

MIAMI UNIVERSITY
OXFORD, OHIO

DEPARTMENT OF ROMANIC LANGUAGES

Dear Nene:

Alas! This is the letter that arrived this morning to tell us we did not win the play competition. However there is one consolation. We did get into the finals, and as the Bricker writes, something may come out of it yet.

Anyway I said I'd let you know as soon as I heard, and I'm keeping my promise.

If anything new comes up, I'll keep you in touch. Meantime, did you have a suggestion about what 4-6 pages to reprint in my anthology?

Is there any chance that the English version will be printed in Chile?

Best wishes for 1960

Jan 14. '60.

Wilbur

C A R O L I N A

A Play in One Act.
by Isidora Aguirre de Sinclair
registered as intellectual property in Chile

Characters.

Caroline : 28 years
Charles, her husband, 33 years
Michael, a student
A porter

~~Usual station scene.~~ Location : Station scene in Chile ^{a small local junction stop}

The curtain opens in a set representing a village station (not quite a halt).
The time is late afternoon in summer.

Epoch : up to date. There is movement typical of this sort of station. Michael the student enters right/s carrying a violin case and a small weekend bag and makes himself comfortable on a station bench. We see hawkers ^{peddlers} etc... Soon enters Charles followed by a porter carrying baggage, etc..

1 CHARLES : Fine, just ^{leave} live them there please...here (gives him a bill)

2 Porter : Thanks (begins to go off)

3 Charles : Just a minute ! When is our train due ?

4 Porter : The ^{express} ~~through~~ train to ^{Santiago} Boston ?

5 Charles : No ^{him} ~~that~~, I'm coming from ^{Santiago} Boston. When is the local train due ?

6 Porter : (Looking at ^a big pocket watch) I guess in about forty minutes.

7 Charles : (As the porter goes off) Forty minutes ! ^{Heck! Nuts!} ~~What bells!~~ Why the devil ~~don't~~ don't they make these trains coincide ?... ~~That's~~ ^{that's} asking too much ?

(CAROLINE enters carrying numberless packets and bags with a traveling rug dangling behind her. She is looking very distraught and passes by Charles without seeing him, almost going off stage)

8 Charles : Caroline ! where ^{the heck} ~~in heaven's name~~ are you going (she starts on hearing his voice and goes over to him) our things are over here. Let me have all those ~~packages~~ ^{things} (helping her stack them on the bench) ~~knowing~~ ^{since you knew} that we had to change ~~to make a connection~~ ^{trains}, didn't it occur to you to pack these in a bag ?

9 Caroline : Yes, Charles (absently)

10 Charles : I'm sure ^{you won't use half of these things} ~~that half of these things~~ you won't be using... Hat box ? are you going to use a hat in the country ?

11 Caroline : Yes, Charles.

12 Charles : Since when do women use hats in the country ?

13 Caroline : I don't know, Charles.

14 Charles : Lets see...one, two, three, four trunks, a bag, four ~~packages~~ ^{packages} and a rug...Hey ! Weren't there five ~~packages~~ ^{packages}?

15 Caroline : Yes, Charles.

16 Charles : So you lose a pack~~age~~ and sit there as if nothing had happened !

17 Caroline : No, Charles.

18 Charles : Well, ^{which was it then?} ~~then~~, how was it ? Five or four pack~~ages~~ ?

19 Caroline : Four, Charles, just four.

20 Charles : (Sitting and opening his newspaper) When will women learn to travel with just the necessary ^{what they need ?} ?

21 Caroline : Yes, Charles.

22 Charles : (Glaring at her) Yes, Charles ! No, Charles ! ... Caroline ! (resignation) (goes back to the paper, and then, brightly) You know ! In the train I noticed a couple ^{of} ads that could be very interesting. Here they are, listen ! " Refrigerator... 11 feet. Good condition. Buy for cash. No commissions. ! ! Call telephone etc... etc... " and this other. ^{Sea going ~~boat~~ - four bunks - 30 hp. motor. easy payments. Notice this detail - The freezer they buy for cash and the ~~boat~~ they sell for easy payments. This way we could sell the freezer and use it as first payment and pay off the rest in instalments. I imagine, a ^{boat} ~~boat~~ ; of course, I know the freezer is really ^{indispensable} ~~indispensable~~ - but I'm sure we could get ~~it~~ ^{anyway} - it's up to you to say ... (SILENCE) ... Caroline !}

23 Caroline : Yes, Charles.

24 Charles : Caroline... What ~~is~~ ^{is} the matter with you ?

25 Caroline : Me... (smiles) Nothing, why ?

26 Charles : For the last half an hour you've been saying "Yes, Charles" without the faintest idea of what you're saying.

27 Caroline : Charles ! (impatiently) I know perfectly well what I say... I say "Yes Charles".

28 Charles : Well ! all right, what do you think ?

29 Caroline : What do I think ?

30 Charles : (containing himself) Yes... What do you think ?

31 Caroline : Ah !... er... about what, for ^{instance} ~~example~~ ?

32 Charles : (tapping the newspaper gently) About these ads for ^{instance} ~~example~~.

33 Caroline : Ah ! yes, ^{of course} ~~quite right~~ ! There are too many ads. They should dedicate more space to literature.

