, too. (*MR. and MRS. WEBB and GEORGE slowly exeunt L.*) Never gives any trouble. I don't drive, though. (*Pause*) (*Pained,—sitting forward*) Mother Gibbs, when does this feeling go away?—Of being one of *them*? How long does it—
MRS. GIBBS. Sh! dear. Just wait and be patient.

(*DR. GIBBS kneels to take flowers from grave, slowly rises and crosses to face MRS. GIBBS*)

EMILY. (*Looking off L., calmly*) I know— Look, they're finished. They're going.

MRS. GIBBS. Sh-h-h!

EMILY. (*Lovingly*) Look! Father Gibbs is bringing some of my flowers to you. (*As he passes, surprised*) He looks just like George, doesn't he? (*DR. GIBBS lays flowers at wife's feet and stands, head bowed and sighs*) (*All sympathy:*) Oh, Mother Gibbs, I never realized before how troubled and how—how in the dark live persons are. Look at him. I loved him so. (*Long pause. DR. GIBBS exits slowly L., gradually raising head. When he is two-thirds off, and putting on his hat*) From morning till night, that's all they are—troubled.

~~1ST DEAD MAN. (*Colloquially*) Little cool, but it was.~~

~~1ST DEAD WOMAN. Ay, that ain't cooled it off a little.~~

~~1ST DEAD MAN. Those northeast winds always~~

~~do the same thing, don't they? If it ain't a rain, it's three-day blow.~~

EMILY. (*Sitting up abruptly, her L. hand hugging her waist, both fists clenched*) But Mother Gibbs, one can go back; one can go back there again—into living! I feel it! I know it! Why just then for a moment I was thinking about—about the farm—and for a minute I was *there* (*Looking at her lap a moment*) and my baby was on my lap as plain as day!

MRS. GIBBS. Yes, of course you can.

EMILY. (*Excited*) I can go back there and live all those days over again—why not?

MRS. GIBBS. All I can say is, Emily, don't. (*STAGE MANAGER enters down R. and stands hands behind him, looking out.*)

EMILY. (*To STAGE MANAGER, but only half facing him*) But it's true, isn't it? I can go and live—back there—again.

~~STAGE MANAGER. (*Quietly*) Yes, some have tried, but they soon come back here.~~

MRS. GIBBS. (*Gently*) Don't do it, Emily.

~~Mrs. GIBBS. (*Pleading*) Emily, don't. It's not what you think it'd be.~~

~~EMILY. (*Eagerly*) But I won't live over a sad day. I'll choose a happy one— I'll choose the day I first knew that I loved George! (*Leans forward as in pain, pressing L. arm to side*) Oh no, no! Why should that be painful?~~

~~STAGE MANAGER. You not only live it; but you watch yourself living it.~~

~~EMILY. (*Head up, still leaning forward*) Yes?~~

~~STAGE MANAGER. And as you watch it, you see the thing that they—down there—never know. You see the future. You know what's going to happen afterwards.~~

~~EMILY. (*Sitting up*) But is that—painful? Why?~~

~~MRS. GIBBS. That's not the only reason why you shouldn't do it, Emily. When you've been here~~