

AFTER BABA'S FUNERAL

Ted Galay

The characters:

NETTY DANISCHUK in her sixties

RONNIE DANISCHUK late twenties, her son

WALTER DANISCHUK in his sixties, Netty's husband

MINNIE HOROSHKO in her fifties, Netty's sister

BILL HOROSHKO late fifties, Minnie's husband

The scene:

The Danischuk kitchen. The last week in July, 1978. A small town in Manitoba.

Ukrainian Expressions:

<i>Baba</i>	Grandmother
<i>Hoychi</i>	Come (used only for children to be lifted)
<i>Skoro, skoro, zberaysya</i>	Hurry, hurry, get dressed
<i>Druhe selo</i>	Next village
<i>Awo, Bokh</i>	Look, God
<i>Nay yeeh shlyak trafit</i>	May evil befall them (considered profanity)
<i>To vsho zhydy</i>	They're all Jews
<i>Valyanky</i>	Felt boots
<i>Ydeet zdorovi</i>	Go in health
<i>Dyakuyu</i>	Thank you

AFTER BABA'S FUNERAL

The Danischuk kitchen. Bright curtains, plants, wall plaques, religious calendar, plastic table cover and a plastic flower ornament on the table. Very neat, but there are some coffee cups and spoons on the table and Ronnie's suitcase on the floor. It is early evening, about 8 p.m. Netty enters, wearing dark dress, hat, and carrying a single live flower. She lays the flower on the counter, puts down her hat and purse, and goes to where her slippers are. Ronnie enters.

RONNIE: Wow, it's hot, eh?

NETTY: These shoes are killing me.

Walter enters.

RONNIE: Here's the car keys.

WALTER: Leave them on the cupboard.

Walter exits to inner room, where he will hang up his jacket. Netty has put on her apron, fills a glass with water, and puts the flower in it. She starts to clear the table. Walter comes back.

WALTER: Netty, sit down and rest.

RONNIE: Sit down, Mom. You must be tired.

NETTY: That won't get the work done.

WALTER: Leave it, Netty. We'll do it later.

NETTY: Leave it. That's all you know. Anything to do, it's leave it.

RONNIE: Here, I'll do it. You sit down.

NETTY: No. It's all right. It's better for me if I do something. *(Pause)* If you want something to do, put your suitcase away.

RONNIE: Okay.

He picks up his jacket and suitcase and exits.

NETTY: He seems thinner.

WALTER: A little.

NETTY: I don't think he eats right.

WALTER: He's healthy.

NETTY: I don't know.

WALTER: He's healthier than you are. Don't worry about him.

NETTY: You're always telling me not to worry. Let me worry if I want to worry.

WALTER: All right. Worry.

NETTY: Okay. *(Pause)* Did he say how long he's staying?

WALTER: No.

Ronnie enters. Pause.

RONNIE: Everything went smoothly today.

WALTER: It was a nice funeral.

RONNIE: Baba looked very nice.

NETTY: Yes, she did look nice.

RONNIE: And the dinner those women prepared. I can't remember when I ate so much.

NETTY: Those women! They're all so helpless. Even at my own mother's funeral, they come running to me, "Netty, how much coffee do you put?" "Netty, how much cream to the

potatoes?" I wish I could give up all that church work now.

RONNIE: Why don't you?

NETTY: How can I? Who else is there to do things?

RONNIE: They'd manage without you. If you stay, it's because you want to.

NETTY: I didn't want to be bothered. Not today. But you saw them. They wouldn't leave me alone.

WALTER: I'll just go and turn the sprinkler on.

Walter exits. Pause.

NETTY: You didn't say how long you were staying.

RONNIE: Till Sunday.

NETTY: Oh. I thought you might stay longer.

RONNIE: I almost didn't make it at all. I had such a time getting everything arranged. After you called Saturday night, I spent all day Sunday calling people and running around. I didn't have enough money for a ticket and I didn't want to wait an extra day just to go to the bank, so I ran around to everyone I knew ... ten dollars here, twenty dollars there ... and even then, I didn't know if I was going to get a seat. But I made it.

NETTY: You said you didn't think you could come.

RONNIE: I know. But I ... wanted to come.

NETTY: You didn't need to come on my account.

Pause.

RONNIE: I wanted to be here. To see Baba once more.

NETTY: She wanted to see you before she died. "Ronnie will come to see me," she said. "Ronnie always comes to see me."

RONNIE: Did she get the cards I sent?

NETTY: Yes. She was so pleased they were in Ukrainian. And they were the only ones from any of the grandchildren.

Walter re-enters.

But she wanted to see you. And then she thought the doctor was you. "See, Ronnie comes to see me. Ronnie comes every day," she said.

RONNIE: It's a shame Larry and Edie couldn't be here.

NETTY: But they came before she died.

RONNIE: I wanted to come but I had to finish my thesis.

NETTY: I'm sure if you asked the professors, they would have let you come.

RONNIE: Mom, you don't understand.

WALTER: So. Now you *are* a doctor.

Netty puts out the coffee cups and plugs the kettle.

RONNIE: Of Mathematics. Well, not quite yet. Not till the fall convocation in November. But the work is all done now.

NETTY: Not till fall? So what was the hurry?

RONNIE: Well, I start my new job in September. I didn't want the thesis hanging over my head.

WALTER: That's at the university?

RONNIE: No. One of the colleges.

WALTER: And will you go back again?

RONNIE: Where?

WALTER: Yourself. To university.

RONNIE: No. There's nothing left after a Ph.D. (*Laughs*) I know it all now, they won't let me go back again.

NETTY: Oh, you kids. You think you know everything. Take some coffee. And a donut.

RONNIE: I had some at the dinner.

NETTY: You haven't had one of mine yet.

Ronnie takes a donut.

WALTER: So, you must be very excited now.

RONNIE: I should be. It doesn't feel the way I thought it would. I thought it would be some ... big, exciting breakthrough ... but it was ... mostly boring.

WALTER: It's just too soon. Give yourself time.

RONNIE: I guess so.

NETTY: How's the donut?

RONNIE: Oh. Good.

NETTY: Not as good as usual.

RONNIE: No, it's really good.

Netty nods her head. Ronnie turns to Walter.

But it was strange how it happened. I didn't seem to be getting anywhere. I was almost ready to give up. For three weeks, I didn't do a thing. Suddenly, one little thing fell into place. Then another. Nothing spectacular. And suddenly, I was done. It snuck up on me when I wasn't looking.

NETTY: Colleges, universities! I only went to Grade Five and I can do more things than any of you.