34 Charles : (Martyrised) Literature !

35 Caroline : But, Charles... you have always said that. Why do you try to confuse me ? I agree absolutely with you.

- 36 Charles : Yes, of course you do...but you haven't the slightest idea of what I am ~~saying~~ *about*
- 37 Caroline : Well then, tell me what it's all about but keep your hair on !
- 38 Charles : If we could sell our freezer.....
- 39 Caroline : (interrupting him) Sell it !...I wouldn't think of it, the meat would ~~split~~ *spoil*...Where would ~~you keep your steaks, eggs etc...~~ *Uncle Henry's ducks* not for anything...
- 40 Charles : (Interrupting her) I haven't finished yet. We could change it for a *sloop* !
- 41 Caroline : What ideas you get ! Who would want to trade a *sloop* for a freezer ?
- 42 Charles : If you took the trouble to read these ads, ~~then~~... (throws the paper on the platform in a rage) To hell with it ! What I want to know is what the devil you're day dreaming about *the time?*
- 43 Caroline : But, Charles ! (rises and collects the paper) Why do you always throw things on the floor ?
- 44 Charles : Don't change the ~~theme~~ *subject*.
- 45 Caroline : I'm not changing the ~~theme~~ *subject*. I was picking up the newspaper. Train journeys upset you so...
- 46 Charles : (mimicking her soft manner) It is not the train journeys that upset me, dear. *be careful with your ulcers*
dear it's bad for you to repress yourself - dear
you are controlling yourself.
- 47 Caroline : Goodness ! You sound just like a controlled husband.
- 48 Charles : Why won't you tell me what you were day dreaming about ?
- 49 Caroline : Me ?
- 50 Charles : Yes, you !
- 51 Caroline : How do you expect me to know what I was thinking about... ~~is~~ nothing I suppose...nothing in particular...Nothing.
- 52 Charles : Ah ! so you want me to believe *that* during the whole journey you thought of absolutely nothing, though you had the same witless expression you have now.
- 53 Caroline : Is that a crime !
- 54 Charles : No ! it's a lie. Nobody can think of nothing for so long. Such a continuous effort to keep the mind blank would exhaust even the most practised brains.
- 55 Caroline : For goodness sakes Charles, how can you be so complicated. I didn't make the slightest effort. Besides - when I say I was thinking of nothing - I meant..., well.....everything.

- 56 Charles : (to an imaginary witness) Ha ! When she says "nothing" she means "everything".
- 57 Caroline : Do you have to repeat everything I say.... you make me feel silly.
- 58 Charles : I repeat ~~you~~ to show how completely illogical your replies are... and it's that, that makes you feel silly.
- 59 Caroline : (hurt) I think you are being very difficult and not a bit helpful. Generally you understand me perfectly well.
- 60 Charles : Not when you are trying to ~~pull~~ the wool over my eyes (Taking her by surprise) What was ^{it} that ~~nervous twitching~~ you had when we arrived at Rancaque ? *made you so pumpy*
- 61 Caroline : But I told you ! cramp from sitting down so long.
- 62 Charles : And the other one near Pelequén ?
- 63 Caroline : Cramp from sitting down so long...What's so special about that ?
- 64 Charles : And the other near ... (Gestures)
- 65 Caroline : Chimbarongo ?
- (Both simultaneously) Cramp from sitting down so long (Pause).
- 66 Caroline : Charles dear : lets stop this useless arguing (Charles searches in his pockets and goes off) Where are you going ?
- 67 Charles : ...To buy cigarettes (exit).
- CAROLINE watches him go off, then, distractedly she moves to the bench and begins to arrange her things. A dog barks, she shoos it away and goes back to the business with her bags. People pass by. MICHAEL who is seated on the other bench since the scene began, is staring at her , eyes popping with admiration. He gets up and sidles over indecisively.
- 68 Michael : (coughing and clearing his throat, timidly speaking to her back) Taking the local train ?... Me too... (pause) Please don't think that ' it 's a habit of mine to ^{pick}...er...scrape acquaintance with ladies like this... But this is different... (Meanwhile he is prodding with his foot a package on the floor) ...Only it's rather awkward to begin...that is... (He notices the package and picks it up, giving it to her) What I mean is...
- 69 Caroline : Ah ! But ... were you speaking to me ?
- 70 Michael : (Glances around) Who else ? of course I ^{was} speaking to you (involuntarily he drops the package he is offering her and hurriedly picks it up again) Excuse me ! 'I'm so clumsy...
- 71 Caroline : (amused) Please leave that poor little package there...and be ~~do~~ good ^{enough} to repeat your question ...Excuse me, I was thinking of something else.

- 72 Michael : I was saying I don't usually speak with ladies without being introduced ~~first~~. ~~But~~ This is the first time that I've done it ...
- 73 Caroline : Very naughty of you !
- 74 Michael : Caroline... (confused by using her first name) That is ...oh ! ma-dame ! I am sure that you're above those silly conventions.
- 75 Caroline : But you know my name ?
- 76 Michael : Yes...I know your name. I know ^{your name very well} ~~very well~~ your name...There is nothing I know so well as your name...Caroline. (with feeling)
- 77 Caroline : Look here, young man ! If you are thinking what I think you're thinking then...
- 78 Michael : (interrupting her) No ! No ! excuse me...and please don't call me " young man".It's just that I wanted to say I've been watching you all the time in the train and it appeared to me you were terribly worried about something. So I thought perhaps I could do something to help you...I would do anything...really !
- 79 Caroline : (Staring at him) Indeed, I'm surprised that ~~a~~ stranger should be so interested.
- 80 Michael : I swear that I am not ~~a~~ stranger.
- 81 Caroline : Nevertheless, ^{you have all the appearance of me} ~~you're acting just like one.~~
- 82 Michael : What does it matter how I ^{appear} ~~act~~, Caroline. Try to understand that somebody who has admired you for so long cannot possibly be ~~a~~ stranger.
- 83 Caroline : Ah ! Now I understand.
- 84 Michael : At last, thank you Caroline.
- 85 Caroline : I understand that you are trying to flirt with me.
- 86 Michael : My God ! and so what... is it so awful ? Hasn't anyone ever flirted with you before ?
- 87 Caroline : I don't care for your ^{intentions} ~~intentions~~. I'm a married woman. Somexcuse me- I have ~~xxxxxx~~ a horrible problem to solve and ~~can't~~ ^{waste time} bandying words with you (goes away..). ^{and I just don't have the time}
- 88 Michael : Caroline, it's precisely that problem I want to help you to solve.
- 89 Caroline : But I don't even know you !
- 90 Michael : That doesn't matter. Look here, let's suppose that one afternoon -any afternoon... we are ^{both} ~~in~~ the park. We meet... somebody introduces us... Caroline... a bewitching woman...Michael an engineering student. There we are. Meetings like that happen every day. And now we just happen to meet again in this station; only, it appears you have forgotten me.
- 91 Caroline : Completely !

