

Inherit the Wind

By Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee

ACT I

Scene 1

In and around the Hillsboro Courthouse.

The foreground is the actual courtroom with jury box, judge's bench and a scattering of trial-scarred chairs and counsel tables. The back wall of the courtroom is non-existent. On a raked level above it is the courthouse square, the Main Street and the converging streets of the town. This is not so much a literal view of Hillsboro as it is an impression of a sleepy, obscure country town about to be vigorously awakened.

It is important to the concept of the play that the town is visible always, looming there, as much on trial as the individual defendant. The crowd is equally important throughout, so that the court becomes a cock-pit, an arena, with the active spectators on all sides of it.

It is an hour after dawn on a July day that promises to be a scorcher. HOWARD, a boy of thirteen, wanders onto the courthouse lawn. He is barefoot, wearing a pair of his pa's cut-down overalls. He carries an improvised fishing pole and a tin can. He studies the ground carefully, searching for something. A young girl's voice calls from off-stage.

MELINDA

(Calling Sweetly)

How-ard! (HOWARD, annoyed, turns and looks toward the voice. MELINDA, a healthy, pigtailed girt of twelve, skips on from SL) Hello, Howard.

(HOWARD is disinterested, continues to search the ground.)

HOWARD

Lo, Lindy.

MELINDA

(Making conversation)

I think it's gonna be hotter'n yesterday. That rain last night didn't do much good.

HOWARD

(Professionally)

It brought up the worms. *(Suddenly he spots one in the lawn. Swiftly he grabs for it, and holds it up proudly)* Lookit this fat one!

MELINDA

(Shivering)

How can you touch 'em? It makes me all goose-bumpy!

(HOWARD dangles it in front of her face. She backs away, shuddering.)

HOWARD

What're yuh skeered of? You was a worm once.

MELINDA

(Shocked)

I wasn't neither!

HOWARD

You was so! When the whole world was covered with water, there was nuthin' but worms and bogs of jelly, And you and your whole family was worms!

MELINDA

We was not!

HOWARD

Blobs of jelly, then.

MELINDA

Howard Blair, that's sinful talk! I'm gonna tell my pa and he'll make you wash your mouth out with soap!

HOWARD

Ahhh, your old man's a monkey! (MELINDA

gasps. She turns indignantly and runs off SL. HOWARD shrugs in the manner of a man-of-the-world) 'Bye, lindy. (He deposits the worm in his tin can, and continues looking for more, RACHEL enters from SR. She is twenty-two, pretty, but not beautiful. She wears a cotton summer dress, She carries a small composition-paper suitcase. There is a tense, distraught air about her. She may have been crying, She looks about nervously, as if she doesn't want to be seen, When she sees HOWARD, she hesitates in the hope that the boy will not notice her. But he does see RACHEL and watches her with puzzled curiosity, Then he spots another worm, tugs it out of the ground, and holds it up, wriggling.)

HOWARD

(addresses the worm) What do you wanta be when you grow up?

(RACHEL stands uncertainly in the courthouse area. This is strange ground to her. Unsure, she looks about.)

RACHEL

(Tentatively, calling) Mr. Meeker...?

(After a pause, MR. MEEKER, the bailiff, enters. There is no collar on his shirt; his hair is tousled, and there is shaving soap on his face, which he is wiping off with a towel as he enters.)

MEEKER

(A little irritably)

Who is it? *(Surprised)* Why, hello, Rachel. *(crosses to her)* 'Scuse the way I look. *(He wipes the soap out of his ear. Then he notices her suitcase)* Not goin' away, are you? Excitement's just startin'.

RACHEL

(Earnestly)

Mr. Meeker, don't let my father know I came here.

MEEKER

(Shrugs)

The Reverend don't tell me his business. Don't know why I should tell him mine.

RACHEL

I want to see Bert Cates. Is he all right?

MEEKER

Don't know why he shouldn't be. I always figured the safest place in the world is a jail.

RACHEL

Can I go down and see him?

MEEKER

Ain't a very proper place for a minister's daughter

RACHEL

I only want to see him for a minute.

MEEKER

Sit down, Rachel. I'll bring him up. You can talk to him right here in the courtroom (RACHEL *sits in one of the stiff wooden chairs*. MEEKER *starts out, then pauses*) Long as I've been bailiff here, we've never had nothin' but drunks, vagrants, couple of chicken thieves. (*A little dreamily*) Our best catch was the fella from Minnesota that chopped up his wife; we had to extradite him. (*Shakes his head*) Seems kinda queer havin' a schoolteacher in our jail. (*Shrugs*) Might improve the writin' on the walls.

