

East of Eden

Genesis IV. 16—A Play in One Act

CHARACTERS — Cain; Enoch, a baby; Cain's wife; Adam; Eve.

[THE SCENE* is laid in the fourth chapter of Genesis, the sixteenth verse. It is the home of Cain and his wife, in "the land of Nod." Genesis is not very explicit, so I shall have to rely on imagination in describing the setting; and I am willing to allow much leeway to the director in arranging his stage.

Cain was evidently an ingenious fellow, with architectural talent, for eventually he "builded a city." Therefore we may fairly surmise that he has made himself some sort of habitable dwelling, even if only in a cave. What we see when the curtain rises is an arbor outside that dwelling. It is on a hilltop, looking off toward Paradise Lost. The back-drop represents a distant view of Eden, beyond a river, and fields and vineyards shining in a rich sunset light. Every group of amateur players has at least one artist who will thoroughly enjoy painting this back-drop, in which he can let his fancy run freely. He can even limn, if he desires, the Tree of Trees (*inter folia fructus*) rising on the skyline, and the flaming sword at the exit. But if he funks such detail, the effect can be achieved by a light blue curtain at the rear, suggesting that Cain and his wife look from their hilltop exile, through airy distances, on the irretrievable innocence of mankind.

The little stage where they find themselves is really the first sleeping-porch in history. It is just a small terrace of level ground that catches the afternoon light, shaded by a vine that grows, r. and l., on a rudely constructed trellis. Downstage, l., is an opening, curtained with skins, that leads into the inner quarters. Not far from this opening a small fire is burning between two large flat stones, on which is propped a steaming earthenware crock. On the r., under the overhanging foliage of the vine, is a rough shelf or work bench on which are some bowls clumsily shaped of sun-baked clay, a bundle of dried grasses for weaving, and perhaps also some primitive tools and weapons—such as a hammer made of a stone lashed to a stick with a rawhide thong, and a bow and arrows. Toward the r., downstage, are two large skins spread out neatly, side by side, each with a sort of bolster or pillow made of hide and stuffed with hay. Two or three other skins are

scattered about. On one of these, in the middle of the stage, Cain is sprawled.

Cain wears a suit of skins, consisting of hairy shorts and a kind of mantle which leaves his arms bare. His arms and his bare shins are tanned a deep brown by exposure: his hair is very long and curly. I suppose he has also got to have a beard, though I should prefer him without it. We are to imagine him as a man of quick, jealous temper (or he wouldn't have quarreled with Abel), but there is also a rather appealing wistfulness about him, as though he is still a bit puzzled about his punishment and exile, and not yet wholly convinced that it will be man's destiny to work so hard for a living. But when the curtain rises we find him in a happy mood: he is stretched at his ease on the ground playing with the baby.

Yes, there is a baby, in a little furry tunic. His name is Enoch (see Genesis iv:17) and he's about fifteen months old. Now the chief purpose of writing plays is to get them performed, and if none of the amateur players in this club wants to lend a real baby for stage purposes, we'll have to use a large doll, one that can utter a life-like lamentation. In that case we shall have to put the doll in some sort of wide-meshed wicker basket or an ark made of bullrushes (cf. Exodus ii:3), through the interstices of which it will be visible to the audience. But I'm going to write as though we had a real baby: if a doll is used the resourceful director will know how to adapt it to our requirements. So you imagine the baby on the skin rug with Cain, crawling about gaily as he plays with it. Cain shakes a gourd, in which the dry seeds rattle noisily, and Enoch is delighted.

All right: now we can go ahead. I'm assuming that you've gathered your audience, made them pay a small entrance-fee (enough to cover your expenses) and that you've informed the author's agent of your intention to produce the play, and paid the modest royalty (for if a play is worth performing at all, it's worth paying for) and the curtain goes up.]

CAIN—[Bursting into laughter as he plays with the baby]

Big boy, big boy, big boy!

A great big baby

In the land of Nod—

Ho, ho, ho,

What a joke on God!

