Mrs. Martin: I can buy a pocketknife for my brother, but you can't buy Ireland for your grandfather.

Mr. Smith: One walks on his feet, but one heats with electricity or coal.

Mr. Martin: He who sells an ox today, will have an egg tomorrow.

Mrs. Smith: In real life, one must look out of the window.

Mrs. Martin: One can sit down on a chair, when the chair doesn't have any.

Mr. Smith: One must always think of everything.

Mr. Martin: The ceiling is above, the floor is below.

Mrs. Smith: When I say yes, it's only a manner of speaking.

Mrs. Martin: To each his own.

Mr. Smith: Take a circle, caress it, and it will turn vicious.

Mrs. Smith: A schoolmaster teaches his pupils to read, but the cat suckles her young when they are small.

Mrs. Martin: Nevertheless, it was the cow that gave us tails.

Mr. Smith: When I'm in the country, I love the solitude and the quiet.

Mr. Martin: You are not old enough yet for that.

Mrs. Martin: Benjamin Franklin was right; you are more nervous than he.

Mrs. Martin: What are the seven days of the week?

Mr. Smith: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.*

Mr. Martin: Edward is a clerk; his sister Nancy is a typist, and his brother William a shop-assistant.*

Mrs. Smith: An odd family!

Mrs. Martin: I prefer a bird in the bush to a sparrow in a barrow.

Mr. Smith: Rather a steak in a chalet than gristle in a castle.

Mr. Martin: An Englishman's home is truly his castle.

Mrs. Smith: I don't know enough Spanish to make myself understood.

* In English in the original.—Translator's note.

The Bald Soprano

Mrs. Martin: I'll give you my mother-in-law's slippers if you'll give me your husband's coffin.

Mr. Smith: I'm looking for a monophysite priest to marry to our maid.

Mr. Martin: Bread is a staff, whereas bread is also a staff, and an oak springs from an oak every morning at dawn.

Mrs. Smith: My uncle lives in the country, but that's none of the midwife's business.

Mrs. Martin: Paper is for writing, the cat's for the rat. Cheese is for scratching.

Mrs. Smith: The car goes very fast, but the cook beats batter better.

Mr. Smith: Don't be turkeys; rather kiss the conspirator.

Mr. Martin: Charity begins at home.*

Mrs. Smith: I'm waiting for the aqueduct to come and see me at my windmill.

Mr. Martin: One can prove that social progress is definitely better with sugar.

Mr. Smith: To hell with polishing!

[Following this last speech of Mr. Smith's, the others are silent for a moment, stupefied. We sense that there is a certain nervous irritation. The strokes of the clock are more nervous too. The speeches which follow must be said, at first, in a glacial, hostile tone. The hostility and the nervousness increase. At the end of this scene, the four characters must be standing very close to each other, screaming their speeches, raising their fists, ready to throw themselves upon each other.]

Mr. Martin: One doesn't polish spectacles with black wax.

Mrs. Smith: Yes, but with money one can buy anything.

Mr. Martin: I'd rather kill a rabbit than sing in the garden.

Mr. Smith: Cockatoos, cockatoos, cockatoos, cockatoos, cockatoos, cockatoos, cockatoos, cockatoos, cockatoos.

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