(MEEKER *goes out. Nervously*, RACHEL *looks around at the cold, official furnishings of the courtroom*. MEEKER *returns to the courtroom, followed by BERT CATES*. CATES *is a pale, thin young man of twenty-four. He is quiet, shy, well-mannered, not particularly good looking*. RACHEL *and CATES face each other expressionlessly, without speaking*. MEEKER *pauses in the doorway*.)

MEEKER

I'll leave you two alone to talk. Don't run off, Bert. (MEEKER *goes out*. RACHEL *and CATES look at each other*.)

RACHEL

Hello, Bert

CATES

Rache, I told you not to come here.

RACHEL

I couldn't help it. Nobody saw me. Mr. Meeker won't tell. (Troubled) I keep thinking of you, locked up here –

CATES

(*Trying to cheer her up*)

You know something funny? The food's better than the boarding house. And you'd better not tell anybody how cool it is down there, or we'll have a crime wave every summer.

RACHEL

I stopped by your place and picked up some of your things. A clean shirt, your best tie, some handkerchiefs.

CATES

Thanks.

RACHEL

(Rushing to him)

Bert, why don't you tell 'em it was all a joke? Tell 'em you didn't mean to break a law, and you won't do it again?

CATES

I suppose everybody's all steamed up about Brady coming.

RACHEL

He's coming on a special train out of Chattanooga. Pa's going to the station to meet him. Everybody is!

CATES

(turning away)

Strike up the band.

RACHEL

Bert, it's still not too late. Why can't you admit you're wrong? If the biggest man in the country -next to the President, maybe – if Matthew Harrison Brady comes here to tell the whole world how wrong you are –

CATES

(turning back angrily)

You still think I did wrong?

RACHEL

Why did you do it?

CATES

You know why I did it. I had the book in my hand, Hunter's *Civic Biology*. I opened it up, and read my sophomore science class Chapter 17, Darwin's *Origin of Species*. (RACHEL starts to protest) All it says is that man wasn't just stuck here like a geranium in a flower pot; that living comes from a long miracle, it didn't just happen in seven days.

RACHEL

There's a law against it.

CATES

I know that.

RACHEL

Everybody says what you did is bad.

CATES

It isn't as simple as that. Good or bad, black or white, night or day. Do you know, at the top of the world the twilight is six months long?

RACHEL

But we don't live at the top of the world. We live in Hillsboro, and when the sun goes down, it's dark. And why do you try to make it different? (RACHEL gets the shirt, tie, and handkerchiefs from the suitcase) Here.

CATES

Thanks, Rache.

RACHEL

Why can't you be on the right side of things?

CATES

Your father's side. (RACHEL starts to leave. CATES runs after her) Rache –
(They embrace. MEEKER enters with a long-handled broom.)

MEEKER

(Clears his throat)

I gotta sweep.

(Rachel breaks away and hurries off.)

CATES

(Calling)

Thanks for the shirt!

(MEEKER, who has been sweeping impassively now stops and leans on the broom.)

MEEKER

Imagine, Matthew Harrison Brady, comin' here. I voted for him for President. Twice. In nineteen hundred and again in oh-eight. Wasn't old enough to vote for him the first time he ran. But my pa did. (Turns proudly to CATES) I seen him once. At a Chautauqua meeting in Chattanooga. (Impressed, remembering) The tent-poles shook! (CATES moves nervously) Who's gonna be your lawyer, son?

CATES

I don't know yet. I wrote to that newspaper in Baltimore. They're sending somebody.

MEEKER

(Resumes sweeping) He better be loud.

CATES

(Picking up the shirt)

You want me to go back down?

MEEKER

No need. You can stay up here if you want.

CATES

(Going toward the jail)

I'm supposed to be in jail; I'd better be in jail!

(MEEKER shrugs and follows CATES off. The lights fade in the courtroom area, and the town swings into view morning of a hot July day. The STOREKEEPER enters SR, unlocking his store. MRS. KREBS saunters across the square.)

STOREKEEPER

Warm enough for you, Mrs. Krebs?

MRS. KREBS

The Good Lord guv us the heat, and the Good Lord guv us the glands to sweat with.

STOREKEEPER

I bet the Devil ain't so obliging.

MRS. KREBS

Don't intend to find out.

(The REVEREND JEREMIAH BROWN, a gaunt, thin-lipped man, strides on. He looks around, scowling.)

STOREKEEPER

Good morning, Reverend.

BROWN

'Morning.

MRS. KREBS

'Morning, Reverend.

BROWN

Mrs. Krebs. (*Shouting off*) Where's the banner? Why haven't you raised the banner?

CORKIN

(*Entering, followed by another workman*)

Paint didn't dry 'til jist now.

(*They are carrying a rolled-up canvas banner.*)

BROWN

See that you have it up before Mr. Brady arrives. (COOPER *enters, gestures "hello" to the others.*)

CORKIN

Fast as we can do it, Reverend.