[He pauses and considers. Then he says these four lines again, emphasizing the rhyme, and seems

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proud of himself. *He sticks his legs up in the air and turns a backward somersault in glee. The baby crows with admiration.*] Did you hear that? When the words sound like each other, it makes you feel good. I wonder if we could do it again? [*He plays with the baby's toes.*]

Enoch, Enoch, in the land of Nod—
[*Then, after a pause, with a shout of triumph*]

His toes are as tiny as peas in a pod!
[*He goes into an ecstasy of self-esteem over this, tosses the baby up and down.*]

My, my, we do have a good time, don't we?
[*At this moment the pot of milk on the fire begins to boil over, but Cain, absorbed in his game with Enoch, doesn't notice it.*]

CAIN'S WIFE—[*Off*] Cain! Cain! [*Cain looks startled, hastily puts the child into its ark or wicker basket.*]

CAIN—Yes?
WIFE—[*Off*] Is baby's milk warm yet? [*He looks anxiously at the pot which he has quite forgotten and thrusts his hand into it, withdrawing it with an exclamation.*]

CAIN—Wow! [*Calling*] Yes, it's getting on nicely.

WIFE—[*Off*] Give it to him, then. [*Cain takes the pot off the fire, gets a small bowl from the shelf, and dips some milk into it. He sits cross-legged beside the basket and—apparently at any rate—tilts some milk into the child's mouth. It is too hot, and Enoch utters a yell. Cain's wife enters through the opening l. She is rather a lovely savage in her fur jerkin and short skirt of fig-leaves. Her skin is a beautiful bronzy color, her long hair is down her back and decorated with a peacock feather. Cain tries to calm the baby.*]

WIFE—What's the matter?
CAIN—I don't know. Maybe he isn't hungry.

WIFE—[*Rapidly investigating*] It's too hot. Gracious, I can't even trust you to give him his food. [*Picks child up from basket.*] There, there! Did silly old man try to burn out inside of him's moufy? [*To Cain*] You take him while I cool it. [*She hands the child to Cain and sits down to cool the milk by the simple expedient of dipping her hand into it, ladling it up in her palm, and pouring it back into the bowl. Cain, holding the baby, walks to the rear and looks off at the view.*]

CAIN—How pretty Eden looks this afternoon.—Do you think God would be angry if He knew we have a baby?

WIFE—He mustn't find out! If God knew about it, He might take him away—

CAIN—It's an awful joke on God. He sent the baby as a punishment, and if He found out that we like it, He'd be furious.

WIFE—It was a queer way of punishing you, to send the baby to me.

CAIN—Probably that was just a mistake that bird made—

WIFE—That bird?

CAIN—That big bird you told me about, the one that left him here—

WIFE—Oh . . . Oh, yes. [*Smiles a little to herself.*]

CAIN—Of course I don't blame God for being angry. But when I hit Abel I didn't know *that* would happen to him. I didn't know he'd get all soft, and cold. I didn't mean—

WIFE—[*Referring to the milk*] There, I think that's all right. [*She rises and crosses to Cain to take the baby. She gazes off at the valley.*] How that Tree stands up in the middle of Eden. It seems to get taller and taller. Sometimes I'm worried, if God climbed up to the top of it he might be able to look all the way over here and see Enoch.

CAIN—[*Speaking with the air of a practical man*] No, that'd be a hard tree to climb. The bark's too slippery—

WIFE—[*In sudden alarm*] Cain, Cain! Come here!

CAIN—What is it?
WIFE—There's someone coming . . . down by the river. [*She points*] . . . There!

CAIN—[*Looking*] So there is. Two of 'em.
WIFE—It's two of those dreadful cherubim . . . I can see the flaming sword. [*She snatches the child from him and holds it with a protecting gesture.*]

CAIN—[*Looking more carefully*] The sunset is so bright, it's hard to tell . . . No, that isn't a flaming sword, it's a beard. . . . [*Horried*] Good heavens! It's Adam and Eve.

WIFE—What *shall* we do? They mustn't see—
CAIN—How did they get here? Why they live way on the other side—

WIFE—They mustn't know we've got a baby. They'd be awfully disgusted.

