



Alone

gave yourself away as soon as he mentioned her other name.

GERALD All right. I knew her. Let's leave it at that.

SHEILA We can't leave it at that.

GERALD (*approaching her*) Now listen, darling—

SHEILA No, that's no use. You not only knew her but you knew her very well. Otherwise, you wouldn't look so guilty about it. When did you first get to know her?

He does not reply.

Was it after she left Milwards? When she changed her name, as he said, and began to lead a different sort of life? Were you seeing her last spring and summer, during that time *when you hardly came near me and said you were so busy?* Were you?

He does not reply but looks at her.

Yes, of course you were.

GERALD I'm sorry, Sheila. But it was all over and done with, last summer. I hadn't set eyes on the girl for at least six months. I don't come into this suicide business.

SHEILA I thought I didn't, half an hour ago.

GERALD You don't. Neither of us does. So – for God's sake – don't say anything to the Inspector.

SHEILA About you and this girl?

GERALD Yes. We can keep it from him.

SHEILA (*laughs rather hysterically*) Why – you fool – *he knows. Of course he knows.* And I hate to think how much he knows that we don't know yet. You'll see. You'll see.

She looks at him almost in triumph. He looks crushed. The door slowly opens and the INSPECTOR appears, looking steadily and searchingly at them.

INSPECTOR Well?

Confirm
the
Inspector
omniscient
nature.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Structure
Why stop/pause
He play here?

At rise, scene and situation are exactly as they were at end of Act One. The INSPECTOR remains at the door for a few moments looking at SHEILA and GERALD. Then he comes forward, leaving door open behind him.

INSPECTOR (*To GERALD*) Well?

SHEILA (*with hysterical laugh, to GERALD*) You see? What did I tell you?

INSPECTOR What did you tell him?

GERALD (*with an effort*) Inspector, I think Miss Birling ought to be excused any more of this questioning. She's nothing more to tell you. She's had a long, exciting and tiring day – we were celebrating our engagement, you know – and now she's obviously had about as much as she can stand. You heard her.

SHEILA He means that I'm getting hysterical now.

INSPECTOR And are you?

SHEILA Probably.

INSPECTOR Well, I don't want to keep you here. I've no more questions to ask you.

SHEILA No, but you haven't finished asking questions – have you?

INSPECTOR No.

SHEILA (*to GERALD*) You see? (*To INSPECTOR.*) Then I'm staying.

GERALD Why should you? It's bound to be unpleasant and disturbing.

INSPECTOR And you think young women ought to be protected against unpleasant and disturbing things?

Highlighting Gerald's Hypocrisy