

~~Now we'll get back to Grover's Corners. It's evening.~~

~~(*Step ladders are moved on from R. and L. to R. C. and L. C. by ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS. GEORGE and EMILY enter R. and L. and mount ladders, where they do their arithmetic as if on windowsills.*)~~

~~(STAGE MANAGER *Yes slowly down R.*)~~

~~You can hear the choir practice goin' on in the Congregational Church. The children are at home doin' their school work. The day is runnin' down like a tired clock. (*He listens a moment, then withdraws off down R.*)~~

(*At the end of the first line of the hymn, lights in the pit have come up showing the heads of the choir silhouetted as they face the stage, while SIMON STIMSON C. conducts them, facing the audience,—a long-faced "character" in his early thirties, now slightly drunk.*)

STIMSON. (*As verse ends*) All right, now do it again. And remember, ladies, music came into the world to give pleasure. Now try it again.

(*EMILY leans out window and peers at GEORGE a moment, then works again*)

(*CHOIR starts again "Blessed Be The Tie That Binds" with increasing volume. At the end of 2nd phrase:*)

(*STIMSON gently*)

Softer—

(*They still increase volume, and he suddenly becomes furious*)

Softer!

(*CHOIR stops*)

Now look here, everybody, get it out of your head that music's only good when it's loud. You leave loudness to the Methodists. You couldn't beat 'em, even if you wanted to. Now again, tenors!

(*CHOIR sings three verses of "Blessed Be The Tie That Binds".*)

~~and gaze at the moon, chins on hands)~~

STIMSON. (*As third verse ends*) That's better; but it ain't no miracle. (*CHOIR sits, at signal from him*) 'Fore I forget it: How many of you'll be able to come in Tuesday afternoon and sing at Fred Hersey's wedding?—Show your hands. (*CHOIR raises hands above orchestra rail. DR. GIBBS puts down book, ponders*) That'll be fine. That'll be right nice. Once again now: "Art thou weary, art thou languid?" It's a question, ladies and gentlemen. Make it talk.

~~DR. GIBBS. (*Getting off R. upstairs*) Oh, George, can you come down a minute?~~

~~GEORGE. (*Listening apatage, as if stairs were behind him*) Yes, Pa. (*Descends ladder, stands above table*)~~

STIMSON. And remember Sunday to take the second verse real soft and sort of die out at the end. Ready? (*The CHOIR sings two verses of "Art thou weary, art thou languid?", the lights fading on them as they start. STIMSON disappears*)

~~DR. GIBBS. (*Facing out throughout, mostly throughout*) Make yourself comfortable, George.~~

GEORGE. Yeah.

~~(*He does not see*)~~

~~EMILY. In square yards of wall-paper.~~

~~(*Faces out, having seen more than a hint*)~~

~~GEORGE. (*A great light breaking*) Oh, I see. Square yards of wall-paper! (*EMILY looks at him,*~~