

Act 2

SCENE 3

It is night, a few weeks later. Everyone is in bed. There is complete quiet. In the VAN DAANS' room a match flares up for a moment and then is quickly put out. MR. VAN DAAN, in bare feet, dressed in underwear and trousers, is dimly seen coming stealthily down the stairs and into the main room, where MR. and MRS. FRANK and MARGOT are sleeping. He goes to the food safe and again lights a match. Then he cautiously opens the safe, taking out a half loaf of bread. As he closes the safe, it creaks. He stands rigid. MRS. FRANK sits up in bed. She sees him.

Mrs. Frank (*screaming*). Otto! Otto! Komme schnell! (Come quickly!)

[The rest of the people wake, hurriedly getting up.]

Mr. Frank. Was ist los? Was ist passiert? ("What's going on?" "What happened?")

[DUSSEL, followed by ANNE, comes from his room.]

Mrs. Frank (*as she rushes over to MR. VAN DAAN*). Er stiehlt das Essen! ("He is stealing the food!")

Dussel (*grabbing MR. VAN DAAN*). You! You! Give me that.

Mrs. Van Daan (*coming down the stairs*). Putti . . . Putti . . . what is it?

Dussel (*his hands on MR. VAN DAAN's neck*). You dirty thief . . . stealing food . . . you good-for-nothing . . .

Mr. Frank. Mr. Dussel! For God's sake! Help me, Peter!

[PETER comes over, trying, with MR. FRANK, to separate the two struggling men.]

Peter. Let him go! Let go!

[DUSSEL drops MR. VAN DAAN, pushing him away. He shows them the end of a loaf of bread that he has taken from MR. VAN DAAN.]

Dussel. You greedy, selfish . . . !

[MARGOT turns on the lights.]

Mrs. Van Daan. Putti . . . what is it?

[All of MRS. FRANK's gentleness, her self-control, is gone. She is outraged, in a frenzy of indignation.]

Mrs. Frank. The bread! He was stealing the bread!

Dussel. It was you, and all the time we thought it was the rats!

Mr. Frank. Mr. Van Daan, how could you!

Mr. Van Daan. I'm hungry.

Mrs. Frank. We're all of us hungry! I see the children getting thinner and thinner. Your own son Peter . . . I've heard him moan in his sleep, he's so hungry. And you come in the night and steal food that should go to them . . . to the children!

Mrs. Van Daan (*going to MR. VAN DAAN protectively*). He needs more food than the rest of us. He's used to more. He's a big man.

[MR. VAN DAAN breaks away, going over and sitting on the couch.]

Mrs. Frank (*turning on MRS. VAN DAAN*). And you . . . you're worse than he is! You're a

mother, and yet you sacrifice your child to this man . . . this . . . this . . .

Mr. Frank. Edith! Edith!

[MARGOT *picks up the pink woolen stole, putting it over her mother's shoulders.*]

Mrs. Frank (*paying no attention, going on to MRS. VAN DAAN*). Don't think I haven't seen you! Always saving the choicest bits for him! I've watched you day after day and I've held my tongue. But not any longer! Not after this! Now I want him to go! I want him to get out of here!

Mr. Frank (*speaking at the same time as MR. VAN DAAN and MRS. VAN DAAN*). Edith!

Mr. Van Daan. Get out of here?

Mrs. Van Daan. What do you mean?

Mrs. Frank. Just that! Take your things and get out!

Mr. Frank (*to MRS. FRANK*). You're speaking in anger. You cannot mean what you are saying.

Mrs. Frank. I mean exactly that!

[MRS. VAN DAAN *takes a cover from the FRANKS' bed, pulling it about her.*]

Mr. Frank. For two long years we have lived here, side by side. We have respected each other's rights . . . we have managed to live in peace. Are we now going to throw it all away? I know this will never happen again, will it, Mr. Van Daan?

Mr. Van Daan. No. No.

Mrs. Frank. He steals once! He'll steal again!

[MR. VAN DAAN, *holding his stomach, starts for the bathroom. ANNE puts her arms around him, helping him up the step.*]

Mr. Frank. Edith, please. Let us be calm. We'll all go to our rooms . . . and afterwards we'll sit down quietly and talk this out . . . we'll find some way . . .

Mrs. Frank. No! No! No more talk! I want them to leave!

Mrs. Van Daan. You'd put us out, on the streets?

Mrs. Frank. There are other hiding places.

Mrs. Van Daan. A cellar . . . a closet. I know. And we have no money left even to pay for that.