RONNIE: Well, it was you who sent us to university.

NETTY: If I had known, I wouldn't have let you go past Grade Five. Now you're all gone away. And when you do come home, you think you're too good for us anyway.

RONNIE: Listen, why don't you come to visit me in Vancouver. I'd really like to show you the mountains and the ocean.

NETTY: How can we go? Two old scraps like us!

WALTER: We should go. At least once before we die, we should see where our children are.

NETTY: How can we go? There's the garden to do. And then Bill is so sick. He might go anytime. (*Looks at clock on wall*) They said they might step in before going back to Winnipeg.

RONNIE: Those are just excuses. Why won't you come?

NETTY: Where would we sleep? You don't have room.

RONNIE: Sure I have. You can have the bedroom. I'll sleep on the hide-a-bed.

NETTY: I don't know. (*Pause*) Are you still seeing that girl?

RONNIE: Susan? Yes.

WALTER: You're not thinking of getting married?

RONNIE: Oh, no. She wants to do her doctorate in Linguistics.

WALTER: You shouldn't wait too long.

NETTY: You wrote you were helping her to move.

RONNIE: That's right.

NETTY: Did she find a nice place?

RONNIE: Oh, yes, it's quite nice.

NETTY: Is it near you?

RONNIE: No, she doesn't like the West End. It's in Kitsilano.

NETTY: Oh. Is that nicer?

RONNIE: Well, you'll just have to come out and see.

NETTY: Have another donut.

RONNIE: I'm full. You went to visit Larry and Edie in Edmonton. Didn't you enjoy that?

NETTY: That Edie, always trying to show me. They had a Greek party and invited all their Greek friends, just to show me what big shots they are. What do I know of such things? And now they're gone to Bangladesh. It's no good for the kids. I don't know why they have to run around so much.

WALTER: It's his job. He's an engineer. He has to go places.

RONNIE: It doesn't hurt the kids. They love it. But how about coming to visit me? If you really want to, you'll find a way.

NETTY: It just depends how I feel. If I'm no good, it's no use me going anywhere, I'm no good to anyone. One of these days, I'm going to go to the old folks' home and I'll say to them, "Let me work here as long as I'm able, I don't want any money, but when I get too old, you'll have to look after me."

RONNIE: If you want to come, you'll find a way.

WALTER: You think they'll want you?

NETTY: Sure, they'll want me. I can still work. And I know how to handle the old ones. Why wouldn't they want me? I don't want to be a burden to my family.

RONNIE: Well, it's far too soon to be talking like that.

NETTY: Well, who's going to take me? You? You have your own life. And Larry and Edie? I told them. I told them before they left. Baba is going down. She won't last long. And we're getting old. What if we get sick and die, and you're not here. Have you thought about that? And he said, "Yes." So, fine. They're gone.

WALTER: Our children don't think like us. That's how it has to be.

RONNIE: How was Baba when she was with you?

WALTER: She was no trouble.

RONNIE: Was she very ... sick?

NETTY: No, not that she was sick. Somebody just had to sit with her all the time. She didn't want to be left.

RONNIE: It felt strange, seeing her ... in church there ...

NETTY: Maybe if you went to church more, it wouldn't feel so strange.

WALTER: Do you go to church in Vancouver?

RONNIE: No.

NETTY: You kids. You think you don't need God. You go to university and you think you're too

smart for God.

RONNIE: Let's not get into that again.

NETTY: You just wait till you have some hardship, then you'll know. All the things I had to live through. I couldn't have gone through it if I didn't know that God was there to help me.

RONNIE: Mom, I have my own beliefs. I prefer to meditate.

NETTY: Meditate! We called it prayer. That was good enough for us. We weren't ashamed to get on our knees.

RONNIE: And I'm not afraid to stand on my own feet!

WALTER: Ronnie!

Ronnie turns to him, surprised. Take another donut.

Pushes plate to him. Ronnie takes one.

NETTY: You think you're too smart for God.

WALTER: Never mind, Netty. *(Pause)* There were lots in church today.

NETTY: Minnie and Theresa had their whole families. Only us with someone missing. But she did look nice. I'm going to miss her.

RONNIE: When everyone was going by and kissing Baba, at first I was glad the pallbearers weren't going. Then I felt sad and thought I should go. But I didn't. It bothers me.

WALTER: It's not important.

NETTY: They always used to say, in the old days, if you didn't kiss the person good-bye, then you would always miss them.

RONNIE: Something stopped me from going up.

NETTY: Did you see Theresa crying all over the place? When just before, all she wanted was to give Baba to the nursing home.

RONNIE: Well, they had her for a long time.

NETTY: No one was asking them to take her again. But they got so mad at me because I said I'd take her. And they didn't even have to sit with her. When she went to the hospital, I took the bus every day to Winnipeg to sit with her, because she was always pulling the intravenous out of her arms. And the nurses wanted me to stay at night, too, but I couldn't. I said, "Look at me. How can I? I'm not well myself. I can't stay twenty-four hours a day."

RONNIE: No, of course not. You should have let someone else go some of the time.

NETTY: Just try. They're all too busy.

RONNIE: They would have had to manage.

NETTY: So then they said she could come home. But Jack didn't want her anymore, he wanted to put her in the nursing home, but they had no room for her, so I said I'd take her.

WALTER: Sure, we have lots of room.

NETTY: And Jack and Theresa almost killed me, they were so mad. They're so funny. Anything I say, they jump on me.

WALTER: Forget it, Netty. Everybody was upset.

NETTY: I don't care. I took her and I'm glad. She was no trouble. And she was happy here.

WALTER: No, she was no trouble. You only had to sit with her.

RONNIE: Was she ... Did she know who you were?

NETTY: Not all the time. She would ask me, "And where's Netty?" And I'd say, "I'm Netty." And

she would look at me and say, "And where's your mother?" And if I said, "You're my mother," she would get all mixed up. She'd look at me and she'd sit so quiet. So after a while, I just said, "Oh, she just went out for a while," and then she was happy.

RONNIE: You said something in your letter about her always talking to a little boy.

WALTER: Oh, that was all the time. She was always asking for the little boy and then she'd think she saw him, so she'd lean forward (*Arms out*) and say, "*Hoychi, hoychi.*"

NETTY: Sometimes, she'd want to come to the kitchen, so we would bring her out and she would sit here and she would see him in that chair ... you see, in the pattern... she'd see him there and she'd say, "See, he's there." And she knew it was a chair, but she saw him there too.

RONNIE: That's how I remember her. Always looking after the children. Did she say who the little boy was?