CAIN—This is terrible. If Adam knew, he might tell God.

WIFE—I don't worry about Adam. We can fool him. But how am I going to keep it from Eve? They've never been here before; she'll want to see everything.

CAIN—[*Looking off*] Gosh, he gets along pretty spry for a man of his age. . . . They'll be here in a minute.

WIFE—Quick! I'll see if I can put him to sleep, somewhere out of sight. You take the bassinette—
[*They bustle about. She picks up a skin and the gourd, and hurries off with the baby, Cain follows with the bowl of milk and the ark. For a moment the stage is left empty, then Adam and Eve appear at the back. In spite of their age—Adam is 130 and Eve only fifteen verses younger—they are a well-preserved couple. Adam has a huge long red beard and walks with a staff. Eve has lost something of her Garden of Eden slimness, but is still a fine matronly figure. They wear kilts of fig-leaves and "coats of skins" and have primitive hide moccasins or sandals on their feet. They pause at the back of the stage to remove these.*]

ADAM—[*Always the gentleman*] Let me help you, my dear. [*Takes off her sandals.*] Phew, that was a long climb. [*Puts his hand to his side.*]

EVE—I suppose this is the place.

ADAM—They seem to be pretty comfortably fixed.

EVE—[*Looking about*] I wonder if she's a good housekeeper?

ADAM—Of course we ought to have called long ago, but there's always so much to do. Do you know her name?

EVE—No. . . . I don't know *who* she is. I never did understand where she came from.

ADAM—Yes, it's very queer. You and me and Cain and Abel—who else *was* there, unless he married the Serpent?

EVE—I must ask her about her family.

ADAM—If only poor Abel had lived—he was the really promising one.

[*Enter Cain, through the opening l.*]

CAIN—Well! This *is* a surprise! [*Embraces Eve*] Mother, how are you?—Father, you don't look a day older.

ADAM—I'm not what I used to be. I get a stitch in my side when I walk uphill. . . . It's that old trouble with my rib.

CAIN—Sit down and rest. [*They squat on the ground.*]

EVE—We should have come before, but we didn't know exactly where you lived. Of course we wanted to see your wife.

CAIN—She'll be here in a minute.

EVE—And today being Adam's birthday, we felt the family ought to celebrate.

CAIN—Your birthday! Well, well, many happy returns! Let's see, I've forgotten exactly how—

ADAM—A hundred and thirty.

CAIN—Oh, a mere nothing, Dad. You've got five or six hundred useful years ahead of you—

EVE—I don't like him to keep telling his age, though. Everyone knows he and I are so nearly the same—

ADAM—I think you picked out a very nice location.

EVE—We like to stay near Eden, it has so many old associations for us.

ADAM—Your mother used to talk about moving up here on the heights—

EVE—But Father enjoys having a chat with the cherubim down at the East Gate.

ADAM—Yes, some of those fellows are quite friendly, they tell me what's going on in the Garden. They say the Serpent's getting a bit old. He was awfully good company when he was young. Your mother can tell you—

EVE—But the soil *is* so terrible where we are, your poor father has to work day and night and we don't get much more than thorns and thistles.

[*Enter Cain's wife.*]

WIFE—[*A little nervously*] How do you do? So nice of you to come.

CAIN—Dear, this is my mother and father.

WIFE—I thought it must be—

EVE—[*Kissing her*] Well, my dear child, let's have a good look at you! What a charming dress. [*To Cain*] I see she has taste.

ADAM—[*Climbing to his feet*] Does the old man get a nice hug? [*He does.*] Delightful, delightful!—My boy, she reminds me of your mother when I first knew her. [*Pats his daughter-in-law's arm, and speaks to Eve.*] A little browner than you were, my dear. It was shady in the Garden, we didn't get so tanned. I can still remember how white you were, against those green fig trees.—Those were the days!

EVE—[*To Adam*] Please don't talk about the Garden. The poor child will be horrified.