- 100 Michael : Ah ! Then if you've forgotten me it means you knew me before.
- 101 Caroline : (laughs) ^{for heavens sakes!} ~~My word~~ ! you certainly are persistent ! Well, allright...
(stretching her hand) How do you do ? (pause) and now Perhaps I can concentrate on my problem ?
- 102 Michael : Then...You're not going to tell me what it is that is worrying you?
- 103 Caroline : Of course not !
- 104 Michael : Well... you are the most obstinate ...
- 105 Caroline : (quickly) and you the most impertinent...Who do you think you are ? I think I'll call Charles.
- 106 Michael : Allright, call Charles (pause) Women are so complicated about everything. What would ^{have you} ~~it cost you~~ to accept my help ? ~~Any one~~ ^{are you} would say you're offended because I offered...Or is it ^{because} ~~that~~ I'm boring you ? Ah...(Indicates with a gesture that he sees Charles in the distance) I'll speak to your husband. I'm sure that he'll recognize me. ~~Yes~~ Of course, ^{you've} never bothered to look at me even though we see each other everyday (he goes to his violin case and strikes a pose) Look at me. Don't I look vaguely familiar ?
- 107 Caroline ^{you are} (pause while she thinks) : The violin next door !... of course, I knew I had seen you somewhere before...
- (Charles enters muttering "Damned one horse town",etc...Michael discreetly moves away from Caroline and she smiles at Charles).
- 108 Caroline : Did you find cigarettes, dear ?
- 109 Charles : No ! (sits down)
- 110 Michael : (from where he is) May I offer mine ?
- 111 Charles : No thank you. ^{from} (Behind the newspaper) ^{Caroline!} Don't start conversations with strangers on train journeys. Later there is no way of getting rid of them.
- 112 Caroline : (rogueishly) Charles, but don't you remember ? It's Michael !
- 113 Charles : (with foolish expression) Er...Michael...Why yes... but of course.. How are you ?... taking a trip ?
- 114 Michael : Yes that's right ! are you sure you ~~won't~~ won't have a cigarette ?
(offers his package)
- 115 Charles : Filter tip ? Fine (Takes one) It's incredible, ^{but} ~~that~~ there's no ~~place~~ place to buy cigarettes... everywhere ^{there's} closed.
- 116 Michael : Just a minute...If I'm not mistaken, what should be open at this time...is the drug store.
- 117 Charles : Where is the drugstore ?

- 7
- 118 Michael : ~~The bar in the hotel...~~ ^{The drugstore?} Well... down the main street, next to the hotel ^{next to} sure and the hotel has to be open. hotel
- 119 Caroline : That's right...of course, ^{next to} the hotel ~~has to be open~~.
- 120 Charles : Be explicit...Where is the hotel ?
- 121 Michael : At the end of the main street... that is ... next to the "Five and Ten" and the "Five and Ten" you'll find right down the main street.
- 122 Charles : (doubtfully) Well, ^{which} is the main street ?
- 123 Caroline : Charles , you can't miss it !
- 124 Michael : Yes...it's the widest and longest street, going out of the station... I think it's in this direction. You'll find it immediately. When ^{you} get to the "Five and Ten" you'll see the movie house... ^{enthusiastically} and over here the church (indicating with his hands) Well it's just a little one, and ~~over~~ this side, the Hotel...The Grand...or Plaza, I think...
- 125 Charles : (With increasing disbelief) Very well...we'll see...(exit in the opposite direction from first exit)
- 126 Michael : (rushing up to Caroline) Thank you, Caroline. How clever you are !
- 127 Caroline : Me ! What have I done ?
- 128 Michael : You helped me ^{get rid of} ~~drive off~~ your husband.
- 129 Caroline : ^{get rid of} ~~Drive off~~ my husband ? What do you mean ?... That ^{drugstore!} ~~bar~~... Do you mean ~~isn't he~~...?
- 130 Michael : All these towns are the same, Caroline. There must be a ~~hotel~~ ^{drugstore} and a hotel in the main street. Don't worry he'll find one. Now... tell me what is this awful secret ?
- 131 Caroline : What makes you think it's a secret ?
- 132 Michael : Charles doesn't know about it .
- 133 Caroline : There are many things better unknown to husbands.
- 134 Michael : Naturally !
- 135 Caroline : What they don't know, they can't ^{be sorry} ~~grieve~~ about !
- 136 Michael : (^{knowingly} ~~with conviction~~) I see what you mean.
- 137 Caroline : I forbid you to think of anything vulgar !it's something that would happen to anybody.
- 138 Michael : Well then, tell me how can I help you ?
- 139 Caroline : Since you insist so much... I believe you said you were an engineering student, didn't you ? (he nods) In that case, I think you could give me some technical data.