Mrs. Frank. I'll give you money. Out of my own pocket I'll give it gladly. (*She gets her purse from a shelf and comes back with it.*)

Mrs. Van Daan. Mr. Frank, you told Putti you'd never forget what he'd done for you when you came to Amsterdam. You said you could never repay him, that you . . .

Mrs. Frank (*counting out money*). If my husband had any obligation to you, he's paid it, over and over.

Mr. Frank. Edith, I've never seen you like this before. I don't know you.

Mrs. Frank. I should have spoken out long ago.

Dussel. You can't be nice to some people.

Mrs. Van Daan (*turning on DUSSEL*). There would have been plenty for all of us, if you hadn't come in here!

Mr. Frank. We don't need the Nazis to destroy us. We're destroying ourselves.

[*He sits down, with his head in his hands.* MRS. FRANK goes to MRS. VAN DAAN.]

Mrs. Frank (*giving MRS. VAN DAAN some money*). Give this to Miep. She'll find you a place.

Anne. Mother, you're not putting *Peter* out. Peter hasn't done anything.

Mrs. Frank. He'll stay, of course. When I say I must protect the children, I mean Peter too.

[*PETER rises from the steps where he has been sitting.*]

Peter. I'd have to go if Father goes.

[*MR. VAN DAAN comes from the bathroom.* MRS. VAN DAAN hurries to him and takes him to the couch. Then she gets water from the sink to bathe his face.]

Mrs. Frank (*while this is going on*). He's no father to you . . . that man! He doesn't know what it is to be a father!

Peter (*starting for his room*). I wouldn't feel right. I couldn't stay.

Mrs. Frank. Very well, then. I'm sorry.

Anne (*rushing over to PETER*). No, Peter! No! (*PETER goes into his room, closing the door after him.* ANNE turns back to her mother, crying.) I don't care about the food. They can have mine! I don't want it! Only don't send them away. It'll be daylight soon. They'll be caught . . .

Margot (*putting her arms comfortingly around ANNE*). Please, Mother!

Mrs. Frank. They're not going now. They'll stay here until Miep finds them a place. (*To MRS. VAN DAAN*) But one thing I insist on! He must never come down here again! He

must never come to this room where the food is stored! We'll divide what we have . . . an equal share for each! (*DUSSEL hurries over to get a sack of potatoes from the food safe.* MRS. FRANK goes on, to MRS. VAN DAAN) You can cook it here and take it up to him.

[*DUSSEL brings the sack of potatoes back to the center table.*]

Margot. Oh, no. No. We haven't sunk so far that we're going to fight over a handful of rotten potatoes.

Dussel (*dividing the potatoes into piles*). Mrs. Frank, Mr. Frank, Margot, Anne, Peter, Mrs. Van Daan, Mr. Van Daan, myself . . . Mrs. Frank . . .

[*The buzzer sounds in MIEP's signal.*]

Mr. Frank. It's Miep! (*He hurries over, getting his overcoat and putting it on.*)

Margot. At this hour?

Mrs. Frank. It is trouble.

Mr. Frank (*as he starts down to unbolt the door*). I beg you, don't let her see a thing like this!

Dussel (*counting without stopping*). . . . Anne, Peter, Mrs. Van Daan, Mr. Van Daan, myself . . .

Margot (*to DUSSEL*). Stop it! Stop it!

Dussel. . . . Mr. Frank, Margot, Anne, Peter, Mrs. Van Daan, Mr. Van Daan, myself, Mrs. Frank . . .

Mrs. Van Daan. You're keeping the big ones for yourself! All the big ones . . . Look at the size of that! . . . And that! . . .

[DUSSEL *continues with his dividing*. PETER, *with his shirt and trousers on, comes from his room.*]

Margot. Stop it! Stop it!

[*We hear MIEP's excited voice speaking to MR. FRANK below.*]

Miep. Mr. Frank . . . the most wonderful news! . . . The invasion has begun!

Mr. Frank. Go on, tell them! Tell them!

[*MIEP comes running up the steps, ahead of MR. FRANK. She has a man's raincoat on over her nightclothes and a bunch of orange-colored flowers in her hand.*]

Miep. Did you hear that, everybody? Did you hear what I said? The invasion has begun! The invasion!

[*They all stare at MIEP, unable to grasp what she is telling them. PETER is the first to recover his wits.*]

Peter. Where?

Mrs. Van Daan. When? When, Miep?

Miep. It began early this morning . . .

[*As she talks on, the realization of what she has said begins to dawn on them. Everyone goes crazy. A wild demonstration takes place. MRS. FRANK hugs MR. VAN DAAN.*]

Mrs. Frank. Oh, Mr. Van Daan, did you hear that?