WIFE—You must be tired after your walk. Sit down and have some fruit. [*She gets some apples and grapes from the shelf, offers Adam an apple.*]

ADAM—[*About to take it, then looks at Eve, and refrains.*] No, thanks. I never eat fruit any more. It . . . it don't agree with me.

EVE—Well . . . I hope Cain makes a good husband?

WIFE—He's a darling. [*Sits by Cain, with her arm about him.*] I'm afraid he works too hard.

CAIN—We've rather given up agriculture. I'm starting a kind of development up here, I'm figuring on building a city.

WIFE—Cain thinks this region has a great future. He says it's fine for young couples because the chil—[*She pauses in dismay, realizing she has almost given away their secret; but garrulous old Adam saves her slip from being noticed.*]

ADAM—The chill? I'm sure it can't be as damp as it is down where we are.—I believe the climate's changing.

EVE—Eden was the place for climate. Simply ideal.

ADAM—You wouldn't believe how simple and easy housekeeping was there. I remember the Serpent saying that really, where everything was so convenient, two could live cheaper than one.

EVE—Adam, do you see how cleverly they've got that fire fixed, between two stones? Why didn't we think of that? And that sideboard over there, [*pointing to the shelf*] that must be very useful. [*To Cain's wife*] I hope you're going to let me see all your arrangements. I'm sure you've thought of a lot of things that Adam could copy.

WIFE—Cain, why don't you show your mother that nice little stable you made for the live-stock.

EVE—No, no, I mean the kitchen. What do you do to keep the milk sweet, this hot weather? Down in the valley it's really been dreadful.

ADAM—It isn't the heat one minds, it's the humidity.

CAIN—I believe you're right. I never thought of that before.

WIFE—[*Getting up*] Come along then.

ADAM—[*Admiring her costume*] Mother, d'you see how she's got her skirt fixed behind? Why don't you do yours that way?

WIFE—[*To Eve*] You see, this is a kind of sleeping-porch.

ADAM—[*Noticing the two skins side by side, r.*] Separate beds! Mother, that's quite an idea.

WIFE—We'll go outside, I want to show you—

ADAM—I want to see things, too. [*Starts to rise.*]

EVE—No, Father, you stay here and have a nice visit with Cain. [*To Cain*] He needs someone to talk to. [*Eve and Cain's wife exeunt at rear.*]

CAIN—Mother seems well.

ADAM—She's a wonderful woman. I don't know what I'd have done without her. But it is nice to have someone else to talk to. I get fed up with those cherubim. Their conversation lacks variety.

CAIN—Now you've found the way here, you must come more often.

ADAM—I'm glad to see you doing so well. You were pretty wild as a youngster. I used to wonder whether we'd ever raise you. Never having been a boy myself, I didn't realize how full of devilment they are.

CAIN—Yes, you were pretty severe. I remember what a licking you gave me because I shinnied over the wall and got back into the Garden to play with the animals. I didn't know it was Eden, I thought it was just a kind of zoo.

ADAM—I like your wife. I might have known you'd pick out a good-looker. Chip of the old block, hey?

CAIN—You didn't have much choice, did you?

ADAM—Oh, yes I did. [*Lowers his voice*] There was another woman floating about the Garden, you know. A person called Lilith. You probably never heard of her. Your mother never mentions her.

CAIN—I suppose you do get homesick for the good old days, before the Fall.

ADAM—Ssssh. Not so loud! [*Cautiously*] I'll tell you something. I'm always afraid Jehovah will change His mind and send us back there. It was a picnic while it lasted, but you know we couldn't go on living like that. It was too informal altogether. And then every time I'd forget myself, and be having a little fun, God would yell out at me and scare me half to death. What with God shouting from the treetops, and the Serpent whispering underfoot, it was too much of a good thing. [*He looks nervously toward Eden, over his shoulder.*] I don't think it's wise to talk too much about these matters. [*Cain remains silent, looking thoughtfully toward Eden.*] Besides, I believe God doesn't really care, and that the cherubim are any rate, that's what the Serpent says. He says God doesn't really care, and that the cherubim are just a bluff.

CAIN—But how about those flaming swords?