WALTER: We think it was Dennis. She practically raised him.

RONNIE: Dennis?

NETTY: He started to scream when he saw Baba in the coffin at prayers.

WALTER: They had to leave him home today. Jack felt so bad because Dennis wanted his grandpa to stay with him, but how could he stay?

RONNIE: They should talk with him. It's very important that the child be made to feel that it's okay for him to be feeling whatever he's feeling.

NETTY: Those who don't have think they know how to raise children. In the old days, when a child got scared, we would melt some wax and pour it into a glass of water. Then whatever shape the wax would take, that was the thing that frightened the child. Then I would dip my two fingers in and make a sign of the cross on the child's forehead. And it would stop crying and go to sleep.

RONNIE: Did you ever do that for me?

NETTY: Yes.

RONNIE: And Baba did it for you.

NETTY: Yes.

RONNIE: You said Baba was happy.

NETTY: It was like she knew. Every morning, you came into her room and she was sitting on the bed, and she'd hold out her arms to be hugged.

RONNIE: That's nice. That's a nice way to be.

NETTY: So I'd hug her. And then she'd say, "Where's Netty?" So I'd tell her, "I'm Netty." And she would ... 1-o-o-k ... (*Peers*)... And then she'd ask, "And where's your mother?" So I'd say, "Oh, she just went out for a while." Because if I said anything else, she'd get puzzled.

WALTER: And sometimes, she thought she was still in the old country.

NETTY: She'd say, "*Skoro, skoro, zberaysya.* Look, it's getting late and we have to go to the dance in the next... village ... *druhe selo,*" like they used to say in the old country. And then she would say, "Look. Look at the flowers. And the fruit trees blooming. All along the road where we have to walk."

RONNIE: How did she get sick again?

NETTY: It was a heart attack. So they took her back, but to the hospital here this time, so it was easier. I went every day to sit with her ... only two days ... Theresa took off work and she went...

WALTER: She started to see things.

NETTY: She saw *Tato* ... my father ... and then she thought she saw God. Only it was hair ... beautiful hair on the ceiling ... she'd 1-o-o-k (*Peering*) ... and she'd point ... and she'd say, "See ... see ... it's God ... *Awo, Bokh.*" And she'd raise her arm to reach out (*Raises her right arm*)... and then it would fall. (*Arm drops lifelessly*) And she'd r-e-a-c-h ... (*Reaching slowly, a strain*) ... and then it would fall. (*Drops*) And then she thought she saw Father. "Look, *Tato*," she would say. And she'd raise her arm, to reach out to him to take her ... (*Reaching*) ... and then ... (*Arm drops*) ... it w^ould fall.

RONNIE: I keep thinking, she's the last of that generation.

NETTY: The end was very peaceful. She was sitting. Then she just... caught her breath (*Does it*) ... and she was gone. (*Pause*) There's her trunk downstairs. Maybe you want something of hers ... for a remembrance?

RONNIE: I don't know. What is there?

NETTY: You'll have to look. (*To Walter*) I told you we should bring the trunk upstairs.

WALTER: Tomorrow, Netty. We'll do it tomorrow.

RONNIE: You don't have to bring it up. I'll go down tomorrow and look through it.

NETTY: Tomorrow, you'll have something else to do. (*To Walter*) Why doesn't anybody else see what has to be done? Why is it always me who has to look after things?

WALTER: Netty, there's time. The funeral was just today.

NETTY: I wish Jack and Theresa would come and take what they want. And everybody else. I don't know what to do with the stuff.

RONNIE: There's no rush.

NETTY: There's all her clothes. They're no good for anyone. And I have no place to keep them.

RONNIE: Take them to the old folks' home.

WALTER: Sure. They'll take them.

NETTY: Then the whole family will get mad at me. I wish they'd come and look. I think we should bring it upstairs.

WALTER: Let it stay where it is. It's too hot to get it now.

NETTY: What if Minnie and Bill come? And Ronnie could look.

RONNIE: Look, don't bring it up on my account. I really don't think there's anything I could use anyway.

NETTY: You have no use for any of us anymore! You never come home!

RONNIE: Oh, Jesus ...

WALTER: This is silly, Netty. You're upsetting yourself.

NETTY: How can I not get upset? My children have no use for me anymore. Everybody's mad at me. Jack and Theresa yelling at me all the time. What did I do wrong? Tell me, what did I do wrong? Somebody had to take Baba. So I did it. And they all jumped on me.

RONNIE: Didn't you *want* to take her?

NETTY: It wasn't if I wanted to or not ... somebody had to.

RONNIE: If you had said you wanted to, then maybe they wouldn't feel as if you were judging them.

NETTY: What about me? Everybody's judging me! What good does it do to say what I want? I never had what I want, I never will. I do what I have to do.

Netty starts to leave.

WALTER: Where are you going?

NETTY: To get the trunk.

WALTER: Leave it, Netty.

NETTY: You don't have to help me. I'll get it myself.

WALTER: Sit down. I'll get it.

NETTY: I don't want you to help me!

WALTER: Netty!

Pause.

NETTY: Ronnie! Help your father.

Walter starts to leave.

RONNIE: Do you need a hand?

WALTER: Just up the stairs.

Ronnie starts to follow him.

No, sit. I'll call you when I'm ready.

RONNIE: I may as well come now.

WALTER: Sit. I'll call you when I'm ready.

Walter exits.

NETTY: I don't know what's wrong with Daddy. He always puts things off. *(Pause)* I guess he's tired, but it's hard for me.

RONNIE: He's getting slower.

NETTY: He's going down. And he's so funny now. I don't know what to do with him. He gets such funny ideas.

RONNIE: What kind of ideas?

NETTY: He never wants to go anywhere. And he never hears me. I talk and talk and he never hears a word I'm saying. All he wants to do is work in the garden.

RONNIE: The garden looks very nice this year.

NETTY: He gets mixed up. And so nervous if you rush him. And ever since the accident, he's scared to drive.

RONNIE: It would do you both good to get away for a while.

NETTY: And so absent-minded. He'd forget to eat if I didn't call him. I don't know what he'd do without me. It would be hard for him if I went first.

RONNIE: There's no use thinking about that.

NETTY: It would be better if he went first. I could manage better than him.

RONNIE: The choir was good today.

NETTY: What?

RONNIE: The choir. In church.