BROWN

We must show him at once what kind of a community this is.

CORKIN

Yes, Reverend. Come on, Phil. Hep.

(*They rig the banner to halyards between the buildings.*)

MRS. KREBS

Big day, Reverend.

CORKIN

Indeed it is. Picnic lunch ready, Mrs. Krebs!

MRS. KREBS

Fit'n fer a king.

(BANNISTER, PLATT *and other townspeople gather excitedly. They are colorful small-town citizens, but not caricatured rubes.*)

BOLLINGER

(*Running on, carrying his cornet*)

Station master says old 94's on time out of Chattanooga. And Brady's on board all right!

COOPER

The minute Brady gets here, people gonna pour in. Town's gonna fill up like a rain barrel in a flood.

STOREKEEPER

That means business!

(MELINDA and her mother come on from USR and set up a lemonade stand.)

BANNISTER

Where they gonna stay? Where we gonna sleep all them people?

MRS. KREBS

They got money, we'll sleep 'em.

PLATT

Looks like the biggest day for this town since we put up Coxey's army!

HOWARD

(Bolting on)

Hey! Ted Finney's got out his big bass drum. And y' oughta see what they done to the depot! Ribbons all over the rainspouts!

MELINDA

Lemonade! Lemonade!

(The workmen hoist the banner above the heads of the crowd, where it hangs for the remainder of the action. The banner blares "READ YOUR BIBLE")

CORKIN

It's all ready, Reverend.

(The townspeople applaud. BOLLINGER toots a ragged fanfare. A HAWKER in a white apron wheels on a hot-dog stand. The crowd mills about, in holiday spirit.)

HAWKER

Hot dogs! Get your red-hots! Hot dogs!

(MRS. MCCLAIN enters with a shopping bag full of frond fans.)

MRS. MCCLAIN

Get your fans. Compliments of Maley's Funeral Home. Thirty-five cents.

(The stage is now full of eager and expectant people. MRS. BLAIR shoves her way through the crowd, looking for her son.)

MRS. BLAIR

(Calling)

Howard. Howard!

HOWARD
(Racing to her)

Hey, Ma. This is just like the county fair.

MRS. BLAIR

Now you settle down and stop runnin' around and pay some attention when Mr. Brady gets here. Spit down your hair. (HOWARD spits in her hand, and she pastes down a cowlick) Hold still! (HOWARD flashes off through the crowd. ELIJAH, a "holy man" from the hills, comes on with a wooden vegetable crate full of books. He is bearded, wild-haired, dressed in a tattered burlap smock. His feet are bare. He sets up shop between the hot dogs and the lemonade, with a placard reading "WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?")

ELIJAH

(In a shrill, screeching voice)

Buy a Bible! Your guidebook to eternal life!

(E.K. HORNBECK wanders on from SL, carrying a suitcase. He is a newspaperman in his middle thirties, who sneers politely at everything, including himself. His clothes – those of a sophisticated city-dweller – contrast sharply with the attire of the townspeople. HORNBECK looks around, with wonderful contempt.)

MRS. MCCLAIN

(To HORNBECK)

Want a fan? Compliments of Maley's Funeral Home – thirty-five cents!

HORNBECK

I'd die first.

MRS. KREBS

(Unctuously, to HORNBECK)

You're a stranger, aren't you, ma'am? Want a nice clean place to stay?

HORNBECK

I had a nice clean place to stay, madame, And I left it to come here.

MRS. KREBS

(Undaunted)

You're gonna need a room.

HORNBECK

I have a reservation at the Mansion House.

MRS. KREBS

Oh? (*She sniffs*) That's all right, I suppose, for them as likes havin' a privy practically in the bedroom!

HORNBECK

The unplumbed and the plumbing-less depths! Ahhhh, Hillsboro – Heavenly Hillsboro. The buckle on the Bible Belt.

(The HAWKER and ELIJAH converge on HORNBECK from opposite sides.)

HAWKER

Hot dog?

ELIJAH

Bible?

(HORNBECK up-ends his suitcase and sits on it.)

HORNBECK

Now that poses a pretty problem! Which is hungrier-my stomach or my soul?

(HORNBECK buys a hot dog.)

ELIJAH

(*Miffed*)

Are you an Evolutionist? An infidel? A sinner?

HORNBECK

(*Munching the hot dog*)

The worst kind. I write for a newspaper. (HORNBECK offers his hand) I'm E.K. Hornbeck, *Baltimore Herald*. I don't believe I caught your name...?

ELIJAH

(*Impressively*)

They call me ... Elijah.

HORNBECK

(*Pleased*)

Elijah! Yes! Why, I had no idea you were still around. I've read some of your stuff.