ADAM—The Serpent says they're not swords at all, just an optical illusion. He says they've got little bits of looking glass in their hands and they flash the sunlight into your eyes and you *think* it's flaming swords. But I don't know, the whole thing's too much for me. I'm not quite sure how far to trust the Serpent. He's got an awful bruise on his head, and it may have made him sore.

CAIN—It's rather important to know . . . Do you suppose God's still angry at me? [*The cry of a baby is heard, off l.*]

ADAM—[*Startled*] What's that?

CAIN—[*Disturbed*] One of the goats, outside.

ADAM—[*Relieved*] Oh.—Gracious, it sounded like—like—never mind.

CAIN—[*Earnestly*] But suppose what was sent as a curse and a punishment turned out to be a happiness, what then?

ADAM—Well, I wouldn't let God know about it. [*Again the baby's cry, unmistakable this time. Adam looks at Cain sharply. Both are greatly agitated.*] What!—You don't mean to say— [*Cain nods silently, much ashamed.*] But how—why—where did you get it?

CAIN—God's punishment, I suppose. He said He would brand me. Oh, I hoped you would never know.

ADAM—This is awful. Don't let your mother find out. Does your wife know?

CAIN—I'd have hidden it from her if I could. But I was away when it happened, on a hunting trip. She said a big bird brought it.

ADAM—It's the family curse. The same thing happened to me. Just the same. Eve said a stork flew by and dropped it. It got bigger and bigger, and—why, you're it!

CAIN—[*Incredulous*] Me?!

ADAM—Yes. Oh, this is terrible. I thought it was just an accident that happened to us. I had no idea it was going to be a habit.

CAIN—Then God is still angry.

ADAM—[*In despair*] Yes, He intends to ruin us.

CAIN—[*Hopelessly*] Perhaps you'd better have a look at it, be sure it's the same kind of thing—

ADAM—Yes—quick, before the women get back. Whew, Eve will never get over this if she finds out. We thought we'd lived it down. [*He totters across the stage, and he and Cain exeunt through the opening, l. The stage is empty for an instant, during which the baby's cry is again heard. Then Eve's head appears at a corner, rear. She looks, and then whispers over her shoulder.*]

EVE—It's all right. They're not here. [*Eve and Cain's wife reënter from the back, Cain's wife carrying the baby.*] Let me take him again, the darling!

WIFE—I'm afraid he may cry, you see he hasn't had his supper yet.

EVE—[*Taking the baby*] Oh, the adorable thing! Oh, he *was* a big baby, a big baby, the loveliest big babblings I *ever* saw. And all those teeth! [*Suddenly panic-stricken*] What *shall* we do, if Adam knows about this he'll be so upset, he'll *never* get over the shame of it. What did you say his name is?

WIFE—Enoch.

EVE—That's a lovely name [*To the baby*] Oh, you delicious creature, I think you're going to have curly hair, yes I do.

WIFE—I don't know *what* to do, it's too dreadful. Cain says it's God's curse on us.

EVE—[*First looking round to make sure they are not overheard*] I don't believe God has anything to do with it. Of course I don't *know*, you see I was an orphan and no one ever told me about things.

WIFE—Perhaps we ought to ask the Serpent?

EVE—I think there's only one thing to do. It isn't right that a young couple, just starting in on life like you two, should have to bear this burden. I'll take him home with *me*.

WIFE—[*Snatching the child, fiercely*] Don't you dare!

EVE—I could pass it off on Adam, somehow. Oh, I'd give *anything* to have another one, myself. [*In a different voice*] Does Cain know the truth?

WIFE—No. I told him a bird brought it. I'll put him out of sight until you're gone.

EVE—Just let me have one more look. [*Takes baby and examines him admiringly*] Yes, it's just the same. I remember Cain's toes were like that, all curly. But you should have seen Abel! He was even lovelier, he had the softest little dark curls.