NETTY: Oh. Yes, they were good. I always hear in my head how it should be. And my chest fills

up and I think I should be able to sing it the way I hear it. And I can't sing. And I wonder why I can't make it come out perfect the way I hear it in my head. I never had a chance to do those things I had in me. To sing. And to dance. When we were small, we had no money, but one of the first things Father got was a gramophone and there was always singing and dancing at home. And Father joined in too with us kids. And I found such a husband. When we went out and the music started, I closed my eyes and grabbed onto the chair, because I was shaking I wanted to dance so much. And he never asked me to dance. But now, it doesn't matter anymore. Especially when you lose someone. *(Pause)* I don't know why I was such a funny kid. I always had such funny ideas and used to wonder about things.

RONNIE: What did you wonder about?

NETTY: Oh ... everything.

RONNIE: But what?

NETTY: Well ... one thing, I remember ... I always used to wonder how the world could hold all those things ... the roads, the buildings, the people ... more and more all the time. And I used to wonder sometime, if it wouldn't all ... fall in ...

WALTER: *(Offstage)* Ronnie!

RONNIE: *(Calling out)* Coming.

Ronnie exits. Netty follows part-way to watch.

NETTY: Be careful! Watch the wall!

Walter backs into Netty as he and Ronnie enter with the trunk.

Watch! What's the matter with you!

RONNIE: Where do you want it?

NETTY: Oh ... *(Looks around)* ... put it there.

The trunk is set down. Walter and Ronnie sit again. Netty stands at the trunk. She wipes the dust from its lid.

Eddie always said she wanted one of Baba's kerchiefs from the old country. I don't know if I should save one for her or not.

WALTER: Sure, take one.

NETTY: She should have thought of that before they went away. Maybe somebody else will take them.

RONNIE: Take one out now.

NETTY: Sure, and then Theresa will come and say something about it. No, let it go.

RONNIE: Eddie will be hurt.

NETTY: She doesn't worry about my feelings. Or Larry either. He's so funny now. He wants to tell me everything about where he went and show me pictures. What do I know about such things?

RONNIE: He just wants you to see where he's been ... what he's doing.

NETTY: I don't know. I guess he wants me to praise him or something. I can't. I don't understand such things. I don't know why he has to go away so much.

WALTER: It's his job. Our kids aren't content to just sit home like us.

NETTY: *(Going to kettle)* Take your coffee.

Walter and Ronnie come to the table and spoon instant coffee into their cups.

WALTER: What grades will you be teaching?

RONNIE: It's not grades ... first and second year university courses.

NETTY: You'll have to buy some new clothes.

RONNIE: No, they dress casually.

NETTY: We can buy you a suit, for a graduation present.

RONNIE: I don't wear suits. And you don't have to give me anything.

WALTER: We'd like to give you something.

RONNIE: All right, then, come to visit. That will be my present.

WALTER: Well, for my part, we could go.

NETTY: I don't know. We'll have to see. The way I'm feeling.. *(She sets the kettle down on the table, looks over at trunk, goes over, opens it, looks in a moment, pulls out a kerchief) ...*

Maybe I will take one for Edie.

WALTER: Sure. Put it away for her.

NETTY: Here's some old photographs, Ronnie, maybe you'd like.

RONNIE: No, I don't think so.

NETTY: Well, just come and look.

RONNIE: I don't have any place for them. I just have a small apartment.

WALTER: Go look.

But Netty is already closing the trunk. Maybe you'll see something you like.

RONNIE: Tomorrow, maybe.

NETTY: I'll just go put this away.

Netty exits.

WALTER: You should take something.

RONNIE: I can't use any of it. And I don't feel right taking anything. I hardly even saw Baba the last few years.

WALTER: Just to please Mama.

RONNIE: Dad, I can't be doing everything she wants. I start feeling like a puppet.

WALTER: It's just for a few days. And she's feeling low right now. Take something. What can it hurt you?

RONNIE: Every time I come home, I promise myself that it's going to be different. I won't get mad. We'll be happy together. I even shaved off my beard, for crying out loud. And every time, it happens again. I start feeling ... erased.

WALTER: How can it hurt you to take something of Baba's?

RONNIE: How can you always do what she wants?

WALTER: Why make trouble? You're so stubborn. Just like her.

RONNIE: Me! Like Mama!

WALTER: Take something. Just to please her.

RONNIE: No. That's your way. I can't be like you. There has to be something I don't give up.

Pause. Netty returns. Sees Walter rubbing his neck.

NETTY: What's the matter? Are you getting one of your headaches?

RONNIE: Headaches?

WALTER: No, I'm just having a hard time keeping awake.

RONNIE: Have you been getting headaches?

NETTY: Ever since the accident.

WALTER: It's not so bad now. But at first, I was getting a buzzing in my shoulder and then it would go to my head.

RONNIE: (*Looking out the window*) Your garden looks nice.

WALTER: It's not too bad.

RONNIE: I don't think I've ever seen it quite so nice.

NETTY: It's not so nice as what we had on the farm. The plum trees were just big enough to begin blooming when we left it.

WALTER: I have to water every day. It's very dry.

NETTY: It's good for the farmers. To harvest.

WALTER: Everything is ripe now. It will be a good crop.

RONNIE: Do you still miss the farm?

WALTER: Oh. Sometimes.

NETTY: It was no use. We couldn't make a go of it.

WALTER: It was a good farm. Only the weather ...

NETTY: And those first years. You had to go out and cut cords every winter.

RONNIE: How long did you do that?

WALTER: Oh, about five years. When we first got our farm.

NETTY: It was six years. Because you went the first winter we had the farm and kept going till Larry was born.

WALTER: Well, I guess it was six years then.

RONNIE: Did you need a permit?

WALTER: Yes, you had to go to Winnipeg to get a permit. At first, you could cut anywhere. But later, they would only let so many go into a bush. One winter, we went and got a permit to go into a bush where Chorneys had been the year before and when Chorneys went, they wouldn't give them the permit anymore, unless they could make some deal with us. So Chorneys came and said we had to get out. But we were only cutting green spruce for pulp, so we said, "Look, we built the road already and we're cutting green spruce. You cut the tamarack for dry wood and we can both work here." So that's how we did it.

RONNIE: Were there lots of fights?

WALTER: No, not with us. Some places. Some people say, "Who are you to tell me so-and-so?" But we never followed that line. We talked it over. You want this, we want this, let's see how we can do it. Only one time, Andrei Maslo was telling everybody he was going to chase us all out of the bush. He told George he was going to line us all up and lead us out. (*Chuckles*) He kept saying that, he was going to line us all up and that's how we were going to come out of the bush. So I said, "Let him try." But he never came.

NETTY: (*Looking at clock*) I don't think Minnie and Bill are coming. I think she's mad at me because I didn't go to see them in Winnipeg.