ELIJAH

(*Haughtily*)

I neither read nor write.

HORNBECK

Oh. Excuse me. I must be thinking of another Elijah.

(An ORGAN-GRINDER enters, with a live monkey on a string. HORNBECK spies the monkey gleefully; he greets the monk with arms outstretched.)

Grandpa!

(Crosses to the monkey, bends down and shakes the monkey's hand.)

Welcome to Hillsboro, sir!

Have you come to testify for the defense

Or for the prosecution?

(The monkey, oddly enough, doesn't answer)

No comment?

That's fairly safe. But I warn you, sir,

You can't compete with all these monkeyshines.

(MELINDA hands the monkey a penny.)

MELINDA

Look. He took my penny.

HORNBECK

How could you ask for better proof than that?

There's the father of the human race.

TIMMY

(Running on, breathlessly)

Train's coming! I seen the smoke 'way up the track.

(The train whistle sounds off.)

BROWN

(Taking command)

All the members of the Bible League, get ready! Let us show Mr. Brady the spirit in which we welcome him to Hillsboro.

(MRS. BLAIR blows her pitch pipe and the townspeople parade off singing "Marching to Zion." Even the ORGAN-GRINDER leaves his monkey tied to the hurdy-gurdy and joins the departing crowd. But HORNBECK stays behind.)

HORNBECK

Amen

(To the monkey)

Shield your eyes, monk!

You're about to meet the mightiest of your descendants.

A man who wears a cathedral for a cloak,

A church spire for a hat,

Whose tread has the thunder of the legions of the Lion-Hearted!

(The STOREKEEPER emerges from this establishment and looks in his own store window. HORNBECK turns to him)

You're missing the show.

STOREKEEPER

Somebody's got to mind the store.

HORNBECK

May I ask your opinion, ma'am, on Evolution?

(Off-stage, a cheer. Then the thumping drum into "Gimme That Old-Time Religion" sung by the unseen townspeople.)

HORNBECK

(To the monkey)

Sound the trumpet,

Beat the drum.

Everybody's come to town.

To see your competition

Alive and breathing in the county cooler:

A high school teach – wild and untamed!

(The crowd surges back, augmented, In a Jubilant parade. Many are carrying banners, reading:

ARE YOU A MAN OR A MONKEY?

AMEND THE CONSTITUTION – PROHIBIT DARWIN

SAVE OUR SCHOOLS FROM SIN

MY ANCESTORS AINT APES!

WELCOME MATTHEW HARRISON BRADY

DOWN WITH DARWIN

BE A SWEET ANGEL

DONT MONKEY WITH OUR SCHOOLS!

DARWIN IS WRONG!

DOWN WITH EVOLUTION

SWEETHEART, COME UNTO THE LORD

HORNBECK *goes to the background to watch the show.* MATTHEW HARRISON BRADY *comes on, a benign giant of a man, wearing a pith helmet. He basks in the cheers and the excitement, like a patriarch surrounded by his children. He is gray, balding, paunchy, an indeterminate sixty-five. He is followed by* MRS BRADY; the MAYOR; REVEREND BROWN; TOM DAVENPORT, *the circuit district attorney: some newspapermen, and an army of the curious.)*

ALL
(Singing)

Gimme that old-time religion,
Gimme that old-time religion,
Gimme that old-time religion,
It's good enough for me!

It was good enough for father,
It was good enough for father,
It was good enough for father,
And it's good enough for me!

It was good for the Hebrew children,
It was good for the Hebrew children,
It was good for the Hebrew children,
And it's good enough for me!

Gimme that old-time religion,
Gimme that old-time religion,
Gimme that old-time religion,
It's good enough for me!

MAYOR
(Speaks)

Mr. Brady, if you please.

REVEREND
(Singing)

It is good enough for Brady.

CROWD

It is good enough for Brady,
It is good enough for Brady,
And it's good enough for me!

(Cheers and applause. BRADY seems to carry with him a built-in spotlight. So MRS. BRADY – pretty, fashionably dressed, a proper “Second Lady” to the nation’s “Second Man” – seems always to be in his shadow. This does not annoy her. SARAH BRADY is content that all her thoughts and emotions should gain the name of action through her husband. BRADY removes his hat and raises his hand. Obediently, the crowd falls to a hushed anticipatory silence.)