WIFE—Do you suppose this sort of thing is going to go on and on? [*They look at each other, struck with sudden horror. Then Eve speaks in alarm.*]

EVE—Look out! They're coming! [*She hastily hands the baby to Cain's wife, who runs off with it through the opening, l. Adam and Cain come on, rear.*]

CAIN—[*Embarrassed*] Oh—here you are. We were looking for you. [*Adam and Eve look at each other uncertainly, each doubtful what to say.*]

EVE—I think your little home is lovely—so—so complete.

ADAM—[*Trying to learn whether Eve has seen the baby.*] Oh. Did she show you around?

EVE—Yes. Everything so nicely arranged.

ADAM—Where's—what is your wife's name, Cain?

CAIN—Her name? Why—I just call her Dear.

EVE—Adam, you'd better *give* her a name. [*Trying to make conversation, to Cain*] He's good at that, you know: God made him name all the animals in Eden. It was really quite a compliment.

ADAM—I shall call her Jenny.

CAIN—Jenny?

ADAM—Yes. Short for Genesis. Where is she?

EVE—She was here a minute ago.

ADAM—I'll go and look for her. [*Starts toward opening.*]

EVE—[*Anxiously detaining him*] Oh, no, Father, we ought to be going.

ADAM—You go first, I'll catch up with you. I don't like to leave without seeing—without saying goodbye.

EVE—You know we ought to get home before the cherubim light up.

CAIN—[*Eager to get Eve off the premises*] I hate to have you leave, Mother, but of course you've got quite a way to go. [*The baby cries, off l.*]

ADAM—[*Hastily*] Dear me, what a noise those goats make.

CAIN—Oh, I've forgotten to feed them. Excuse me. [*He hurries off through opening. Adam and Eve look at each other queerly.*]

EVE—I like Jenny. I think Cain was very lucky.

ADAM—I suppose so. As lucky as anyone can be with God's curse pursuing him.

EVE—It reminds me of *our* old days.

ADAM—What does?

EVE—Why—seeing them together.

ADAM—You'd better start. I'll put your shoes on for you. [*He gets them.*]

EVE—I *won't* go alone. You know how I hate walking past those cherubim, they always make faces at me.

ADAM—I'll be right after you. I'm just going to help Cain feed the live-stock.

EVE—[*Deciding to trick him*] All right. [*She puts on her sandals.*]

ADAM—Straight down the hill, and I'll catch you before you get to the river. [*Eve goes off at the back. Adam looks round and with surprising briskness hobbles to the opening, l.*]

ADAM—[*In a loud whisper*] Cain!

CAIN—[*Appears at opening.*] Yes?

ADAM—Eve's gone. Where is it? Hurry! [*Cain disappears an instant, and then returns carrying the baby's ark which he places on the ground. Adam looks at the child with mingled horror and delight.*] It's the same. It looks just the way you did. Yes, we're ruined, done for. This is God's punishment.—Can I pick it up?

CAIN—[*With the indifference of despair*] Sure. [*Adam gingerly takes the baby and dandles it awkwardly. It emits a yell.*]

ADAM—Same kind of noise, too. There, there, there—hush, hush, hush—My, how this takes me back!—Was he a fine baby, a beyootiful chillums, hey?—Oh, this is terrible, this'll kill Eve, she'll never get over it.—Has it got the right number of toes? [*Sits down, puts the baby's foot against his own, compares the number.*] Yes, quite all right.—

Who would have thought that God would be so revengeful—Such a big, fine, handsome baby. Hi itty itty, oh, what a pity! [*Getting more excited he kneels on all fours making humorous faces at the infant.*] Look at all those toofens, by Jehovah. And such nice straight legs, he'll be a big fellow when he grows up.—Look here, my poor boy, it's too bad for you and Jenny to have your little home broken up like this. Suppose I take him off your hands. Eve wouldn't mind so much if she thought it was our own. I'll tell her I found him out in the woods.

CAIN—No! I'll take my own punishment.

ADAM—Well then, lend him to me just for tonight, I'd like to show him off to those stuck-up cherubim.

CAIN—My wife wouldn't hear of it. If you want a baby, find one of your own.

ADAM—[*Still cajoling the infant*] Yum yum yum, googly-goo.—I think he looks rather like me. What's his name?