WALTER: They have a long drive. And Bill looked tired.

NETTY: How could I go to visit them? I had to sit with Baba every day. They hardly even came.

RONNIE: How is Uncle Bill now?

WALTER: Not too bad.

NETTY: He's very low. Three times a week he has to go on the machine. Dialysis. Maybe it's better they don't come. The way I'm feeling now, if I have to look at him, with nothing to look forward to, I might just break down.

RONNIE: He was having a good time at the dinner.

NETTY: Everything is so tight in me. I wish I could let go or cry or something.

WALTER: Maybe you should lie down.

NETTY: That doesn't help. Nothing helps. Just to work. Sometimes, if I work and work, then it lets go for a while.

RONNIE: Aunt Minnie was telling me about this ... Peter ... who shot his father.

NETTY: The doctors said, when they cut out that part of my intestine, that I wouldn't be so nervous anymore. But now ... I just get numb. I wish I could cry.

WALTER: Ronnie was asking about your cousin Kashka's boy.

NETTY: Peter?

RONNIE: Yes. How did all that happen?

NETTY: He shot Arthur ... when he brought another woman to the house.

WALTER: He was always spoiled. They were old when they had him.

NETTY: That's right. And then Kashka was always sick after that so Arthur started running around. And after Kashka died, Peter wouldn't leave, even after he got married, he said it was his mother's house and he wouldn't leave his mother's house. Then Arthur brought his girlfriend in and Peter shot him.

RONNIE: I don't know what it was about him. I only met him once. You remember, when they came up from Detroit. Everybody was so excited. I was about eight years old then, and I went to Baba's with them.

NETTY: You had to show them the way.

RONNIE: And something happened ... I can't remember what... but I came into the house and everybody kept saying, "Go out and play with Peter." But I didn't want to. And then you came in the evening, and I went home with you instead of staying at Baba's. Do you remember that?

WALTER: No.

NETTY: Maybe he pushed you or something.

RONNIE: No, it was more. Because after that, I didn't want to go to Baba's for a long time. I always used to like to stay at Baba's, and after that, I didn't want to anymore. Do you remember that?

WALTER: No.

NETTY: No. It was nothing. He probably just pushed you. You always were such a sensitive kid. It's no good to be like that. I know. Or to wonder about things. You never find out.

RONNIE: Like why the world doesn't fall in?

WALTER: What?

RONNIE: Mama was saying ...

NETTY: Ronnie, be quiet ...

RONNIE: ... that she always wondered, when she was a girl, why the world didn't fall in.

(Pause) With all the new roads and buildings and people.

WALTER: Oh. *(Pause)* Well, if you look at it another way, all those things came from the earth, so there is no extra weight. It always was there. It still is there.

NETTY: Not the people!

WALTER: No. Not the people.

NETTY: And the things were *in* the earth, not on it!

Knock at door. Minnie and Bill enter. Bill's face is very dark and he moves slowly, holding on to furniture.

MINNIE: Walter!

NETTY: Minnie, Bill, come in. We thought you had gone back already.

WALTER: Come in, sit down.

NETTY: *(Indicating Bill)* Walter! Help him!

BILL: I don't need help.

MINNIE: We were on our way, but I said to Bill, "We better step in, because if we don't, then Netty will think we're mad she didn't come to see us in Winnipeg."

NETTY: No, I wouldn't have thought that.

BILL: Oh, no!

MINNIE: Bill! And we're not. We understood you had to sit with Mother.

BILL: *(To Ronnie)* So, your mama made you shave your beard.

NETTY: I'm glad you stopped, but you didn't need to worry.

RONNIE: I shaved before I came.

MINNIE: And I felt so bad I couldn't sit with Mother.

WALTER: Take your coat off, Bill. It's too hot for that.

NETTY: *(To Minnie)* You shouldn't feel bad. You have your own troubles.

BILL: I'm sweating like a pig.

MINNIE: Netty, I wanted to, but how could I? With Bill going three times a week on the machine. And I'm still scared to drive in the city.

WALTER: *(About to exit with Bill's coat)* You're doing pretty good driving.

MINNIE: Well, when you have to, you have to.

Walter exits.

NETTY: I'll just plug the kettle. *(She goes to stove)*

MINNIE: So, Ronnie, how long you're out for?

RONNIE: Till Sunday.

MINNIE: Oh, why so short?

NETTY: He has a new job he's starting. Teaching at the college.

MINNIE: Oh.

She and Bill exchange a look.

That's nice. It's such a shame you couldn't see Baba before she went.

NETTY: He had his thesis to finish.

RONNIE: I wanted to come, but it ... just wasn't possible.

MINNIE: And Larry not here. I felt so bad about that.

NETTY: He has his job.

MINNIE: Where is he now? India?

NETTY: Bangladesh.

Minnie and Bill exchange another look. Walter re-enters.

BILL: Those kids! They think they're so smart, running all over the place. I don't see why they can't stay put.

NETTY: We worked hard so that our kids could live better than us. They're not content to sit around like us and do nothing.

MINNIE: Well, Netty, you must be proud, your children have so much education. Me, I'm just happy my children are all close by and that they can all be here when something happens.

BILL: So, Ronnie, you got another degree?

RONNIE: That's right.

BILL: What do you call this one?

RONNIE: A Ph.D.

BILL: All those letters. Do they teach you how to live better?

NETTY: Our kids aren't going to have to work like we did.

MINNIE: So when you're getting married, Ronnie?

RONNIE: I'm not planning on it.

BILL: Maybe he doesn't like girls.

NETTY: He's too busy studying for that foolishness.

RONNIE: There is a girl I've been seeing.

BILL: Oh? Maybe they're living together. That's what they're all doing now.

MINNIE: You should go for a surprise visit, Netty, see what he's doing out there.

NETTY: She has her own place. In Kiltisano.

BILL: It's not normal, a young man like you, not married. How do you keep your feet warm at night?

RONNIE: Well, you don't have to be married, you know ...

NETTY: Take your coffee, Bill. And Minnie. Walter, what are you sitting for? Bring some donuts.

They spoon coffee into their cups.

WALTER: Oh. Okay.

Walter gets up and gets donuts from cupboard.

MINNIE: They'll have to put your picture, now, in the Gazette, like Larry when he got his degree.

RONNIE: I didn't see that. Do you have it around?

NETTY: *(Pouring water into cups)* I sent you one.

RONNIE: I don't think so. Not that I remember.

NETTY: I was sure I sent one. Walter, go bring that paper with Larry's picture.

WALTER: Where is it?