BRADY

Friends – and I can see most of you are my friends, from the way you have decked out your beautiful city of Hillsboro –
(There is a pleased reaction, and a spattering of applause. When BRADY speaks, there can be no doubt of his personal magnetism. Even HORNBECK, who slouches contemptuously at far left, is impressed with the speaker’s power; for here is a man to be reckoned with) Mrs. Brady and I are delighted to be among you!
(BRADY takes his wife’s hand and draws her to his side) I could only wish one thing that you had not given us quite so warm a welcome! *(BRADY removes his alpaca coat. The crowd laughs. BRADY beams. MRS. MCCLAIN hands him a frond fan. BRADY takes it.)* Bless you. *(He fans himself vigorously)* My friends of Hillsboro, you know why I have come here. I have not come merely to prosecute a lawbreaker, an arrogant youth who has spoken out against the Revealed Word. I have come because what has happened in a schoolroom of your town has unloosed a wicked attack from the big cities of the North! – an attack upon the law which you have so wisely placed among the statutes of this state. I am here to defend that which is most precious in the hearts of all of us the living Truth of the Scriptures!

(Applause and emotional cheering.)

PHOTOGRAPHER

Mr. Brady. Mr. Brady, a picture?

BRADY

I shall be happy to oblige! *(The townspeople, changing to “Go Tell It on the Mountain,” move upstage. BRADY begins to organize a group photograph. To his wife)* Sarah ...

MRS. BRADY

(Moving out of the camera range)

No, Matt. Just you and the dignitaries.

BRADY

You are the Mayor, are you not?

MAYOR

(Stepping forward, awkwardly)

I am, sir.

BRADY

(Extending his hand)

My name is Matthew Harrison Brady.

MAYOR

Oh, I know. Everybody knows that. I had a speech of welcome ready, but somehow it didn't seem necessary.

BRADY

I shall be honored to hear your greeting, sir.

(The MAYOR clears his throat and takes some notes from his pocket.)

MAYOR

(Sincerely)

Mr. Matthew Harrison Brady, this municipality is proud to have within its city limits the warrior who has always fought for us ordinary people. The lady folks of this town wouldn't have the vote if it wasn't for you, fightin' to give 'em all that suffrage. Mr. President Wilson wouldn't never have got to the White House and won the war if it wasn't for you supportin' him. And, in conclusion, the Governor of our state . . .

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hold it! *(The camera clicks)* Thank you.

(MRS. BRADY is disturbed by the informality of the pose.)

MRS. BRADY

Matt – you didn't have your coat on.

BRADY

(To the PHOTOGRAPHER) Perhaps we should have a more formal pose *(As MRS. BRADY helps him on with his coat)* Who is the spiritual leader of the community?

MAYOR

That would be the Reverend Jeremiah Brown.
(REVEREND BROWN *steps forward.*)

BROWN

Your servant, and the Lord's.
(BRADY *and* BROWN *shake hands.*)

BRADY

The Reverend at my left, the Mayor at my right. (*Stiffly, they face the camera*)
We must look grave, gentlemen, but not too serious. Hopeful, I think is the word. We must look hopeful. (BRADY *assumes the familiar oratorical pose. The camera clicks. Unnoticed, the barefoot HOWARD has stuck his head, mouth agape, into the picture. The MAYOR refers to the last page of his undelivered speech.*)

MAYOR

In conclusion, the Governor of our state has vested in me the authority to confer upon you a commission as Honorary Colonel in the State Militia.
(*Applause.*)

BRADY

(*Savoring it*)

"Colonel Brady." I like the sound of that!

BROWN

We thought you might be hungry, Colonel Brady, after your train ride.

MAYOR

So the members of our Ladies' Auxiliary have prepared a buffet lunch.

BRADY

Splendid, splendid – I could do with a little snack.

(*Some of the townspeople, at BROWN'S direction, carry on a long picnic table, loaded with foodstuffs, potato salad, fried turkey, pickled fruits, cold meats, and all the picnic paraphernalia. RACHEL comes on following the table, carrying a pitcher of lemonade which she places on the table.*)

BANNISTER

(*An eager beaver*)

You know, Mr. Brady – Colonel Brady – all of us here voted for you three times.

BRADY

I trust it was in three separate elections!

(There is laughter. TOM DAVENPORT, a crisp, business-like young man, offers his hand to BRADY.)

DAVENPORT

Sir, I'm Tom Davenport.

BRADY

(Beaming)

Of course. Circuit district attorney. *(Putting his arm around DAVENPORT'S shoulder)* We'll be a team, won't we, young man! Quite a team! *(The picnic table is in place. The sight of the food being uncovered is a magnetic attraction to BRADY. He beams, and moistens his lips)* Ahhhh, what a handsome repast! *(Some of the women grin sheepishly at the flattery. BRADY is a great eater, and he piles mountains of food on his plate)* What a challenge it is, to fit on the old armor again! To test the steel of our Truth against the blasphemies of Science! To stand –

MRS. BRADY

Matthew, it's a warm day. Remember, the doctor told you not to overeat.

