

ANNE 4

ANNE. It's hard. If you want to cry or something. There's nowhere to go.

PETER. It's easier for me, I guess. When there's a fight ... you know, with my parents ... I just duck into my room.

ANNE. You're lucky you have a room of your own.

PETER. Well, at least you can talk to your parents.

ANNE. Not really. I never discuss anything serious with Mother. She just doesn't understand. I can talk about everything with Father ... except Mother. I don't think you can really ... really be intimate with someone if they hold something back, do you?

PETER. I think your father's terrific.

ANNE. He likes you too.

PETER. *(Looking up quickly, blushing.)* You think so?

ANNE. I can tell from the little things he says. *(She pauses.)* It's funny, isn't it?

PETER. What?

ANNE. Well, we've been living here for almost a year and a half and this ... this is the first time we've really talked.

PETER. I know what you mean.

ANNE. You know something, Peter?

PETER. What?

ANNE. I ... I've never really had a friend. Someone I could truly confide in. *(She is still, looking at him. He smiles.)*

PETER. Me neither. *(A moment. Suddenly.)* Smile for me.

ANNE. Why?

PETER. You have dimples when you smile.

ANNE. Dimples — the only mark of beauty I possess.

PETER. That's not true. You're pretty.

ANNE. Me? *(Peter nods.)*

PETER. Yes. *(Quiet.)* You. *(Anne looks down. A pause. She looks up, a dazzling smile. Moments pass. They smile at each other. Still looking at her, Peter starts to go, almost trips, catches himself, leaves. Anne continues to smile. Chopin's Nocturne A-flat major, Op. 32, No. 2 begins over the BBC dinner concert, as light brightens on Anne joyously dancing around the table in the main room. Lost in a blissful reverie, she is unseen by the others, who are getting ready for supper. But even they seem transformed by Anne's happiness, as the simple household activities — setting the table, the worn tablecloth ballooning out as it is put down, bringing in the plates, laying the silverware — all become a kind of ritual.)*

ANNE. *(Directly to us.)* The sun is shining, the sky a deep blue, there's

a magnificent breeze, and I'm longing — so longing — for everything! I walk from room to room, breathe through the crack in the window frame, feel my heart beating as if to say, "Can't you fulfill this longing at last?" I long for every boy, and to Peter I want to shout, "Say something, don't just smile at me all the time, touch me, so I can get that delicious feeling inside." I feel spring within me, I feel spring awakening, I feel it in my entire body and soul. I'm utterly confused, don't know what to read, to write, to do. I only know ... I am longing ... (*Anne joins them as they sit down at the table. Mrs. Frank and Mrs. van Daan serve a supper of kale and potatoes.*)

MR. VAN DAAN. What is it tonight?

MRS. VAN DAAN. Don't ask.

MR. VAN DAAN. I have to. I have to be prepared.

MR. DUSSEL. My God, I can't eat this again! Pickles, kale, and rotten potatoes — every night for weeks now.

MR. VAN DAAN. Something wrong, Mr. Dussel? You try cooking for a change, instead of insulting my wife.

MR. FRANK. I think you prepared the kale very well, Mrs. van Daan. I don't know how you do it.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Mr. Frank. Always the soul of politeness.

MR. FRANK. Every night another miracle. (*Mr. Dussel hastily gets up from the table, lurches toward the W.C.*)

MR. VAN DAAN. Careful, Mr. Dussel! We don't want to clog the pipes like last week.

MRS. VAN DAAN. Putti, please.

MRS. FRANK. You're not eating, Margot. (*Margot is still.*) Eat. You have to eat.

MARGOT. I'm not hungry.

MR. VAN DAAN. If she doesn't want it, Peter will eat it.

MR. FRANK. Come, Margot. Just take a bite.

MARGOT. (*Giving Peter her plate.*) I can't. I just can't.

MRS. VAN DAAN. She eats like a bird. Look at her. Every day a smaller bird. Margot, I'm doing the best I can.

MARGOT. I'm sorry, Mrs. van Daan. I just —

MRS. VAN DAAN. Anne's eating. Peter's eating.

MARGOT. How do you do it, Anne?

ANNE. I pretend it's delicious, don't look at it, and before I know it, it's gone.

MR. FRANK. Very wise, Anneke.

PETER. I eat because I'm hungry. (*Silence. Anne laughs — a tender*