- 140 Michael : (joyfully) You ... so feminine...so charming... talking about technical data. (~~she is astonished at this outburst~~) I can't help it !
~~you move me~~ *he takes her hands and she reacts with astonishment*
~~you do something to me~~
- 141 Caroline : But how ridiculous ! Control yourself, please .
- 142 Michael : I don't mind being ridiculous and I can't control myself. I have waited so long for this chance to talk to you... to share something with you... *aw...* (change of tone) All right...if you really want it, I can give you mountains of technical data. About what ?
- 143 Caroline : Let's say, about the resistance of certain materials to heat.
- 144 Michael : Resistance to heat ! Don't say ~~another word~~. *anything more Now I understand* I can imagine everything Caroline (wagging a reproachful finger) if it is what I suppose it is, then I shan't oblige. *nothing doing* !
- 145 Caroline : That's a joke, just what is it you suppose ?
- 146 Michael : It's very simple : you need money, so you decided to get a job without your husband knowing and you were offered a place in a construction company, supply of materials, and so on ... so you need these technical details. Caroline, please, let me take the job for you ! I'll give you the whole salary...I don't need it, really !
- 147 Caroline : Good heavens ! What fantastic theory is this ?
- 148 Michael : I assure you it is not fantastic...there are no strings ~~attached~~ *to it*. Please, Caroline, let me take the job !
- 149 Caroline : Very generous of you, young man, and suppose I accept, on what would you live ?
- 150 Michael : Me ? Well, on the same miracle that I lived ^{on} up to now... if it's necessary to steal, then I'll steal, I haven't any scruples.
- 151 Caroline : You are completely mad. I really don't know how we arrived at this absurd business... and ~~in my case~~ *besides*, I don't need money ! Is that ~~clear~~ clear ?
- 152 Michael : (Resigned) Quite clear.
- 153 Caroline : And now, pay attention...it's about my little problem...:(unhappily) it's quite ridiculous... but
- 154 Michael : (emphatically) Yes. I know. It's the little ones that are always the worst !
- 155 Caroline : Don't interrupt me ! I'm worrying myself sick while you say nothing but ~~stupidities~~ *nonsense*
- 156 Michael : ~~Stupidities~~ *Nonsense* ! Here am I ready to lay down my life for you and you call them ~~stupidities~~ *nonsense*...My God !
- 157 Caroline : I don't want your life. I want your technical *knowledge* ~~data~~.

- 158 Michael : And I don't want you to work !
- 159 Caroline : Is that so ? and what right do you have to interfere... I - will - work !
- 160 Michael : Over my dead body !
- 161 Caroline : What ?... Your body ?... You're making my head spin... *I don't know what I am saying* I've never thought of working !
- 162 Michael : Thanks (takes her a hand) I knew you would agree in the end.
- 163 Caroline : Agree ? I said I never even thought of going to work.
- 164 Michael : I could have sworn I heard you say " I- will - work ".
- 165 Caroline : (holding her head) Oh! Please ! Please !... go away... go away !
Leave me in peace !
- 166 Michael : (Long pause , sadly) Caroline... What's wrong ? Why do you treat me like that ? I am only trying to help... have I said something I shouldn't ? If I have I'll never forgive myself... because I...
(pause)
- 167 Caroline : (curious) You... what ?
- 168 Michael : Because I... I'm in love with you... (long pause)
- 169 Caroline : (taken aback) No !... you don't expect me to believe that... do you ? *(moves away)*
- 170 Michael : No... that would be too much to hope for.
- 171 Caroline : Love at first sight, Hah ? I don't think you know what you're saying - what happens is that you're very young... and ... and ... you imagine things...
- 172 Michael : No, Caroline. I don't imagine anything. *almost* For four months now I haven't been able to *concentrate* study properly... I can't do anything except think about you. I've tried hard to get you out of my head... but it's impossible
- 173 Caroline : Don't be so romantic !
- 174 Michael : Love is romantic, Caroline. Listen, when I first noticed you in your garden I thought it was a vision I was seeing, you were the image of her, the same eyes... so large, her smile, the color of her hair... you looked so much like her...
- 175 Caroline : Like who ?
- 176 Michael : Do you believe in reincarnation ?
- 177 Caroline : But what are you talking about ?
- 178 Michael : You can laugh at me and call me romantic if you like, but the truth is when I was small I fall hopelessly in love with a very *beautiful* *great* aunt of mine who died young... that is, with a *picture* ~~portrait~~ of her, a

miniature that I always kept at the head of my bed. She was so pretty that just for one of her smiles...I would have done anything... Well, as it happened I had almost forgotten her... when one day, one afternoon, I was playing my violin in front of the window and suddenly there appears in your garden...

187 Caroline : Who, your ^{great} aunt ?

188 Michael : No, ^{you!} Caroline. It was like a vision... You look so much like her. I can ~~imagine~~ imagine you in an old fashioned dress, with a lace parasol and buttoned boots... Caroline, from the very first I saw you... everything has changed... of course I know I can't hope for anything, but even so I feel as though I am in heaven.

189 Caroline : Lucky you... because as for me... I'm in hell !

190 Michael : Caroline... forgive me... your little problem I'd forgotten... tell me all about it, from the beginning... *what's it about?*

191 Caroline : Well, I... it's a ... it's about a ~~pan~~ ^{an enamelled pan} ! (in a rush) ~~A cooking pot~~ ^{an enamelled pan}... do you understand ?

192 Michael : Caroline ! (sinking down on the suitcases) A ~~pan~~ ^{pan}... do you have to talk about ~~pan~~ ^{pan} now !

193 Caroline : Let me tell you, the only thing I can think about is ~~pan~~ ^{pan}.

194 Michael : Damn the ~~pan~~ ^{pan} !

195 Caroline : Yes, damn the ~~pan~~ ^{pan}... I hate it. I hate it from ~~bottom~~ the bottom of my heart !

196 Michael : (startled) So much excitement about a ~~pan~~ ^{pan}... Frankly I don't understand it .

197 Caroline : Ah... at last something you don't understand. But of course, how could you understand if it's about something real... some simple everyday ~~happening~~ ^{thing}. The ~~reality~~ ^{earthly things} which you ignore. Anyway, listen to me. About half an hour before we left the house Charles said to me " I hate lunching on the train, let's take a lunch box.

198 Michael : ^{Magnificent!} ~~wonderful~~ (to himself)

199 Caroline : (without hearing him) So I went to the kitchen to prepare some sandwiches ^{in the mean time!} and ~~meanwhile~~ put on an enamelled ~~pan~~ ^{pan}, about this size (indicates with hands) and height... with some eggs to boil...