BRADY

Don't worry, Mother. Just a bite or two. *(He hoists a huge drumstick on his plate, then assails a mountain of potato salad)* Who among you knows the defendant? – Cates, is that his name?

DAVENPORT

Well, we all know him.

MAYOR

Just about everybody in Hillsboro knows everybody else.

BRADY

Can someone tell me – is this fellow Cates a criminal by nature?

RACHEL

(Almost involuntarily)

Bert isn't a criminal. He's good, really. He's just –

(RACHEL seems to shrink from the attention that centers on her. She takes an empty bowl and starts off with it.)

BRADY

Wait, my child. Is Mr. Cates your friend?

RACHEL

(Looking down, trying to get away)

I can't tell you anything about him-

BROWN

(Fiercely)

Rachel! *(To BRADY)* My daughter will be pleased to answer any questions about Bertram Cates.

BRADY

Your daughter, Reverend? You must be proud, indeed. *(BROWN nods. BRADY takes a mouthful of potato salad, turns to RACHEL)* Now. How did you come to be acquainted with Mr. Cates?

RACHEL

(Suffering)

At school. I'm a schoolteacher, too.

BRADY

I'm sure you teach according to the precepts of the Lord.

RACHEL

I try. My pupils are only second-graders.

BRADY

Has Mr. Cates ever tried to pollute your mind with his heathen dogma?

RACHEL

Bert isn't a heathen!

BRADY

(Sympathetically)

I understand your loyalty, my child. This man, the man in your jailhouse, is a fellow schoolteacher. Likable, no doubt. And you are loath to speak out against him before all these people. *(BRADY takes her arm, still carrying his plate. He moves her easily away from the others. As they move)* Think of me as a friend, Rachel. And tell me what troubles you.

(BRADY moves her upstage and their conversation continues, inaudible to us. BRADY continues to eat, RACHEL speaks to him earnestly. The townspeople stand around the picnic table, munching the buffet lunch.)

BANNISTER

Who's gonna be the defense attorney?

DAVENPORT

We don't know yet. It hasn't been announced.

MAYOR

(He hands a modest picnic plate to MRS. BRADY)

Whoever it is, he won't have much of a chance against your husband, will he, Mrs. Brady?

(There are chortles of self-confident amusement. But HORNBECK saunters toward the picnic table.)

HORNBECK

I disagree.

MAYOR

Who are you?

HORNBECK

Hornbeck. E.K. Hornbeck, of the Baltimore *Herald*.

BROWN

(Can't quite place the name, but it has unpleasant connotations.)

Hornbeck ... Hornbeck ...

(BRADY and RACHEL exit.)

HORNBECK

I am a reporter, bearing news.

When this sovereign state determined to indict

The sovereign mind of a less-than-sovereign schoolteacher,

My editors decided there was more than a headline here.

The Baltimore *Herald*, therefore, is happy to announce

That it is sending two representatives to "Heavenly Hillsboro":

The most brilliant reporter in America today,

Myself.

And the most agile legal mind of the Twentieth Century,

Henry Drummond.

(This name is like a whip-crack.)

MRS. BRADY

(Stunned)

Drummond!

BROWN

Henry Drummond, the agnostic?

BANNISTER

I heard about him. He got those two Chicago child murders off just the other day.

BROWN

A vicious, godless man! (Blithely, HORNBECK reaches across the picnic table and chooses a drumstick. He waves it jauntily toward the astonished part.)

HORNBECK

A Merry Christmas and a Jolly Fourth of July!

(Munching the drumstick, HORNBECK goes off. Unnoticed, BRADY and RACHEL have left the scene, missing this significant disclosure. There is a stunned pause.)

DAVENPORT

(Genuinely impressed)

Henry Drummond for the defense. Well!

BROWN

Henry Drummond is an agent of darkness. *(With resolution)* We won't let him in the town!

DAVENPORT

I don't know by what law you could keep him out.

MAYOR

(Rubbing his chin)

I'll look it up in the town ordinances.

BROWN

I saw Drummond once. In a courtroom in Ohio. A man was on trial for a most brutal crime. Although he knew – and admitted – the man was guilty, Drummond was perverting the evidence to cast the guilt away from the accused and onto you and me and all of society.

MRS. BRADY

Henry Drummond. Oh, dear me.

BROWN

I can still see him. A slouching hulk of a man, whose head juts out like an animal's. (*He imitates DRUMMOND'S slouch. MELINDA watches, frightened*) You look into his face, and you wonder why God made such a man. And then you know that God didn't make him, that he is a creature of the Devil, perhaps even the Devil himself!

