

*the congregation a moment, then takes a few steps of withdrawal, toward the right proscenium pillar. His mother, from the front row, seems to have felt his confusion. She leaves her seat and comes down the aisle quickly to him.)*

MRS. GIBBS. George! George! What's the matter?

GEORGE. Ma, I don't want to grow old. Why's everybody pushing me so?

MRS. GIBBS. Why, George...you wanted it.

GEORGE. No, Ma, listen to me -

MRS. GIBBS. No, no, George, - you're a man now.

GEORGE. Listen, Ma, - for the last time I ask you...All I want to do is to be a fella -

MRS. GIBBS. George! If anyone should hear you! Now stop. Why, I'm ashamed of you!

*(GEORGE comes to himself and looks over the scene.)*

GEORGE. What? Where's Emily?

MRS. GIBBS. *(relieved)* George! You gave me such a turn.

GEORGE. Cheer up, Ma. I'm getting married.

MRS. GIBBS. Let me catch my breath a minute.

GEORGE. *(comforting her)* Now, Ma, you save Thursday nights. Emily and I are coming over to dinner every Thursday night...you'll see. Ma, what are you crying for? Come on; we've got to get ready for this.

*(MRS. GIBBS, mastering her emotion, fixes his tie and whispers to him.)*

*(In the meantime, EMILY, in white and wearing her wedding veil, has come through the audience and mounted onto the stage. She too draws back, frightened, when she sees the congregation in the church. As EMILY appears, the choir begins: "Blessed Be the Tie That Binds".)*