He goes out, but the door remains open. Hjalmars continues for a while and then puts his brush down and goes to the door.

Hjalmar Are you busy, Father?
Ekdal When you're busy I'm busy. Hum!

Hjalmar goes back to his work. After a while, Ekdal reappears in the doorway.

Ekdal I'm not that busy.

Hjalmar I thought you were writing.
Ekdal It's not a matter of life or death.

Hjalmar No, and you're not a slave either.
Ekdal And there are things to do up there –

Hjalmar Do you want to go up there?
Ekdal That's a good idea.

Hjalmar and Ekdal go up to the attic. Pigeons are flying around, others perch, cooing, on the rafters and further back in the loft the hens are clucking from time to time. Ekdal moves to go inside.

Ekdal Are you coming in?

Hjalmar I might as well – (He sees Gina in the kitchen door.) Actually, I don't think I've got the time, but look – (He goes back down.) Perhaps there's a chance I can get some bloody peace and quiet now.

Gina Does he have to go up there to fool around again?

Hjalmar Would you prefer it if he went down to Madam Eriksen's? (He sits down.) What do you want?

Gina Can we set the table for lunch in here?

Hjalmar No one's arrived yet, have they?

Gina No, but I'm expecting a young couple who want a photograph taken.

Hjalmar Damn them, why couldn't they want to be photographed together another day!

Gina Ekdal dear, I made the appointment for this afternoon when you were having your nap.

Hjalmar Well, that's all right then, we'll eat in here.

Gina There's no need to set the table yet –

Hjalmar You can see that I'm doing as much as I can!

Gina Good, then you'll have some time to spare later.

She goes out in to the kitchen. A slight pause.

Ekdal is heard in the loft.

Ekdal Hjalmar!

Hjalmar Yes?

Ekdal We're going to have to move the water trough after all.

Hjalmar Well, that's what I said all along.

Ekdal Hum-hum-hum.

Ekdal goes away from the door again. Hjalmar works a little, glances towards the loft and rises halfway. Hedvig enters from the kitchen. Hjalmar sits down quickly.

Hjalmar What do you want?

Hedvig I just wanted to see you, Father.

A beat.

Hjalmar What are you sneaking around for? Have you been told to keep an eye on me?

Hedvig No.

Hjalmar What's Mama doing out there?

Hedvig Mama's up to her neck in herring salad. (She goes to the table.) Isn't there anything I can help you with?

Hjalmar Oh no, it's best I do everything on my own – as long as I've got the strength. Don't worry, Hedvig, as long as I've got my health, then –
Hedvig  Don't say such nasty things, Papa —  
_She looks up to the left._

Hjalmar  What's he doing, Hedvig?

Hedvig  Making a new path to the water trough, I think.

Hjalmar  He'll never be able to do that on his own! And I'm forced to sit here —

Hedvig  goes to him.

Hedvig  Let me have the brush, I can do it.

Hjalmar  Don't be silly, you'll ruin your eyes.

Hedvig  No I won't — give me the brush.

Hjalmar  It'll only take a couple of minutes.

Hedvig  Then it won't hurt me, will it? (She takes the brush.) There. (She sits down.) I can copy from this one.

Hjalmar  You'll ruin your eyes! Are you listening to me? If you ruin your eyes, then it's your fault, it's not my fault — I'm telling you.

Hedvig  begins retouching.

Hedvig  I know.

Hjalmar  It's very kind of you, Hedvig, but a couple of minutes, that's all.

_He sits up to the left. Hedvig sits with the work. Hjalmar and Ekdal can be heard arguing in there. Hjalmar comes back in._

Hjalmar  Hedvig, pass me those pliers from the shelf — and the chisel. (He turns back.) Now look, Father, let me show you.

Hedvig  fetches the required tools and hands them to him.

Hjalmar  Thank you. It was a good job I looked in here.

_He goes back inside and they hammer away while they're chatting._

Hedvig  remains standing, watching them. After a while there's a

knock on the front door, but she doesn't notice. Gregers, hatless and without an overcoat, enters and stops in the doorway for a moment. He coughs. Hedvig turns round and goes towards him.

Hedvig  Good morning.

Gregers  Thank you.

_He looks towards the left._

Have you got workmen in the house?

Hedvig  It's only Father and Grandfather. Shall I tell them you're here?

Gregers  Don't — I'd rather wait.

_He sits down._

Hedvig  It's so messy in here.

_She tries to remove the photographs._

Gregers  Leave them, they're all right. Are those photographs waiting to be finished?

Hedvig  I was helping Father.

Gregers  Don't let me disturb you.

Hedvig  Oh no —

_She lays out the photographs again and starts work. Gregers watches her._

Gregers  Did your duck sleep well last night?

Hedvig  Yes, I think so.

Gregers  turns towards the left.

Gregers  It looks quite different from last night — in the moonlight.

Hedvig  In the morning it looks different from the afternoon and when it rains it looks different from when it's sunny.

Gregers  Have you noticed that?