

Act 2

SCENE 4

*It is an afternoon a few weeks later. . . .
Everyone but Margot is in the main room.
There is a sense of great tension.*

Both MRS. FRANK and MR. VAN DAAN are nervously pacing back and forth. DUSSEL is standing at the window, looking down fixedly at the street below. PETER is at the center table, trying to do his lessons. ANNE sits opposite him, writing in her diary. MRS. VAN DAAN is seated on the couch, her eyes on MR. FRANK as he sits reading.

The sound of a telephone ringing comes from the office below. They all are rigid, listening tensely. DUSSEL rushes down to MR. FRANK.

Dussel. There it goes again, the telephone! Mr. Frank, do you hear?

Mr. Frank (*quietly*). Yes. I hear.

Dussel (*pleading, insistent*). But this is the third time, Mr. Frank! The third time in quick succession! It's a signal! I tell you it's Miep, trying to get us! For some reason she can't come to us and she's trying to warn us of something!

Mr. Frank. Please. Please.

Mr. Van Daan (*to DUSSEL*). You're wasting your breath.

Dussel. Something has happened, Mr. Frank. For three days now Miep hasn't been to see us! And today not a man has come to work. There hasn't been a sound in the building!

Mrs. Frank. Perhaps it's Sunday. We may have lost track of the days.

Mr. Van Daan (*to ANNE*). You with the diary there. What day is it?

Dussel (*going to MRS. FRANK*). I don't lose track of the days! I know exactly what day it is! It's Friday, the fourth of August. Friday, and not a man at work. (*He rushes back to MR. FRANK, pleading with him, almost in tears.*) I tell you Mr. Kraler's dead. That's the only explanation. He's dead and they've closed down the building, and Miep's trying to tell us!

Mr. Frank. She'd never telephone us.

Dussel (*frantic*). Mr. Frank, answer that! I beg you, answer it!

Mr. Frank. No.

Mr. Van Daan. Just pick it up and listen. You don't have to speak. Just listen and see if it's Miep.

Dussel (*speaking at the same time*). For God's sake . . . I ask you.

Mr. Frank. No. I've told you, no. I'll do nothing that might let anyone know we're in the building.

Peter. Mr. Frank's right.

Mr. Van Daan. There's no need to tell us what side you're on.

Mr. Frank. If we wait patiently, quietly, I believe that help will come.

[*There is silence for a minute as they all listen to the telephone ringing.*]

Dussel. I'm going down. (*He rushes down the steps. MR. FRANK tries ineffectually to hold him. DUSSEL runs to the lower door, unbolting it. The telephone stops ringing. DUSSEL bolts the door and comes slowly back up the steps.*) Too late.

[MR. FRANK goes
to MARGOT in ANNE's bedroom.]

Mr. Van Daan. So we just wait here until we die.

Mrs. Van Daan (*hysterically*). I can't stand it! I'll kill myself! I'll kill myself!

Mr. Van Daan. For God's sake, stop it!

[*In the distance, a German military band is heard playing a Viennese waltz.*]

Mrs. Van Daan. I think you'd be glad if I did! I think you want me to die!

Mr. Van Daan. Whose fault is it we're here? (MRS. VAN DAAN starts for her room. He follows, talking at her.) We could've been safe somewhere . . . in America or Switzerland. But no! No! You wouldn't leave when I wanted to. You couldn't leave your things. You couldn't leave your precious furniture.

Mrs. Van Daan. Don't touch me!

[*She hurries up the stairs, followed by MR. VAN DAAN. PETER, unable to bear it, goes to his room. ANNE looks after him, deeply concerned. DUSSEL returns to his post at the window. MR. FRANK comes back into the main room and takes a book, trying to read. MRS. FRANK sits near the sink, starting to peel some potatoes. ANNE quietly goes to PETER's room, closing the door after her. PETER is lying face down on the cot. ANNE leans over him, holding him in her arms, trying to bring him out of his despair.*]

Anne. Look, Peter, the sky. (*She looks up through the skylight.*) What a lovely, lovely day! Aren't the clouds beautiful? You know what I do when it seems as if I couldn't stand being cooped up for one more minute? I think myself out. I think myself on a walk in the park where I used to go with Pim. Where the jonquils and the crocuses and the violets grow

down the slopes. You know the most wonderful part about thinking yourself out? You can have it any way you like. You can have roses and violets and chrysanthemums all blooming at the same time. . . . It's funny . . . I used to take it all for granted . . . and now I've gone crazy about everything to do with nature. Haven't you?

