

PAUL: Did you know Beverly Strauss?  
 ANNE: Not well.  
 PAUL: Maybe they're walking the dog.  
 ANNE, *calling into hole*: And I'm a dog lover! *Beat*: You want to play Simon Says?  
 PAUL: Shall we try the window?  
 ANNE: Why not? I've always loved shrieking.  
 PAUL: Hey, ma, throw me a nickel. *He tries to open the window. It is stuck.* Would you lend me a hand?  
 ANNE: Sure.  
 PAUL: When I count three?  
 ANNE: On the three or four?  
 PAUL: What?  
 ANNE: One-two tug or one-two-three tug?  
 PAUL: Care for the extra count for preparation?  
 ANNE: Whatever you say.  
 PAUL: One-two-three tug.  
 ANNE: Roger. *They tug. Nothing happens. Continues.*  
 PAUL: Once more. One-two-three tug! *Again nothing. Wait a minute. He takes off his jacket, gets on his knees on the radiator and tries mightily to open it. Meanwhile, Anne goes to the other window and opens it easily. It's coming. It's coming. He opens it about an inch. Then he sees the other window:* Why didn't you tell me?  
 ANNE: I thought it might be a matter of machismo.  
 PAUL, *good-naturedly*: You're a crazy lady. *Indicating the open window*: Shall I?  
 ANNE: Please.  
 PAUL: Hello! Hello! There's a woman in the kitchen downstairs. Hello!  
 ANNE: Hello, miss! Madam!  
 PAUL: You! The lady in the half-slip! Damn, she ran out of the room.  
 ANNE: People of New York! There's a nice young couple trapped in apartment 4B, six rooms, still rent-controlled, three twenty-five a month! Get us out and we'll give you the agent's name! *Beat*: Do you think we'll come to hate each other after a few months?  
 PAUL: Permit a master. *Calls out window*: Ladies and gentlemen, I see a parking space!

## DIRTY HANDS

by Jean-Paul Sartre,  
 translated by Lionel Abel

## ACT III

The play is set during World War II in the fictitious European country of Illyria. The German army is in occupation. They are opposed by an underground proletarian party (as well as by the Russians). Within the party, an assassination is planned against one of its own members, Hoederer. Hugo, the central character in the play, is a young party member. He is an intellectual from a wealthy family; an ineffectual idealist. He yearns for an assignment in which he can prove his dedication. He insists on being allowed to carry out the mission to kill Hoederer. It is arranged for him to become Hoederer's secretary so that he may gain his confidence and get past his bodyguards.

In the following scene Hugo and his wife, Jessica, are at Hoederer's quarters, a summerhouse in the country. They have recently arrived and are arranging their room and unpacking. Jessica has opened a suitcase that she was not supposed to open. In it, she found a revolver.

JESSICA: What's that revolver doing here?  
 HUGO: I always have one with me.  
 JESSICA: That's not so. You never had one before we came here. And you never had that suitcase either. You bought them both at the same time. Why did you get a revolver?  
 HUGO: Do you really want to know?  
 JESSICA: Yes, and be serious. You have no right to keep things like this from me.  
 HUGO: You won't tell anybody?  
 JESSICA: I won't tell a soul.  
 HUGO: It's to kill Hoederer.  
 JESSICA: Don't tease me, Hugo. I tell you I'm not playing now.  
 HUGO, *he laughs*: Am I playing? Or am I being serious? There's a mystery for you. Jessica, you are going to be the wife of an assassin!

**JESSICA:** But you could never do it, my poor little lamb, would you like me to kill him for you? I'll go offer myself to him and then—

**HUGO:** Thanks, and anyhow you would fail! I shall act for myself.

**JESSICA:** But why do you want to kill him? You don't even know the man.

**HUGO:** So that my wife will take me seriously. Wouldn't you take me seriously then?

**JESSICA:** Me? I would admire you, hide you, feed you, and entertain you in your hideaway. And when the neighbors turned us in I would throw myself on you despite the police, and I would take you in my arms crying: "I love you."

**HUGO:** Tell it to me now.

**JESSICA:** What?

**HUGO:** That you love me.

**JESSICA:** I love you.

**HUGO:** But mean it.

**JESSICA:** I love you.

**HUGO:** But you don't really mean it.

**JESSICA:** What's got into you? Are you playing?

**HUGO:** No, I'm not playing.

**JESSICA:** Then why did you ask me that? That's not like you.

**HUGO:** I don't know. I need to think that you love me. I have a right to that. Come on, say it. Say it as if you meant it.

**JESSICA:** I love you. I love you. No: I love you. Oh, go to the devil! Let's hear you say it.

**HUGO:** I love you.

**JESSICA:** You see, you don't say it any better than I.

**HUGO:** Jessica, you don't believe what I told you.

**JESSICA:** That you love me?

**HUGO:** That I'm going to kill Hoederer.

**JESSICA:** Of course I believe it.

**HUGO:** Try hard, Jessica. Be serious.

**JESSICA:** Why do I have to be serious?

**HUGO:** Because we can't always be playing.

**JESSICA:** I don't like to be serious, but I'll do the best I can. I'll play at being serious.

**HUGO:** Look me in the eyes. No. Don't laugh. Listen to me. It's true about Hoederer. That's why the party sent me here.

**JESSICA:** I believe you. But why didn't you tell me sooner?

**HUGO:** Perhaps you would have refused to come here with me.

**JESSICA:** Why should I refuse? It's a man's job and has nothing to do with me.

**HUGO:** This is going to be no joke, you know. He seems to be a hard guy.

**JESSICA:** Oh well, we'll chloroform him and tie him across a cannon's mouth.

**HUGO:** Jessica! I'm serious.

**JESSICA:** Me too.

**HUGO:** You are playing at being serious. You told me so yourself.

**JESSICA:** No. That's what you're doing.

**HUGO:** You've got to believe me, I beg you.

**JESSICA:** I'll believe you when you believe that I'm serious.

**HUGO:** All right, I believe you.

**JESSICA:** No. You're playing at believing me.

**HUGO:** This can go on forever!

## THE GOODBYE PEOPLE

by Herb Gardner

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### Act I

If plays had mottoes, the motto of *The Goodbye People* would probably be Dreamers of the World Unite! And unite they do in this funny and touching play by Herb Gardner. Dreamer number one is Max, seventy years old, who "decided *not* to die" of a heart attack so that he could resurrect his once-successful but long-defunct Coney Island restaurant (Max's Hawaiian Ecstasy). His reason: "I gotta leave something you should know I been around, somethin' says I was alive, somethin' terrific, somethin' classy . . . somethin' beautiful." Dreamer number two