[*DUSSEL embraces MRS. VAN DAAN. PETER grabs a frying pan and parades around the room, beating on it, singing the Dutch national anthem. ANNE and MARGOT follow him, singing, weaving in and out among the excited grown-ups. MARGOT breaks away to take the*

flowers from MIEP and distribute them to everyone. While this pandemonium is going on, MRS. FRANK tries to make herself heard above the excitement.]

Mrs. Frank (to MIEP). How do you know?

Miep. The radio . . . The BBC! They said they landed on the coast of Normandy!

Peter. The British?

Miep. British, Americans, French, Dutch, Poles, Norwegians . . . all of them! More than four thousand ships! Churchill spoke, and General Eisenhower! D-day, they call it!

Mr. Frank. Thank God, it's come!

Mrs. Van Daan. At last!

Miep (*starting out*). I'm going to tell Mr. Kraler. This'll be better than any blood transfusion.

Mr. Frank (*stopping her*). What part of Normandy did they land, did they say?

Miep. Normandy . . . that's all I know now . . . I'll be up the minute I hear some more! (*She goes hurriedly out.*)

Mr. Frank (to MRS. FRANK). What did I tell you? What did I tell you?

[*MRS. FRANK indicates that he has forgotten to bolt the door after MIEP. He hurries down the steps. MR. VAN DAAN, sitting on the couch, suddenly breaks into a convulsive sob. Everybody looks at him, bewildered.*]

Mrs. Van Daan (*hurrying to him*). Putti! Putti! What is it? What happened?

Mr. Van Daan. Please. I'm so ashamed.

[*MR. FRANK comes back up the steps.*]

Dussel. Oh, for God's sake!

Mrs. Van Daan. Don't, Putti.

Margot. It doesn't matter now!

Mr. Frank (*going to MR. VAN DAAN*). *Didn't you hear what Miep said? The invasion has come! We're going to be liberated! This is a time to celebrate! (He embraces MRS. FRANK and then hurries to the cupboard and gets the cognac and a glass.)*

Mr. Van Daan. To steal bread from children!

Mrs. Frank. We've all done things that we're ashamed of.

Anne. Look at me, the way I've treated Mother . . . so mean and horrid to her.

Mrs. Frank. No, Anneke, no.

[ANNE *runs to her mother, putting her arms around her.*]

Anne. Oh, Mother, I was. I was awful.

Mr. Van Daan. Not like me. No one is as bad as me!

Dussel (*to MR. VAN DAAN*). Stop it now! Let's be happy!

Mr. Frank (*giving MR. VAN DAAN a glass of cognac*). Here! Here! Schnapps! L'chaim! (To life!)

[MR. VAN DAAN *takes the cognac. They all watch him. He gives them a feeble smile. ANNE puts up her fingers in a V-for-victory sign. As MR. VAN DAAN gives an answering V sign, they are startled to hear a loud sob from behind them. It is MRS. FRANK, stricken with remorse. She is sitting on the other side of the room.*]

Mrs. Frank (*through her sobs*). When I think of the terrible things I said . . .

[MR. FRANK, ANNE, and MARGOT *hurry to her, trying to comfort her. MR. VAN DAAN brings her his glass of cognac.*]

Mr. Van Daan. No! No! You were right!

Mrs. Frank. That I should speak that way to you! . . . Our friends! . . . Our guests! (*She starts to cry again.*)

Dussel. Stop it, you're spoiling the whole invasion!

[*As they are comforting her, the lights dim out. The curtain falls.*]

Anne's Voice (*faintly at first and then with growing strength*). We're all in much better spirits these days. There's still excellent news of the invasion. The best part about it is that I have a feeling that friends are coming. Who knows? Maybe I'll be back in school by fall. Ha, ha! The joke is on us! The warehouse man doesn't know a thing and we are paying him all that money! . . . Wednesday, the second of July, nineteen forty-four. The invasion seems temporarily to be bogged down. Mr. Kraler has to have an operation, which looks bad. The Gestapo have found the radio that was stolen. Mr. Dussel says they'll trace it back and back to the thief, and then, it's just a matter of time till they get to us. Everyone is low. Even poor Pim can't raise their spirits. I have often been downcast myself . . . but never in despair. I can shake off everything if I write. But . . . and that is the great question . . . will I ever be able to write well? I want to so much. I want to go on living even after my death. Another birthday has gone by, so now I am fifteen. Already I know what I want. I have a goal, an opinion.

[*As this is being said, the curtain rises on the scene, the lights dim on, and ANNE's voice fades out.*]