NETTY: In the drawer. *(Pause)* In the bedroom. Where else would it be?

Walter exits.

Honestly, that old man of mine! He's no good for anything anymore.

MINNIE: Ronnie, you're going to have to look after your Mama and Daddy. They're getting old.

BILL: Don't listen to her. You go out and have a good time while you're still able.

MINNIE: Well, he can still think about his Mama and ...

BILL: Why should he think about his Mama? All those girls he has! I know. I know how it is.

NETTY: You know nothing! You men!

MINNIE: That's right.

BILL: I know. I know.

NETTY: *(To Minnie)* How are Joan and Ross? I didn't even have a chance to talk to them today.

MINNIE: Oh, wonderful. They're building a summer cottage in the Whiteshell this summer.
Walter returns with paper and gives it to Ronnie.

Walter, I was just telling Netty that Joan and Ross are building a summer cottage in the Whiteshell this summer. Did you ever think? When we were young, we were lucky to have more than one bedroom. And look at our kids now.

BILL: They got so much they don't know what the hell to do with it.
Women laugh: "Isn't Uncle Bill funny?"

NETTY: That's right. I think we were happier when we were young. We had less things but we made our own fun. And in groups all the time ... not this going steady ...

BILL: *Nay yeesh shlyak trafrit.* The sons of bitches, they don't appreciate nothing.

RONNIE: *(Looking at paper)* That's a good picture of Larry.

MINNIE: *(Reaching for paper)* Let's see.

BILL: So. You had to write a book.

RONNIE: A thesis.

MINNIE: Ross had his picture when they made him manager.

BILL: What was it about?

RONNIE: Some ... mathematical things ...

BILL: What things?

RONNIE: Well, it's hard to explain.

BILL: What was it called? *Pause.*

RONNIE: "Certain Aspects of the Stone-Čech Compactification of a Locally Convex Space."
Pause.

BILL: Oh.

MINNIE: *(Unfolding the paper)* Oh, look, here's Harasym with that fifteen pound potato he grew.

BILL: Fifteen pounds?

NETTY: *(Coming up behind Minnie)* I forgot about that.

WALTER: *(Coming to look)* We went to see. Lots of people went.

NETTY: Then he invited the whole family and they had potato pancakes, all from one potato.

BILL: And that's a big family too.

WALTER: I don't know how he did it. I could never grow one like that.

MINNIE: But Walter, your garden is always so nice. Those plum trees you gave us are so nice. I always say, everything Walter gives us grows so nice for us. Bob is always saying, "Mama has the nicest fruit trees," and I say to him, "They're all from Uncle Walter. Everything he gives me grows so nice for me."

NETTY: *(To Bill)* When do you go for your treatment?

BILL: Tomorrow. Two o'clock.

NETTY: How long do you have to be there?

BILL: (*Proud of it*) Sixteen hours, they keep me.

MINNIE: They send a taxi for him. And then they bring him home again. Sometimes five o'clock in the morning.

BILL: They have a smaller machine. It takes only five hours, they say. All year, I've been asking for it, but they don't have enough of them.

Netty. Maybe they have to use them for those that have to go to work.

BILL: I guess so. But they should get more.

RONNIE: How often do you have to go?

BILL: Three times a week. *Nay yeeh shlyak trafit*. The cheapskates, they can't even spend a little money. Ever since that Conservative government came in ...

General murmur of agreement.

NETTY: They're cutting back all over. When I sat with Mother, I saw. It was terrible how they leave them. They don't look after them. They just shut the door and leave them.

BILL: Bunch of god-damn cheapskates!

WALTER: They don't have enough nurses.

NETTY: That's what I said.

WALTER: I know. I was agreeing with you. *Pause. They laugh.*

MINNIE: Netty, Theresa was telling me, what, was Mother seeing things before she died?

NETTY: She saw Father, and then she saw God. She'd point to the ceiling and she'd say ... "See ... the beautiful hair ... it's God ..."

MINNIE: (*Impressed*) Oh.

NETTY: And then she'd raise her arm, like she wanted him to take her (*Raises her arm*) ... and then it would fall. (*It falls*)

MINNIE: And you say she saw Father?

NETTY: The same. She'd see him in front of her and she'd say, "*Awo, Tato* ..." and she'd raise her arm to him (*Raises her arm*)... and then it would fall. (*It falls*)

MINNIE: Nascha, I was so happy you took her. I told Joanie, I said, "I'd like to take her. But how can I with Daddy going three times a week?" It was good you could take her.

WALTER: She was no trouble.

NETTY: No. And I couldn't let her go to a home. The doctor came to me and he said, "If there's any way, take your mother home with you. It won't be for long." And I said to him, "Look at me. Do I look well? Do you think I could look after her?" And he said, "We'll get you help. We'll send you a nurse ... and a woman to sit with her for an hour or two a day so you can get out." So I said okay. How could I let my mother go to a home?

MINNIE: Did they send the nurse?

WALTER: She came, every two days, but there was nothing for her to do.

NETTY: And the woman, but it was no use, so I told her not to come. Because Mother didn't want to be left with strangers.

MINNIE: Netty, you should have let her. You always do too much.

NETTY: And Jack got so mad at me. I felt so hurt. I didn't want to do anything wrong for him,

but he wanted Mother to go to a home and he said if I took her, then they'd never take her again.

BILL: That's right. They're cheap like Jews, that government. *To vsho zhydy.*

RONNIE: Do you ... really believe that?

MINNIE: Oh, Bill, what will Ronnie think?

BILL: Think about what? Believe what?

MINNIE: You know, what you said ...

BILL: No. What did I say?

MINNIE: About Jews. (To *Ronnie*) I always say, people are really all the same.

BILL: Once a Jew, always a Jew.

MINNIE: Bill! What will Ronnie think?

BILL: He can think what he wants. It's the truth. And they're no better, this government. If they thought your Mama could take care of Baba, they wouldn't do anything for her.

NETTY: No! Because I asked the social worker and she said, "If she's in the hospital, we don't care. It's not our problem. But if you take her home and can't manage, then we'll try as fast as we can to get her into a home."

BILL: That's what they say! But when the time comes ...

NETTY: So I took her. And Jack and Theresa got mad and yelled and wouldn't talk.

BILL: Well sure they got mad. You try to show you're better than them.

NETTY: I didn't want to make them look bad. Somebody had to do it.

RONNIE: Why you all the time?

