

**THE WOMAN
WHO WOULDN'T**

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The Woman Who Wouldn't by Rose Pastor Stokes

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ROSE PASTOR STOKES

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Rose Pastor Stokes

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1916

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PERSONS IN THE PLAY

MARY LACEY.....*A Flower Maker*
KATHERINE.....*Her Mother*
JOHN.....*Her Father*
KATIE.....*Her Little Sister*
BENNIE.....*Her Baby Brother*
JENNIE.....*Her Married Sister*
JOE.....*Engaged to Mary*
McCARTHY.....*A Labour Leader*
THE DOCTOR
THE CHILD



ACT I

SCENE: *The interior of a workingman's home in a small milling town in Pennsylvania. The room contains to the left an old cupboard, a stove, a washstand with tin basin and half-broken water pitcher and pail; an empty soap box set near the stove. Down Left, a clothes-horse laden with expensive, elaborate undergarments freshly ironed, a kitchen chair and a table, an ironing-board, and a clothes-basket. To Right Centre, a small deal table; on it a profusion of gaily coloured flower-making material and a simple bit of pottery which holds an artificial American Beauty rose. There is a chair before the table, a stool on one side of it, and a cradle on the other. Down Right, a dilapidated old sofa. Up Right, in the angle of the wall, is an alcove inadequately curtained off by clean but scant and faded dimity curtains; and through these an old wooden bed and its trappings are half*

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disclosed. One window up Left, near the cupboard, opens to a small back yard, where several lines of wash are seen fluttering in the wind. Up Right to left of alcove is another window looking on a street typical of the poorest district in any milling town. On the wall near this window hangs a small shelf upon which are ranged a variety of medicine bottles and a cheap old alarm clock. Street door up Centre. Between the door and shelf, rather low on the wall, an inexpensive but artistic (not Catholic) print of a Madonna and Child.

TIME: *The end of a day early in March.*

DISCOVERED: *KATIE, a thin, pale child of nervous movements, sits on stool near table Right, laboriously trying to fashion a red flower. KATHERINE, a hard-working woman of forty-three, stout and troubled with rheumatism, is ironing an elaborate undergarment. Her face is expressive of extreme humility.*

KATIE

Oh, I can't make one!

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KATHERINE

[Turning to glance at KATIE]

Put that stuff down, child, put it down. If you spoil some o' that it'll only worry Mary, for they'll take it out o' her wages. She's worried enough these days! Though what worries her the good Lord knows.

[Glancing at the child again who now sits with empty hands folded]

That's a good girl. . . . Now where's Mary gone to?

KATIE

To Mrs. Jones to borrow a bucket of coal.

KATHERINE

[Changing her irons]

It was a cold, cold night. . . . But the Lord knows what's best for us.

[She sighs, catches her breath with pain which comes upon her suddenly and frequently, and returns to her work]

KATIE

[Going to table Right]

If I could make flowers Mary wouldn't have to work all day and all evening . . . would she,