200 Michael : You describe it ^{so} ~~as~~ well I can almost see it .

201 Caroline : And ^{the} ~~have~~ I done nothing but see it during the whole journey ... in the window of the train... against the landscape... on the telegraph poles... in the trees...

202 Michael : See what ?

203 Caroline : The ~~fleming~~ ^{burning pan} pot ! (in anguish)

- 196 Michael : You poor little thing ! ... and then you started getting nervous.
- 197 Caroline : Yes, when we were going through Rancaqua, I remember I had left the pan boiling and it could go on boiling for fifteen days ... ~~THE~~ Those fifteen days ~~which~~ I'd promised myself of peace and quiet I am going to spend worrying myself sick !
- 198 Michael : But Caroline. Calm yourself... a pan can't boil for fifteen days...
- 199 Caroline : But that's even worse ! Because it will stop boiling when the water evaporates and then the pan will get red hot and there'll be a fire and the house will burn down and we haven't even paid for it yet...perhaps the fire could burn the whole block. What a terrible responsibility (he tries to calm her) In the train I was thinking perhaps I could telephone one of the neighbours...
- 200 Michael : The one with the violin for example.
- 201 Caroline : Yes, yes... he could get in the window or something.
- 202 Michael : (affectionately) But I don't have a telephone, Caroline.
- 203 Caroline : Oh...then think of something... suggest something, please. I'm ~~xxxx~~ so confused I can't concentrate. I've been wracking my brains since we left Rancaqua.
- 204 Michael : Aha !... and you were ~~had~~ the jumpy again as we came into Chimbarongo.
- 205 Caroline : Chimbarongo ? Oh, yes...The waste basket ~~garbage box~~. I remembered it's right next to the stove...it's full of papers... and it's... made of paper ! Can you imagine ?
- 206 Michael : Take it easy ! Let's reconstruct the scene.
- 207 Caroline : Ah... at last... a helpful suggestion.
- 208 Michael : Is it an electric stove or gas ?
- 209 Caroline : Gas. (Indicating with hands) Here's the stove, and over there's the working counter (anxiously) ... it's wood... Here are the cupboard doors and just here a chair... with a seat of wicker ~~wicker seat~~. Set straw
- 210 Michael : What else ?

* from here on; very rapid over lapping

Michael - You poor little thing!...and then you started getting nervous...

CAROLINE - Yes, when we're going ^{through} ~~near~~ Rancagua, I remembered I had left the pot boiling and it could go on boiling for fifteen days, which I'd promised myself of peace quiet, I am going to spend worrying myself sick!

MICHAEL - But Caroline. Calm yourself...a pot can't boil for fifteen days...

CAROL - But that's even worse! Because it will stop boiling when the water evaporates and then the pot will get red hot and there'll be a fire and the house will burn down and we haven't even paid for it yet...perhaps the fire could burn the whole block. What a terrible responsibility!
(He tries to calm her)

CAROL - In the train I was thinking perhaps I could telephone one of the neighbours...

MICHAEL - The one with the violin for example?

CAROL - Yes yes...he could get in the window or something...

MICHAEL - (AFFECTIONATELY) But I don't have a telephone Caroline...

CAROL - Oh....then think of something! Suggest something please! I'm so confused, I can't concentrate. I've been wracking my brains since we left Rancagua...

MICHAEL - Aha...the jumps! and you ~~had~~ ^{got} the jumps again as we came into Chimbarongo...what was it?

CAROL - Chimbarongo? Oh yes...the garbage box. I remembered it's right next to the stove...it's full of paper...and its made of wood, can you imagine?

MICHAEL - Take it easy! Let's reconstitue the scene.

CAROL - Ah...at last...a helpfull suggestion.

MICHAEL - Is it an electric stove or gas?

CAROL - Gas (INDICATING WITH HANDS) Here's the stove, and over there's the working comber (ANXIOUSLY) it's wood! Here are the cupboard doors and just here, a chair...with a seat...~~of straw~~ ^{of straw}

MICHAEL - What else?

CAROL - The waste ~~paper~~ ^{burner}, practically underneath the ~~saucepan~~!

MICHAEL - Let's see: in an hour the water will evaporate.

CAROL - Yes, there was very little!

Here

211

212

213

- 214 MICHAEL - In two hours the ~~pot~~ will be red hot.
- 215 CAROLINE - (ALMOST CRYING) ~~Awful!~~ *oh, No!*
- 216 MICHAEL - The eggs burnt to cinder.
- 217 CAROL - That's not important!
- 218 MICHAEL - I have to check all the details.
- 219 CAROLINE - Is it necessary?
- 220 MICHAEL - An empty pot reacts differently from one with eggs in it.
- 221 CAROL - My god...go on!
- 222 MICHAEL - Was it aluminium?
- 223 CAROL - It was enamelled.
- 224 MICHAEL - Then first the enamel ~~springs~~ *poops* *stet*.
- 225 CAROL - What's that got to do with it!
- 226 MICHAEL - I have already told you that...
- 227 CAROL - (HISTERICALLY) Don't tell me anything...the ~~saucepan~~ *stet* *poops* on the waste ~~bin~~ *bin* and the whole house burns down...Oooh... (ALMOST IN TEARS)
- 228 MICHAEL - (TAKING HER HANDS TO PACIFY HER) But Caroline, take it easy...~~saucepans~~ don't spring!
- 229 CAROLINE - You are just saying that to make me feel better...
- 230 MICHAEL - (COMING CLOSER, ~~CONFIDENTLY~~ ASSURINGLY) I ~~swear~~ *u* to you they don't spring!
- 231 CAROL - (IMPETUOUSLY HUGGING HIM) Really? if only it were true, The n
- 232 MICHAEL - (HOLDING HER WITH EYES CLOSED, DREAMILY) What a pity...if only Charles didn't exist. *he* *were't coming back!* *and you in my arms*
- 233 CAROL - (RECOVERING HERSELF) What's that? how dare you...
- 234 MICHAEL - But Caroline...I just said, what a pity Charles will be coming back ~~so~~ soon.
- 235 CAROL - Oooh! You're right! Then we wont be able to do anything! Please....you must find a way of getting rid of him again Say anything...Yes, and try to find out if we are insured against fire. Say that you sell insurance policies...Very casually of course. I don't want him to suspect anything, (PaUSE) Will you?
- 236 MICHAEL - You are asking me something very simple, ~~but at the~~

but so

~~same time very~~ difficult to do...I'd ^{much prefer} rather you ask me something more difficult that would work out simpler...~~is it clear?~~ ^{do you get me!}

