

THE MALE ANIMAL
By James Thurber & Elliott Nugent
as revised by Robert Armin

OPENING SCENE OF ACT ONE

(VICTROLA is playing "I Never Knew (I Could Love Anybody)." ELLEN enters from dining room door with a vase of flowers, which she places on the fireplace mantel. She picks up several magazines and puts them in a neat stack on a bookcase shelf. She then starts up the stairs, just as the TELEPHONE begins to ring. She rushes down to the phone and answers it.)

ELLEN

Hello. Oh, good evening, Doctor Damon. No, Tommy isn't in at the moment. He's picking up a few things for the party. You and Mrs. Damon are still coming, aren't you? Oh, good. Did you want me to give Tommy a message or something? I see. Well, we'll look forward to seeing you soon.

(She hangs up and straightens the room a bit more. She turns off the Victrola, takes the record off the turntable and places it under a binder of 78 rpm records, as if hiding it. She then exits up the stairs. There is the sound of whistling outside, and TOMMY TURNER enters through the front door. He is carrying chrysanthemums and two bottles of liquor, wrapped in paper and tied with string. He puts the flowers and bottles on the sofa while he removes and hangs up his coat and hat.)

ELLEN

(Calling from upstairs.)

Tommy, is that you?

TOMMY

Yes it is!

ELLEN

Please don't mess up the living room, dear, we have guests coming over.

TOMMY

Okay.

(TOMMY picks up the bundles and looks for a place to put the bottles, putting them on the center chair. He then unwraps the flowers, throwing the paper and string on the floor, sticks flowers in the middle of other flowers on the mantle; sees book, picks it up, looks at it disapprovingly, looks upstairs and makes a gesture of disgust, throws it in the waste-basket; crosses to pick up liquor. ELLEN enters on stair landing, crosses down to TOMMY.)

ELLEN

Hello, dear!

TOMMY

Hello, Ellen! Those are for you.

(Indicates his flowers.)

ELLEN

Oh, thank you, Tommy. They're lovely.