NETTY: I don't know. All my life, I was the one who had to look after things. When Father went to work, I looked after the farm. On our farm, Daddy went to cut cords in the winter and I was left alone to manage. And whenever there was any trouble in the family, they came to me. You remember, Minnie, when Joanie had that thing in her eye and the doctors couldn't find it. I got it out and Joanie always said, 'Auntie Netty is the best doctor.'

MINNIE: Joanie still remembers that.

NETTY: Everything was always left to me.

BILL: Ha! Try to stop you.

MINNIE: Bill!

Netty gets up and goes to stove. Ronnie, tell me, are you still in the same apartment?

RONNIE: Yes, still the same place.

MINNIE: What do you do with yourself, all alone there?

RONNIE: I never have any trouble filling my time.

MINNIE: You must be on the beach a lot. You're so brown.

RONNIE: I get out as much as I can.

MINNIE: It must be nice living right across from the beach.

RONNIE: I enjoy it. We almost lost it though.

MINNIE: We?

RONNIE: The tenants. Someone wanted to buy it and convert it to condominiums, so if we didn't want to buy our suites, we'd have to move.

BILL: It's those Jews. They're always buying everything.

RONNIE: It wasn't a Jew. As a matter of fact, it was a Polish guy.

BILL: Oh, well, what can you expect from a polack?

RONNIE: Anyway, we got organized, and wrote letters and got up a petition, and finally we beat them.

MINNIE: That's good.

RONNIE: It was really very exciting. I don't know how it happened, but I ended up being in charge of everything so I was getting up early every morning and going through all the papers to figure out how we could beat them.

BILL: What can you do? They have all the money, those businessmen.

WALTER: And the politicians do what they want.

RONNIE: No! We beat them. We had meetings with City Council and the Planning Department. I got up and gave a speech and so did a lot of others.

Minnie gets up to join Netty. Bill is losing interest. Anyway, we won. You can fight City Hall.

WALTER: Well, that's what it is to be educated. People like us, we wouldn't know what to do.

RONNIE: You just have to be stubborn, not educated.

MINNIE: *(At window)* Walter, did you get those same bugs again this year?

WALTER: Not so bad. I sprayed, and got rid of them that way.

NETTY: *(To Bill)* Can you sleep when you're on the machine?

BILL: Sleep!

MINNIE: *(To Walter)* They were terrible last year.

BILL: *(To Netty)* No. I can't sleep. I sleep when I get home.

WALTER: *(To Minnie)* This year, they sprayed with helicopters in the spring.

BILL: *(To Netty)* The whole next day, I sleep. Then I have to go again.

NETTY: More coffee? *(Offers jar to Minnie)* Minnie, have some more.

Minnie takes some as Netty goes for kettle.

I don't make real coffee anymore. We like instant better.

WALTER: *(To Bill)* Can you do anything in the yard?

MINNIE: *(To Netty)* Us too.

BILL: *(To Walter)* Not much. I get so tired.

NETTY: *(To Minnie)* I don't even have a percolator anymore.

WALTER: *(To Bill)* You should get the kids to help out.

BILL: *(To Walter)* Ha!

MINNIE: *(To Netty)* Joanie complains but I tell her, "In your house, you do things your way; in my house, I'll do them my way."

The women laugh.

BILL: *(To Walter)* You think she'll let anyone near that garden of hers!

MINNIE: *(Touching Walter's arm)* Walter, I was just telling Netty, Joanie complains I don't make real coffee, so I said to her, "In your house, you do things your way, and in my house, I'll do them mine."

They laugh.

WALTER: Well, sure.

NETTY: Ronnie is always complaining I have too much junk and photographs around. They always think they can teach you, the young ones.

BILL: (To Ronnie, pointing finger) You can't teach an old bull anything.

He laughs uproariously, the others joining in.

NETTY: When we were young, we didn't speak unless we were spoken to. We had to treat our mother and father with respect. We had to sit quiet if we wanted to listen to them talk. (Laughs) You remember Georgie, how he used to sit and listen to the old ones. And sometimes, he'd forget and say something.

MINNIE: Yes, Georgie was like that.

NETTY: I remember once, we were on our farm already, Walter and I, and Father and Mother and you and Georgie, and Walter's father and mother, and Jessie and Henry came to pick the grain. And they all stayed with us, so the four old people slept across on the bed and the rest of us on the floor. And the old ones were talking and Georgie was sitting and listening, and Father said, "It's not the best crop, but it will do." And Georgie forgot himself and said, "Yes, it will do." Well, when the other kids started laughing, and they kept it up all night. Especially Jessie, she was terrible. We'd be just about asleep and one would say, "Yes, it will do." And then, they'd all start giggling, and our parents got so mad, we all had to get up early in the morning.

MINNIE: Yes, I remember that.

NETTY: But Georgie was like that. Once he saw old Chruscht going by our place and without thinking, he said, "And where are you going?" and Chruscht looked at him and said, "And what's it to you?"

They all laugh.

BILL: "And what's it to you?" *They laugh again.*

NETTY: Well, they're gone now. First, Father. Then George. And now Mother. (Pause) Father's funeral was the worst. You remember how it rained and all the cars were sliding into the ditches.

WALTER: Father Horetchko said he never saw it like that for a funeral.

NETTY: It was like ... even God was crying for our Father.

Pause.

MINNIE: How was Mother when she was at your place?

NETTY: Fine. You just had to sit with her.

WALTER: She was no trouble.

NETTY: But she wouldn't know who we were, sometimes, and she would ask me, "And where's Netty?" and I'd say ...

RONNIE: Mom, you've told that story two times already.

MINNIE: Ronnie, be nice.

NETTY: So what if I have. It's so hard to listen to me? (Pause) Never mind. You'll go Sunday, you won't have to listen to me anymore. (Turns to Minnie) You look forward to your kids coming home and they treat you like dirt.

MINNIE: Nascha, don't upset yourself, he didn't mean it.

NETTY: Nobody cares how I feel. Nobody tries to understand. I don't know why Jack got so mad at me. I wasn't trying to show him up.

BILL: Netty, you always have to be the most important one.

NETTY: No! I wasn't trying to show them. But somebody had to do it and there was no one else.

RONNIE: You did it because you wanted to.

NETTY: Who else was there? Nobody else would take her!

RONNIE: Damn it, can't you be honest just once? You took her ...

WALTER: Ronnie ...

NETTY: *I took her because she was afraid!* She was afraid of being left! All right! I wanted to take her. She needed me. Nobody else needed me. And she was afraid. To be left.

And I know how it is to be afraid of being left. I'm afraid now.

Who's going to look after me when I'm sick? My mother and father are gone. My children have left. Who will look after me?

Pause.

MINNIE: You have Walter.