(*Little MELINDA utters a frightened cry, and buries her head in the folds of her mother's skirt. BRADY re-enters with RACHEL, who has a confused and guilty look. BRADY'S plate has been scraped clean; only the fossil of the turkey leg remains. He looks at the ring of faces, which have been disturbed by BROWN'S description of the heretic DRUMMOND. MRS. BRADY comes toward him.*)

MRS. BRADY

Matt-they're bringing Henry Drummond for the defense.

BRADY

(*Pale*)

Drummond? (*The townspeople are impressed by the impact of this name on BRADY*) Henry Drummond!

BROWN

We won't allow him in the town.

MAYOR

(*Lamely*)

I think-maybe the Board of Health –
(*He trails off.*)

BRADY

(*Crossing thoughtfully*)

No. (*He turns*) I believe we should *welcome* Henry Drummond.

MAYOR

(*Astonished*)

Welcome him!

BRADY

If the enemy sends its Goliath into battle, it magnifies our cause. Henry Drummond has stalked the courtrooms of this land for forty years. When he fights, headlines follow. (*With growing fervor*) The whole world will be

watching our victory over Drummond. (*Dramatically*) If St. George had slain a dragonfly, who would remember him.

(*Cheers and pleased reactions from the crowd.*)

MRS. BLAIR

Would you care to finish off the pickled apricots, Mr. Brady? (BRADY *takes them.*)

BRADY

It would be a pity to see them go to waste.

MRS. BRADY

Matt. do you think –

BRADY

Have to build up my strength, Mother, for the battle ahead. (*Munching thoughtfully*) Now what will Drummond do? He'll try to make us forget the lawbreaker and put the law on trial (*He turns to RACHEL*) But we'll have the answer for Mr. Drummond. Right here, in some of the things this sweet young lady has told me.

RACHEL

But Mr. Brady –

(BRADY *turns to BROWN.*)

BRADY

A fine girl, Reverend. Fine girl!

(RACHEL *seems tormented, but helpless.*)

BROWN

Rachel has always been taught to do the righteous thing.

(RACHEL *moves off.*)

BRADY

I'm sure she has.

(MELINDA *hands him a glass of lemonade.*)

BRADY

Thank you. A toast, then! A toast to tomorrow! To the beginnings of the trial and the success of our cause. A toast, in good American lemonade!

(*He stands lifting his glass. Others rise and join the toast. BRADY downs his drink.*)

MRS. BRADY

Mr. Mayor, it's time now for Mr. Brady's nap. He always likes to nap after a meal.

MAYOR

We have a suite ready for you at the Mansion House. I think you'll find your bags already there.

BRADY

Very thoughtful, considerate of you.

MAYOR

If you'll come with me-it's only across the square.

BRADY

I want to thank all the members of the Ladies' Auxiliary for preparing this nice little picnic repast.

MRS. KREBS

(Beaming)

Our pleasure, sir.

BRADY

And if I seemed to pick at my food, I don't want you to think I didn't enjoy it. *(Apologetically)* But you see, we had a box lunch on the train.

(There is a good-humored reaction to this, and the BRADYS move off accompanied by the throng of admirers, singing "If it is good enough for Brady." Simultaneously the lights fade down on the courthouse lawn as the building swing open and fade up on the courtroom area. HORNBECK saunters on, chewing at an apple. He glances about the courtroom as if he were searching for something. When RACHEL hurries on, HORNBECK drops back into a shadow and he does not see her.)

RACHEL

(Distressed)

Mr. Meeker. Mr. Meeker? *(She calls down toward the jail)* Bert, can you hear me? Bert, you've got to tell me what to do. I don't know what to do –

(HORNBECK takes a bite out of his apple. RACHEL turns sharply at the sound, surprised to find someone else in the courtroom.)

HORNBECK

(Quietly)

I give advice, at remarkably low hourly rates. Ten percent off to unmarried young ladies, and special discounts to the clergy and their daughters.

RACHEL

What are you doing here?

HORNBECK

(I'm inspecting the battlefield
The night before the battle. Before it's cluttered
With the debris of journalistic camp-followers.

(Hiking himself up on a window-ledge)

I'm scouting myself an observation post
To watch the fray.

(RACHEL starts to go off)

Wait. Why do you want to see Bert Cates?

What's he to you, or you to him?

Can it be that both beauty and biology

Are on our side?

*(Again she starts to leave. But HORNBECK jumps down from his ledge
and crosses toward her)*

There's a newspaper here I'd like to have you see.

It just arrived

From that wicked modern Sodom and Gomorrah,

Baltimore!

*(RACHEL looks at him quizzically as he fishes a tear sheet out of his
suitcase)*

Not the entire edition, of course.

No Happy Hooligan, Barney Google, Abe Kabibble. Merely the part worth
reading: E.K. Hornbeck's

Brilliant little symphony of words.

(Hornbeck offers her the sheet, but she doesn't take it)

You should read it.