237 CAROL - No darling, but it doesn't matter.

238 MICHAEL - (JOYFULLY) Caroline!

239 CAROL - What's wrong?

240 MICHAEL - You you....

241 CAROLINE - But...what is it?

242 MICHAEL - You called me darling...to me...so spontaneously that I could almost believe that you...that you...

243 CAROL - (QUICKLY) No, no, you musn't think anything. Let's not start all that again, please... (MICHAEL INDICATES THAT CHARLES IS COMING)

CHARLES ENTER. THEY HAVE DISCREETLY MOOVED APART)

244 CAROL - Did you get them Charles?

245 CHARLES (TAKING HIS TIME AND WITH A FORCED SMILE) No.

246 CAROL - Really dear? wasn't the drug store open?

247 CHARLES - What drug store?

248 CAROLINE - Next to the hotel...

249 CHARLES ³/₄ (SLOWLY) There was no drugs store, ~~neither~~ ^{no} hotel, no five and ten, ~~not even a~~ ^{and NO} mainst street.

250 CAROLINE - Charles...a ~~village~~ ^{town} without a main street...you're exaggerating.

251 CHARLES : Listen, this ^{to} called ~~village~~ ^{town} of yours, is nothing more than a half a dozen shacks kept together by a dirt track. There's nothing that looks like a main street, and what's more, it's ~~uninhabited~~ ^{uninhabited}. And now, I hope you'll excuse me. (SOURLE? AND SITS DOWN TO READ HIS NEWSPAPER)

~~I will now read my newspaper~~
CAROLINE LOOKS HELPLESS ~~MAAT~~ MICHAEL, HE CLEARS HIS THROAT)

252 MICHAEL - It's my fault...I must have mistaken this ~~village~~ ^{town} for another. Before, the ~~change~~ ^{junction} of trains was ~~made~~ further on

253 CAROLINE - Ah, you travel a lot? ^{junction}

254 MICHAEL - Yes, quite a bit.

255- CAROLINE - (SHE MAKES SIGNS EGGING HIM ON) How interesting, of course, if's because of your job (MORE SIGNS) I mean your profession?

C: Ah, you travel a lot?

M: Yes, quite a bit.

C: (she makes signs egging him on) How interesting of course... it's because of your job (more signs, I mean your profession?)

M: (Suddenly remembering) ah yes... ~~quite~~ ^{of course} it's because of my job. (He leans forward at Charles) I'm an insurance agent (Charles is still reading so Michael bravely approaches him)... Five policies and so on. The company ~~has many branches in the provinces~~ ^{around the state}... and I am... (he gulps and with a backward glance at Caroline) Well... I am the ~~provincial coordinator~~ ^{state} organizer. (he smiles stupidly at Charles who is politely listening).

C: (Helpfully) I imagine you ^{must} earn a ~~lot~~ ^{great deal} of money with a job like that. ~~What I mean is~~ since it is something... er... you can't do without. What I mean is... (lame) something of ~~such~~ ^{so} vital ~~importance~~.

M: Of course, you can make yourself rich, selling first policies... There are so many firms, aren't there?

C: Incidentally, Charles. We've insured, haven't we?

Ch: Us? What for?

C: Our house. silly... The house.

Ch: No.

C: To Michael after being taken aback slightly by Charles's negative) Ah... Then if we're not insured it must be for some reason. It means our house must be fire proof or something, if not Charles would have bought a policy --- he is very ~~careful~~ ^{cautious}, you know.

Ch: (Calmly) It would burn like a box of matches.

(There is a silence after this.)

C: ^(To herself) Ah, Well... (Sadly) In any case... it's too late now.

Ch: Too late for what?

C: ... to buy a policy.

Ch: ... a policy?

C: No... to buy cigarettes (Seeing him staring at her) Charles! You know perfectly well when I say policy ^{what I} really mean ^{is} cigarettes...

Ch: (Approaching her ^{ironically}) Then why not adopt the useful habit of saying immediately what you wish to express instead letting me suppose that ^{you} mean exactly the opposite.

C: (Overwhelmed) Charles, how complicated you are....

Ch: and now I'm going to see the stationmaster!

C: Why?

Ch: What do you mean why? To ask him how long it'll be before that blasted

Ch. local train arrives -
(He looks at Michael and then
at Caroline and ~~goes out~~) turns to go)

C: Ah! The stationmaster, he should
know where they sell cigarettes...
did you ask him?

Ch. (~~annoyed~~^{irked}) No.

C: But darling... it's obvious, he lives here,
doesn't he? (Lightly) Some times the
simple things are the last that occur
to us - silly isn't it?

Ch: (with a forced smile) very silly. (exit)

C: I don't know what's wrong with Charles,
he's in a ~~foul~~^{nasty mood} temper.

M: (Importantly) Charles, suspects.

C: How do you know?

M: He laughs at the wrong times.

C: Oh, Charles always laughs at the wrong
times... And now, let's not waste these
precious few moments

M: (Moved) Yes... Very precious... we may never
meet again... like this, alone... you and me.

C: Oh! for goodness sake (impatiently)

M: But, Caroline, I... It would be ideal

C: ~~the~~ (without hearing him) The idea is to
find someone who has had ~~the same~~ a similar
thing happen to them... then we would
know ~~how to do~~^{what to do}...