CAIN—Enoch. Enoch C. Adamson.

ADAM—Well, if you see that bird around again, let me know. I could do with another of these. Eden's been lonely since you and Abel grew up.

CAIN—[*Encouraged by Adam's enthusiasm.*] This is what he likes. Look, Enoch. [*He gets down on the floor, sticks up his legs, and then turns a backward somersault. Adam is sitting on the ground bouncing the baby, and uttering such inane remarks as, "There! See that! Wasn't that a wonderful? Oh what a baby!" At this moment Eve and Cain's wife appear at the back and stand transfixed with horror. Cain and Adam finally become aware of the two women, and look at them in consternation.*]

EVE—Adam! What would God say if He could see you now?

ADAM—[*After a sheepish pause*] I thought you were on your way home. I tried to spare you this.

EVE—That's not the way to hold him. You'll break his back. Here, let me. [*She takes the baby from him.*] I thought this was a curse, and here you are, simply revelling in it. [*Cain and Adam look at each other, greatly ashamed.*] I do believe he looks like you.

ADAM—Well, don't blame me for it. It was that bird again.

CAIN—Mother, please don't be too disgusted with us. Really, it's not our fault. At any rate Jenny had nothing to do with it.

ADAM—Let me have him again, I want to feel how heavy he is.

EVE—Nonsense. You might drop him.

ADAM—But it feels so interesting to be the father of the father of a baby. I'll have to think of a name.

EVE—He's got a name.

ADAM—I mean, a name for how it feels to be its father's father. It feels grand . . . that's what I'll call it, grandfather!

WIFE—That poor child will be starved if he doesn't get his supper pretty soon.

ADAM—I'll bet that God had this all doped out. [*With a sudden air of discovery*] Why I shouldn't wonder if this sort of thing is going to go right on. More and more of 'em, all the time. You see? More people—how simple!

EVE—For you, yes.

ADAM—[*Greatly elated*] Hot dog! Won't that be wonderful! I must tell the Serpent about this.

CAIN—[*Hopefully*] Perhaps it isn't a curse, after all. I'm going to tell you something. You've both been so busy thinking about the baby, you haven't noticed—[*He pushes up the long hair on his forehead and shows his brow.*]

ADAM and EVE—[*Aghast*]—The brand! It's gone! [*Cain bows assent, with a sort of mixed humility and fearful pride.*]

WIFE—Yes, that terrible red mark on his forehead. After Enoch came, it went away. That's why we thought the baby was to take its place—another sign of God's anger. [*The baby cries.*]

ADAM—The mark of shame is gone! [*Raises his eyes.*] Oh, Jehovah, great are Thy works. [*In exultation*] Why maybe this family will amount to something after all.

EVE—Not unless the children get their food regularly. [*To Cain's wife*] My dear, I think that's such a wonderful idea of yours, to wash his little cup every time after using it. I never thought of that.

ADAM—Well, we ought to be going. It'll be dark.

CAIN—Why don't you stay overnight? We've got a couple of extra skins.

EVE—[*To Adam*] Do you think we could? Then perhaps Jenny would let me give Enoch his bath in the morning.

ADAM—We will! It's none of the cherubim's business anyhow.

WIFE—Come along, Mother, you can help me put him to bed. [*Eve and Cain's wife go off, with the baby. The dusk is deepening outside, but over Eden the light still glows and the tall Tree is luminous in the sunset. Adam goes toward the rear and looks off at the view.*]

CAIN—[*Pointing off*] You see, that's where I'm laying out my city. The main street will be right along there. There's a fine view. I always notice how that big Tree shines in the sunset.

ADAM—The Tree.—Yes.—

CAIN—Is it really so that God told you not to go near it?

ADAM—Yes; and I begin to see why. He told us that to make sure that we would. [*He turns away from the view and comes forward, thoughtfully, to the baby's ark, and looks at it affectionately.*] There's just one thing—I think you might have named him after me!