Peter. I've just gone crazy. I think if something doesn't happen soon . . . if we don't get out of here . . . I can't stand much more of it!

Anne (*softly*). I wish you had a religion, Peter.

Peter. No, thanks! Not me!

Anne. Oh, I don't mean you have to be Orthodox . . . or believe in Heaven and Hell and Purgatory and things . . . I just mean some religion . . . it doesn't matter what. Just to believe in something! When I think of all that's out there . . . the trees . . . and flowers . . . and sea gulls . . . When I think of the dearness of you, Peter . . . and the goodness of the people we know . . . Mr. Kraler, Miep, Dirk, the vegetable man, all risking their lives for us every day . . . When I think of these good things, I'm not afraid anymore . . . I find myself, and God, and I . . .

[*PETER interrupts, getting up and walking away.*]

Peter. That's fine! But when I begin to think, I get mad! Look at us, hiding out for two years. Not able to move! Caught here like . . . waiting for them to come and get us . . . and all for what?

Anne. We're not the only people that've had to suffer. There've always been people that've had to . . . sometimes one race . . . sometimes another . . . and yet . . .

Peter. That doesn't make me feel any better!

Anne (*going to him*). I know it's terrible, trying to have any faith . . . when people are doing such horrible . . . But you know what I sometimes think? I think the world may be going through a phase, the way I was with Mother. It'll pass, maybe not for hundreds of years, but someday . . . I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart.

Peter. I want to see something now . . . not a thousand years from now! (*He goes over, sitting down again on the cot.*)

Anne. But, Peter, if you'd only look at it as part of a great pattern . . . that we're just a little minute in the life . . . (*She breaks off.*) Listen to us, going at each other like a couple of stupid grown-ups! Look at the sky now. Isn't it lovely? (*She holds out her hand to him. PETER takes it and rises, standing with her at the window looking out, his arms around her.*) Someday, when we're outside again, I'm going to . . .

[*She breaks off as she hears the sound of a car, its brakes squealing as it comes to a sudden stop. The people in the other rooms also become aware of the sound. They listen tensely. Another car roars up to a screeching stop. ANNE and PETER come from PETER's room. MR. and MRS. VAN DAAN creep down the stairs. DUSSEL comes out from his room. Everyone is listening, hardly breathing. A doorbell clangs again and again in the building below. MR. FRANK starts quietly down the steps to the door. DUSSEL and PETER follow him. The others stand rigid, waiting, terrified.*]

In a few seconds DUSSEL comes stumbling back up the steps. He shakes off PETER's help and goes to his room. MR. FRANK bolts the door below and comes slowly back up the steps. Their eyes are all on him as he stands there for a minute. They realize that what they feared has happened. MRS. VAN DAAN starts to

whimper. MR. VAN DAAN puts her gently in a chair and then hurries off up the stairs to their room to collect their things. PETER goes to comfort his mother. There is a sound of violent pounding on a door below.]

Mr. Frank (*quietly*). For the past two years we have lived in fear. Now we can live in hope.

[*The pounding below becomes more insistent. There are muffled sounds of voices, shouting commands.*]

Men's Voices. Aufmachen! Da drinnen! Aufmachen! Schnell! Schnell! Schnell! (Etc., etc.) ("Open up! You in there! Open up! Quickly! Quickly! Quickly!")

[*The street door below is forced open. We hear the heavy tread of footsteps coming up. MR. FRANK gets two school bags from the shelves and gives one to ANNE and the other to MARGOT. He goes to get a bag for MRS. FRANK. The sound of feet coming up grows louder. PETER comes to ANNE, kissing her goodbye; then he goes to his room to collect his things. The buzzer of their door starts to ring. MR. FRANK brings MRS. FRANK a bag. They stand together, waiting. We hear the thud of gun butts on the door, trying to break it down.*]

ANNE stands, holding her school satchel, looking over at her father and mother with a soft, reassuring smile. She is no longer a child, but a woman with courage to meet whatever lies ahead.

The lights dim out. The curtain falls on the scene. We hear a mighty crash as the door is shattered. After a second ANNE's voice is heard.]

Anne's Voice. And so it seems our stay here is over. They are waiting for us now. They've allowed us five minutes to get our things. We can each take a bag and whatever it will hold of clothing. Nothing else. So, dear Diary, that

means I must leave you behind. Goodbye for a while. P.S. Please, please, Miep, or Mr. Kraler, or anyone else. If you should find this diary, will you please keep it safe for me, because someday I hope . . .

*[Her voice stops abruptly. There is silence.
After a second the curtain rises.]*