M: But... (Changing his mind) Allright!
 you win. let's talk about ~~saucepans~~,
 are we going to ~~Walt~~ spend the rest of our lives talking
 about ~~saucepans~~? ~~Where were we? (Martyr)~~

Walt, where the ~~Japanese~~ ^{Japanese} ~~spring~~ ^{fruits} and
that's serious because in ^{the} cupboard. I
have six bottles of kerosene

Q: Why so much kerosene?

C: Well, it's useful.. there's the energy
heater.. the kerosene lamp....

at: Ah, the Camp!

C: What, is it dangerous?

M: No, it's just that I can imagine you so
well... on a rainy night, ^{sewing} ~~embroidering~~ by the
light of that old fashioned lamp.. as if
you'd escaped from another century

C: (Disgusted) ~~you're just~~ ^{well, what do you suggest} ~~you're just~~ ^{you are} ~~completely insensitive to~~

(Port. Entering.) The express to Santiago is due in 4 minutes (Caroline follows him with

her eyes as he exits the other side)
I suggest we change the subject completely

M: I suggest we change the subject completely.
I'd like ~~to~~ to take your mind off it.
Caroline... I can't see you suffering like
this... what can I do? Would you like
me to play something on the violin...
a little music? I know some ^{thing from} ~~of~~ Nutcracker suite.

Port. ^(enters) ~~in four minutes~~ Santiago express due in
" four minutes (exit)

C: (Horified) ~~Nutcracker~~ ^{Music}! What I need is action! (3)

~~do you~~ can you understand... action!

M: Well, what do you expect... In spite of progress, we haven't yet invented anything to turn off ~~the~~ gas by remote control... or by telepathy...

C: (Ego (coquetishly) No, but... you could take a train back to Santiago...

M: Caroline! (taken aback)

C: ~~What~~ You said you would do anything for

M: ~~me...~~ anything, but ~~leave~~ ~~separate~~ ~~from~~ you... not ~~for a minute~~ ~~me~~.

C: Do you want to help me, or don't you?
(Pause) Perhaps everything you said before was just ~~plain words~~ ^{talk}. I shouldn't have relied on a violinist!

M: Don't ~~insult~~ ^{insult} my violin! Second to you it's the thing I ~~as~~ ^{most} fond of care about. Listen... I would go ~~in a minute~~ ^{in a minute} without ~~hesitating~~ if there were the slightest danger... but there isn't. ~~you can rely on me~~ please believe me. Be reasonable...

C: It's no use! I can't stop thinking about the ~~sweep~~pan - It's possible that nothing will happen - but it's also possible that ~~the~~ ^{the} house ~~burns down~~ ^{starts a fire}. You don't know what it is have ~~buy~~ ^{have} a piece of land with ~~no~~ ^{easy payments} a mortgage ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~red tape~~ ^{red tape} and then ~~build your own~~ ^{to finally build the house} house... If you were a little bit

more understanding; you would say: "give me the keys, I'll go back and put out the gas."

But no, you'll never understand, because this is something real... something that can't be arranged just by dreaming or ~~not~~ ~~dreaming~~ waking up. I'm ~~char~~ sure ~~if~~ ~~you~~ Charles, ^{if he} knew, ~~he~~ would understand. Of course he would be furious... but at least... ~~Somebody has to understand me~~
~~I have to share my misery with someone...~~

I'll call Charles (goes off ~~without~~ and not very heartily calls) Charles!

M: (Being prisoner of a violent struggle within himself bursts out) No. Don't call him... ~~let this be a secret between you and me~~ ^{this is our secret}
(Heroically thrusting out his hand, without looking at her) Give me those keys!

C: (Overjoyed) Really? do you mean it?
...in your heart?

M: from the bottom of my heart.

C: (embracing him ~~impetuously~~ ^{holds his hands}) Thank you, Mike
(and very naturally ~~kisses his cheek~~, then hears the express coming, she pulls away from him while, Michael looks at her with emotion).... It's coming this way... it's the Santiago express... quickly! The keys!
(Runs around, frantically looking for the keys, she empties her ~~bag~~ handbag on the bench, Michael appears paralysed) Look, this

one is the ~~gate~~^{aperture} key and this yellow one is the front door key ... pay attention... There's a trick to it... you have to ~~insert~~^{juggle} it a little to the right. (she is not sure which is her right) No, to the left. The kitchen is at the end of the ~~pass~~ hall... your bag (~~stealing~~^{giving} it to him) ... ah yes, my address in the country so you can send me a telegram if everything's all right... a pencil... quick a pencil (~~he pats~~^{he pats his jacket pockets automatically}) the eyebrow pencil (she finds it among the other things on the bench) And now paper, paper please.

M: (extending his arm so she can write on his shirt cuff) here! here on my shirt cuff

C: My address (writes) and ~~name~~ invent a name for signing, I don't want Charles to suspect anything... Quickly... a name

M: (gaping at her) Greta Garbo!

C: No, No. something common.

M: something common?... Mary Smith

C: That's it (writes) Mary Smith; don't forget (He goes) Your violin!

(Michael returns for the violin case and calmly plants a kiss on her lips and then runs off to the train before ~~disappearing~~ going off he stops and says

M: goodbye, my love!

(He bumps into Charles coming on, who stops and hurls five packages of cigarettes to the ground)

C: (quittily picks up the cigarettes) Charles, (34)
What a mania you have for throwing
everything on the ground... (He is still silent)
Did you hear anything?