Pause.

NETTY: What if he goes first?

Walter comes up behind Netty, puts his hands on her shoulders.

WALTER: You will manage, Netty. You always have. You always will.

Ronnie moves in to the family. Pause. Netty nods.

NETTY: When Father used to go away to work, I'd say to him, "I'm afraid, how can I manage? And maybe you won't come back." And he would say to me, "You will manage, Netty. God will help you. And I will be back in the spring." He always came back.

Even when he was dying, he came back. They called us to the hospital, and when we came there, he said, "I was already half-way there, but I came back because I didn't say good-bye to you."

Pause.

MINNIE: Yes, I remember that.

WALTER: Are you all right, Netty?

NETTY: Yes.

Ronnie touches her shoulder. She looks up, squeezes his hand.

Yes, I'm all right.

They leave her. She turns to Minnie.

Mother's trunk is here. Maybe there's something you'd like.

MINNIE: Nascha, you had her. You should take what you want first.

BILL: That's right. And Jack and Theresa.

MINNIE: Let Ronnie choose something.

NETTY: Ronnie doesn't want anything.

RONNIE: I think ... maybe I would like to have something.

MINNIE: Sure. Let Ronnie choose what he wants.

WALTER: I'll get it out. We can look what's there. *(He pulls the trunk over to a chair)* Netty, you take the things out.

Ronnie positions the chair for Netty and remains by her as she takes the things out.

NETTY: Here's their wedding picture.

MINNIE: Oh, will you look at the costumes!

NETTY: And this is Father and his brother, in the old country, just before they came over.

(Points to corner of photo) See, nineteen-o-five.

RONNIE: Did Baba come then too?

NETTY: No, she came in nineteen-o-six.

MINNIE: Here's *our* wedding picture, Bill.

WALTER: Why don't you take it?

MINNIE: I'll take it for Joanie.

Minnie looks to Netty who nods.

BILL: If I knew then what I know now. You're smart, Ronnie. Stay single.

MINNIE: Listen to him! He knows everything.

BILL: Too late. For me, it's too late.

MINNIE: Don't talk like that. I don't like you to talk like that.

NETTY: Here's some of Baba's kerchiefs from the old country. *(Brings out kerchiefs)* This one she brought with her. These her brother sent.

MINNIE: Did anyone write to him?

NETTY: Not yet. I'll have to. *(Hands kerchiefs to Minnie)* Take one for Joanie. I took one for Edie.

Minnie takes them.

Look, her black dress she wore for the year after Father died. *(Pulls it out)*

RONNIE: *(Pointing into trunk)* What's that?

NETTY: I don't know. *(Pulls out two framed pictures, wrapped in an embroidered cloth)* Oh, Minnie, look.

WALTER: Taras Shevchenko and Ivan Franko.

NETTY: Father always read to us from their poems. They must be here, too. *(Digs and pulls out two books)* Here they are. Minnie, do you remember?

MINNIE: Yes. "You must never forget your homeland," he used to say.

NETTY: "And you must learn and be educated," he would say to us, "to keep up your tradition, and pass on to your children the stories and songs of their people."

MINNIE: Ronnie, you should have these.

RONNIE: Yes. I'd like to have them.

Netty passes them over to him.

BILL: You'll have to learn to read Ukrainian.

NETTY: He knows. At catechism, he learned.

WALTER: What else is there?

NETTY: Just a quilt. *(Pulling it out)* Baba made it herself. No. Minnie, will you look at that!

MINNIE: *(As Netty passes them to her)* *Valyanky!* *(They are high felt boots)* She kept her *valyankyl*

NETTY: I forgot about that. She kept them when they moved from the farm. You remember?

BILL: Baba in her *valyanky*, going to feed the chickens.
RONNIE: Now I remember! He was making fun of Baba!
NETTY: What? Who?
RONNIE: Peter! That's why I wouldn't stay at Baba's. He laughed at her. He said she dressed funny, she talked funny. He even said she smelled funny!
BILL: What Peter?
WALTER: Kashka's boy. When they came out years ago.
RONNIE: So I wouldn't play with him. But I was ashamed and when Baba tried to hug me, I pushed her away and I wouldn't go to her. Because she did smell funny. And she was wearing *valyanky*. Then I wanted to tell her I was sorry but I never did.
WALTER: She forgot long ago.
NETTY: It didn't matter.
RONNIE: Can I have them?
WALTER: *(Looks at Netty)* Sure. *(He takes them and passes them over to Ronnie)*
BILL: What do you want them for?
RONNIE: To keep my feet warm.
MINNIE: Well, old man, I guess we should be going. You have a long day tomorrow.
BILL: That's right.
WALTER: Well, it's good you could come.
MINNIE: You'll have to come and see us soon.
WALTER: Sure.
Exits to get Bill's coat.
NETTY: We'll try, but since the accident, Walter doesn't like to drive.
MINNIE: Ronnie, while you're home, bring your Mama and Daddy for a visit.
BILL: Sure, you can drive them.
RONNIE: All right.
Walter re-enters with coat and helps Bill on with it.
MINNIE: Good. Well, good-bye, Nascha. It's a sad day.
NETTY: Yes. *(They kiss)* Good-bye. *Ydeet zdorovi.*
MINNIE: *Dyakuyu.*
WALTER: Good-bye, Bill.
They shake hands.
Minnie.
MINNIE: Good-bye, Walter. And Ronnie. And don't forget, you come to see us.
RONNIE: We won't. Good-bye, Aunt Minnie, Uncle Bill.
Minnie and Bill exit.
WALTER: Bill is looking good. Don't you think?
Pause. Netty touches his arm.
NETTY: Yes. He's all right.
Netty takes off her apron. Goes to the trunk. Ronnie stands near the chair which was indicated as having the child's face in it. Walter starts to clear the table. Netty puts the things back in the trunk.

Such a small box. To hold so many memories. *(She closes the trunk and pushes it back to where it was)* I'm going to miss her. We only had her for a short time, but the house feels empty without her. She would sit here *(Sits)* and she would 1-o-o-k *(Leans forward)* and she would say, "Awo ... look ... *(Points toward Ronnie)*. .. the little boy ... he's there." And she would reach out her arms and say, "*Hoychi, hoychi.*"

Netty reaches out her arms. Pause. Ronnie takes a step forward. Netty lowers her arms.

Well, it's good you could come. Jack wanted to have one grandchild from each family for pallbearers. We wouldn't have had anybody if you hadn't come.

WALTER: Yes, it's good you could come.

RONNIE: Yes. It's good.

CURTAIN