(Almost reluctantly, she starts to read)

My typewriter's been singing

A sweet, sad song about the Hillsboro heretic,

B. Cates, boy-Socrates, latter-day Dreyfus,

Romeo with a biology book.

(HORNBECK looks over his shoulder, admiring his own writing. He takes another bite out of the apple)

HORNBECK

I may be rancid butter,
But I'm on your side of the bread.

RACHEL

(Looking up, surprised)

This sounds as if you're a friend of Bert's.

HORNBECK

As much as a critic can be a friend to anyone.

(He takes another bite out of his apple, then offers it to RACHEL.)

Have a bite?

(RACHEL, busily reading, shakes her head)

Don't worry. I'm not the serpent, Little Eva.

This isn't from the Tree of Knowledge. You won't find one in the orchards of Heavenly Hillsboro.

Birches, beeches, butternuts. A few ignorance bushes.

No Tree of Knowledge.

(RACHEL has finished reading the copy; and she looks up at HORNBECK with a new respect.)

RACHEL

Will this be published here, in the local paper?

HORNBECK

In the "Weekly Bugle"? Or whatever it is they call the leaden stuff they blow through the local linotypes? I doubt it.

RACHEL

It would help Bert if the people here could read this. It would help them to understand ...

(She appraises HORNBECK, puzzled)

I never would have expected you to write an article like this. You seem so –

HORNBECK

Cynical? That's my fascination.

I do hateful things, for which people love me,

And lovable things for which they hate me.

I am friend of enemies, the enemy of friends;

I am admired for my detestability.
I am both Poles and the Equator,
With no Temperate Zones between.

RACHEL

You make it sound as if Bert is a hero. I'd like to think that, but I can't. A schoolteacher is a public servant
I think he should do what the law and the school-board want him to. If the superintendent says, "Miss Brown, you're to teach from Whitley's *Second Reader*," I don't feel I have to give him an argument.

HORNBECK

Ever give your pupils a snap-quiz on existence?

RACHEL

What?

HORNBECK

Where we came from, where we are, where we're going? RACHEL

All the answers to those questions are in the Bible. HORNBECK
(With a genuine incredulity)

All?! You feed the youth of Hillsboro from the little truck
garden of your mind?

RACHEL

(Offended, angry and turning away)

I think there must be something wrong in what Bert believes, if a great man like Mr. Brady comes here to speak out against him.

HORNBECK

Matthew Harrison Brady came here to find himself a stump to shout from.
That's all.

RACHEL

You couldn't understand. Mr. Brady is the champion of ordinary people, like us.

HORNBECK

Wake up, Sleeping Beauty. The ordinary people played a dirty trick on Colonel Brady. They ceased to exist.

(RACHEL looks puzzled)

Time was
When Brady was the hero of the hinterland,
Water-bay for the great unwashed.
But they've got inside plumbing in their heads these days!
There's a highway through the backwoods now,
And the trees of the forest have reluctantly made room
For their leafless cousins, the telephone poles.
Henry's Lizzie rattles into town
And leaves behind the Yesterday-Messiah,
Standing in the road alone
In a cloud of flivver dust.

(Emphatically, he brandishes the apple)

The boob has been de-boobed.
Colonel Brady's virginal small-towner
Has been *had* –
By Marconi and Montgomery Ward.

(HORNBECK strolls out of the courtroom and onto the town square; the lights dissolve as before from area to the other. RACHEL goes off in the darkness. The town swings back into view. The store fronts glow with sunset light. The SHOPKEEPER pulls the shade in his store window and locks the door. MRS. MCCLAIN crosses from SL fanning herself wearily.)

STOREKEEPER

Gonna be a hot night, Mrs. McClain.

MRS. MCCLAIN

I thought we'd get some relief when the sun went down.

(HORNBECK tosses away his apple core, then leans back and watches as the SHOPKEEPER and MRS. MCCLAIN go off. The ORGAN-GRINDER comes on, idly with his monkey. MELINDA enters alone, back to the audience, center stage. HORNBECK, silent and motionless, watches from the side. The faces of the buildings are now red with the dying moment of sunset.

A long, ominous shadow appears across the buildings, cast from a figure approaching from off stage. MELINDA, awed, watches the shadow grow. HENRY DRUMMOND enters, carrying a valise. He is hunched over, head jutting forward, exactly as BROWN described him. The red of the

*sun behind him hits his slouching back, and his face is in shadow.
MELINDA turns and looks at DRUMMOND, full in the face.)*

MELINDA
(Terrified)

It's the Devil!

*(Screaming with fear MELINDA runs off. HORNBECK crosses slowly
toward DRUMMOND, and offers his hand.)*

HORNBECK

Hello, Devil. Welcome to Hell.