Ch: I heard, exactly "Goodbye, my love, What ~~luck~~ ^{com}.
(He sits, then stand) I think I'll punch his
nose (The train can be heard leaving the
station)

C: Too late. The train has started (she sighs with
relief)

Ch: So "that" was the nervousness from sitting
down so long, and the "nothing" you were
thinking about all the time. and you were
so ~~muddleheaded~~ ^{distracted} when I talked. and that
disgusting hurry to get rid of me... Do you
~~think~~ think I'm so stupid that I didn't
notice anything

C: Charles, (laughing) You're ~~rambling~~ ^{raving}. Darling
you're the nervous one. It's always the same
when you run out of cigarettes... you're
completely drugged by the nicotine

Ch: Drugged by nicotine... and how do you
explain that that moron who looks like a
juvenile delinquent fakes his leave with a
"Goodbye, my love"? He's got a nerve...

C: Charles... you're jealous

Ch: (Without looking at her) hm. That's the way
it is, I'm jealous

C: But, ~~Darling~~ ^{Darling}. you have always sworn that
you are incapable of jealousy... that jealousy
is one of the symptoms of an inferiority complex

Ch: What man hasn't said that ~~incredibly~~ at
least once.

C: Charles... now you're being ridiculous

Ch ... Insurance agent... and you had the

nerve to pressure me to buy a policy...
(He studies her) and how long is it you've been
interested in insurance agents. Eh?

C: Oh please... ^(embracing her) let's not have a scene, now.

Ch: ah so you don't think you've given me
good enough reasons.

C: Darling - you have such a twisted mind
I asked you if we were insured... because
I was a little worried. That's the truth
just suppose we left for vacations.. like now..
and something was left ~~left~~ ^{on}... we would
have a fine!

Ch: ~~You know, to avoid that sort of accident~~
~~or accident~~ ^{well, I have ways of avoiding that sort}
I take precautions ... I turn off ~~the~~ main
switches. Great invention.. The main switch

C: (Paralyzed, with inexpressive voice) You...
did it... ~~this~~ time?

Ch: Naturally.

C: The electricity... and the gas?

Ch: Of course... (watching her) And that funny face?

C: What?

Ch: Caroline! you left something burning!
~~What was it~~ ^{it} the iron again, like when we
went that year to Cartagena? Come on!

C: Oh, don't start an ^{cross examining me} interrogation, were
not in the courts now. It's ^{awful} terrible being
married to a lawyer.

Ch: Don't change the subject. what was it?

C: Well, all right I admit it... I did
have... a slight doubt.

Ch: Caroline! (inflexibly)

C: even if I had left something burning; you don't have to use that tone of superiority. ... The same thing happens to you, doesn't it? you never leave the front door badly closed? hah? I still can't forget ^{how} they robbed us of the radio and all the silver, last ~~summer~~.

Ch: Hah I suppose it was my fault?

C: Well it ^{certainly} wasn't mine. You're the one in charge of seeing everything closed up when we leave for vacations.

Ch: ~~Caroline~~ listen here! (controlling himself) I didn't leave it closed badly; it's just that the lock is ^{a bit} worn out.

C: Just the same, darling - you could have changed the lock this year - and you didn't do it.

Ch: I know, but this time I did something much better than change the lock... (sitting down ~~smiling~~ grinning) It's going to be ~~funny~~ - You know, I'm pretty sure our ~~Wilmers~~ ^{Wilmers} gardener is the ~~caretaker~~ ^{Wilmers} of the ~~Wilmers~~ ^{Wilmers} house ~~opposite~~ - he ~~must~~ probably has a key that fits ~~on~~ the front door - (chuckles) ... but just let him try this time... I've got a surprise for him.

C: Really? What did you do? (~~Amused~~ prematurely by Charles cleverness)
An anti-burglar gadget?

Ch: ~~Weren't you surprised that I took so~~
~~long~~, while you were getting a ^{cab} ~~taxi~~
~~Well~~, I fixed ^{up} a trap; the least that
 can happen is that he's knocked cold
 for a week

~~Caroline~~ (The smile is dashed from her
 face, the shock takes away her voice)

C: Charles! ... a trap... is it fatal?

Ch: Hmm... it depends ^{on his stamina} ~~how strong he is~~!

C: ~~But, good~~ ~~heavens~~ ~~are~~ ~~what~~ ~~horror~~ ~~have~~
 you committed? Good heaven! What will happen?

Ch: ~~So let him worry about it that~~
~~much concern for a thing like that?~~
~~if everybody thought like you, we'd~~
~~have a plague of them here.~~

C: ~~Yes~~ ~~yes~~ all right. ^{but} ~~tell me~~, what did
 you do?

Ch: (Very satisfied smugly) Do you remember
 that trunk full of iron junk, that
 your uncle ^{Henry} ~~would~~ ~~left~~ and wouldn't
 take away. I found it in the ~~box room~~ ^{garage},
 that gave me the idea. ^{so} I wedged ^{it} ~~over~~
 the ^{transome} ~~lintel~~ of the door and ^{bolstered it} ~~with~~ a rope &
~~balanced it~~ so that when the door opens....

Crash... it comes down! it can't miss!

(enter
 the porter ~~comes on~~ Caroline is still paralysed with
 horror, down stage)

Porter (to Charles) ~~Five~~ minutes for the local
 train! & if you're going to take that train
 you'd have to cross ^{over} ~~the line~~. (exit)

ch: (still to Caroline) I won't be a bit
surprised to arrive back and find
a corpse on the doorstep... (sees she
is still paralyzed) Caroline!... Caroline!
(he passes her packages and bags)

C: Yes, Charles.

ch: Didn't you hear? it's on train!
Caroline!

C: Yes Charles

ch: Are you going to stay there all
afternoon?

C: ~~Yes~~ Charles!

ch (hurling a package on the ground)
My God! When will you quit daydreaming!

C: ~~No Charles~~ Charles

Curtain

~~awful~~
 Something terrible happens
 to me, I mean, is ri-
 diculous for but for
 me it's a tragedy
 - a little ~~real~~ tragedy
 but - -

Caeslin
 husbands

Prada

Pa.
 Rosa Svedane
 Sneythe