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

The Myth of Wall Street

WALL STREET, sitting like a spider in a web of ticker wires and interlocking directorates, seeks whom it may destroy. To gain popular support for anyone it is only necessary to say that Wall Street is against him. Here are some of the charges made against Wall Street (alias the money power, alias J. P. Morgan, alias monopoly) during the past few years:

Wall Street got us into the war to save its foreign loans. Wall Street plotted and ordered the drive against labor unions. Wall Street planned the post-war deflation and the depression of 1921 in order to bankrupt the farmers and reduce wages. Wall Street nominated Harding and was responsible for the ensuing corruption. Wall Street nominated Coolidge and Dawes and caused the Republicans to ignore liberal protest. Wall Street opposed McAdoo, and raised the religious issue to defeat him and to divert attention from progressive measures in the Democratic convention. Wall Street procured the nomination of John W. Davis, counsel for J. P. Morgan, the Standard Oil Company, and the New York Telephone Company.

So automatic is the response raised in the general mind by this kind of stereotype that William J. Bryan could, without subjecting himself to popular ridicule, write in newspapers owned by William R. Hearst—a big capitalist if there ever was one—that the New York World is one of the chief agents of Wall Street and those whom it opposes are therefore sanctified.

The popular picture of the way Wall Street works is probably something like this:

Secret conference of bank presidents in the office of J. P. Morgan and Company. Order of business: bankrupting of farmers; subjection of Central America; election of Republican President. Resolutions passed: instructing Federal Reserve Board to raise interest rates in country districts, to restrict credit and lower the price of wheat 50 percent; instructing big business through interlocking directorates and credit power to raise prices on goods sold to farmers and lower other prices; instructing the State Department to force a loan on Honduras and instructing Navy Department to land marines to protect loan; instructing newspaper editorial writers to support Republicans and instructing all borrowers to donate to Republican campaign fund on pain of bankruptcy.

There is no denying the deep-seated sway of the myth. But to many who have seen Wall Street and Big Business at close range it seems so ridiculous as to make them believe merely that those who accept it are afflicted with boobyism and demagoguery.

Wall Street—if one means by it the exchanges—is composed of bulls and bears, of speculators and investors, of individuals small and great who are

concerned about little but their private gain and who are most of the time at each others' throats. Wall Street—if one means by it the banks—is composed of several large and more small banking groups who compete with each other for profitable business, and carry on the numerous functions of banking with an eye to profits, with an eye to safety, and with very little attention to anything else except the intrigue incident to personal advancement.

Wall Street—considered as a symbol of the credit power in its relation to business—is often curiously powerless. The United States Steel Corporation finances itself and comes into the market not to borrow, but to lend. The same is true of numerous other big business enterprises. Bankers or large owners who try to influence the policy of concerns of which they are directors often find themselves checkmated by the big business executive, who is frequently a strong-willed, prejudiced person and is believed to be extremely limited in supply. The open-shop drive was closely and effectively organized in Texas, where the hand of Wall Street rests lightly, and was scarcely prosecuted in New York City, under the very towers of the financial barons. Those who know the big bankers often find them better educated and more liberal than the proprietor of the \$50,000 concern, but incapable of making much headway against the general public opinion of business.

If competent social scientists, with full access to the facts, were to investigate this situation, their report would make interesting reading.

The economist would probably tell us that there are a few basic industries controlled by very large concerns, and many other industries in which the medium or small concern is typical. Big concerns are closely affiliated with big banks—not all in New York—but it is often difficult to say whether the bank controls the manufacturer or the manufacturer controls the bank. The power of centralized credit may be great in times of stringency, but is small in times of plenty. On the whole, what happens to prices and business is not subject to a single, conscious control, but is the upshot of vast confusion and the average of many minds. A few of the more intelligent business men and bankers are trying to find out how to control large tendencies, but they have not been strikingly successful. Their success has been noteworthy only in making money for themselves.

The psychologist would probably report that there is just as much individual difference, as much generosity, as much native selfishness, as much independence and as much gregariousness among bankers and business men as among any other class of the population. He would state that among themselves they exhibit many conflicts and differences of