

(MRS. MULLIN comes in on the run from left, followed by two GIRLS, who try to stop her.)

GIRL. Don't let her!

(MRS. MULLIN stops left center, looks at BILLY, then at JULIE questioningly. JULIE steps back – a silent invitation to come and pass in front of her. MRS. MULLIN walks slowly to where BILLY lies. After a moment she brushes BILLY's hair off his forehead, as she used to do. Then NETTIE, the POLICEMEN and all exit, leaving only JULIE and MRS. MULLIN on the stage with BILLY. MRS. MULLIN gets up and turns slowly to look at JULIE, who looks back at her. MRS. MULLIN tries a faint little smile, then turns and exits left. JULIE returns to BILLY, leans over, and restores the stray lock to where it was before MRS. MULLIN took the liberty to brush it back.)

START

JULIE. Sleep, Billy – sleep. Sleep peaceful, like a good boy. I knew why you hit me. You were quick-tempered and unhappy. I always knew everythin' you were thinkin'. But you didn't always know what I was thinkin'. One thing I never told you – skeered you'd laugh at me. I'll tell you now –

(Even now she has to make an effort to overcome her shyness in saying it.)

I love you. I love you. *(In a whisper.)* I love – you.

(Smiles.) I was always ashamed to say it out loud. But now I said it. Didn't I?

END

(She takes the shawl off her shoulders and drapes it over BILLY. NETTIE comes in from left. JULIE looks up and sees her, lets out a cry, and runs to her.)

What am I goin' to do?