

OBLAKA. — THE CLOUDS.

Měra o třech jednáních od Jaroslava Kvapila. Ukáška z amerického překladu Karla Rechta.

(Vydáno z časopisu Foot Lore.)

(Přínášejíce nejnovější zajímavou ukášku Rechta překladu hry Jaroslava Kvapila, známého českého spisovatele a dramaturga a vrchního regisera Národního divadla, předosláme ji dopis samotného autora, který redaktor t. j. obdržel v jednu z r., a pak stručný obsah samotné hry, čímž se, jak myslíme, čtenářům svým nemálo zavděčíme.)

Jaroslav Kvapil psáteli těchto řádek píše: "Způsobil jste mi svým dopisem opravdu potěšení, a jsem rád, že se Vám v Americe dobře daří. Při tom Vám řeknu z mého prostí: o tom, že má "Oblaka" vyšla v Americe anglicky, dočtete jsem se i v jednom z nejlepších novin, ale nedostal jsem ani exempláře. Vykloprý to před tím i někde v časopise. — Byl bych Vám proto tuze povděčen, kdybyste mi oznámil alespoň adresu nakladatelovu, bych si mohl výtisk objednat. — Sám teď už docela neví, jak se tomu teď, ať bych rád, vyhovětí Vašemu přání, abych Vám poslal pro Vás nějaký příspěvek. Ale, chcete-li, omluvte si, pokud z mých knih, ať-li lyrika (a já vedle ní psával jen divadla) je pro Vaše čtenáře vůbec nějakým zájmem. Těži mi ze srdce, že neschůvám s bohoslužbami pietistickým našich lidí v Americe. Právě nedávno se o tom u nás tuze zobra, a myslím, po zásluze psalo. Já sám ani nejsem tou věcí dotčen, poněvadž nějaká ta básnička nemá obecního ceny. Ale obilněn belletristé jako Jirásek, Hermann a t. d., jsou tím značně pokřiveni. Již mně napadlo, nebylo-li by nejlépe hledati pro takové knihy českého nakladatele v Americe, aby tam byly chráněny. Ale to by bylo dlouhé psaní. Děkuji za Vaše dopis a jeho milý obsah. Přejí Vám boje zdaru v tom daleku, a, těže se na nové Vaše zprávy, jsem Vám nejspříjemnější Jaroslav Kvapil."

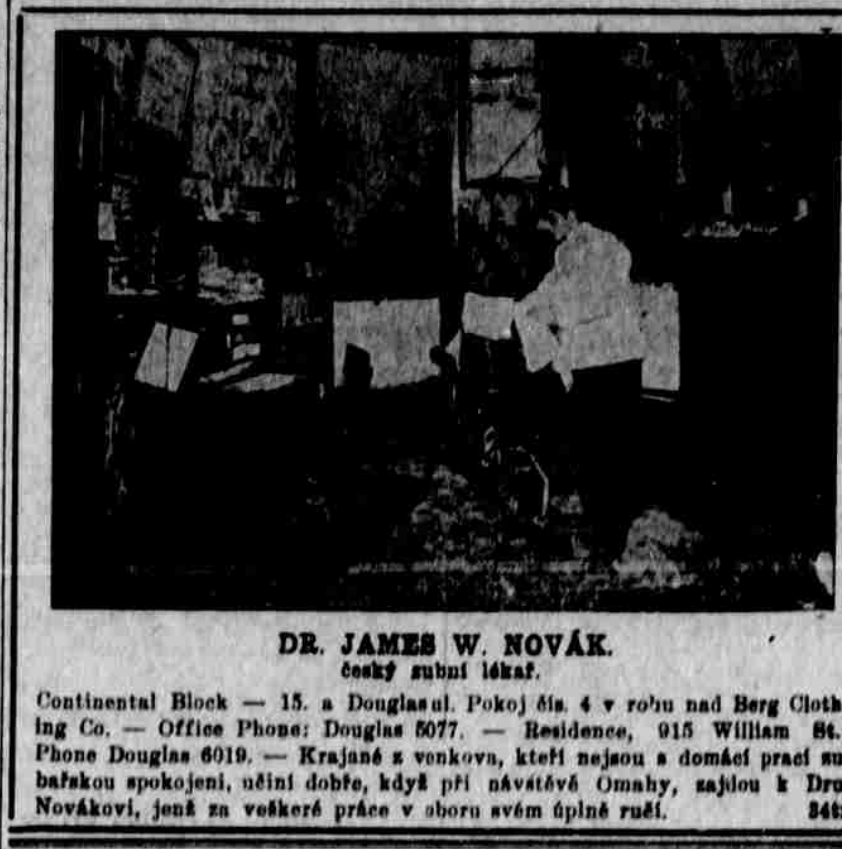
Děj Kvapilovy hry "Oblaka" odehrává se na venkovské pohorské faře. Farář Jan Matouš má u sebe hospodyně svou sestru, vdovu Marii Kocianovou, jejíž syn Petr tráví právo u nich po celou svou prázdninu jako bohoslovec. Prázdniny ehlý se ku konci a tu dobrodružný a hodný farář radí své synovci, nechtěl-li se pro povolání, které si zvolil, dosti pevně a jistým, aby si dříve, než učiní poslední rozhodný krok, vše rozmyslil a, nebyl-li by spokojen, věnoval se raději povolání jinému. Petr je přesvědčen, že se jako kněz bude cítiti zcela šťastným, a že nezná taký zájem jiných požadavků. Skutečně nezná a neznal, poněvadž o něm, ve kterém domě žil, žádná jiná v něm nevzbudilo. Pojednou však do zátiší malé horské faře přijde Maja Zemanová, vlastně Maja Preisová, podívat se na své rodiče, na místa, kde v útlém dětství strávila nejkrásnější léta svého života ve společnosti své roven, bezstarostných dětí, z kterých Petr byl již druhem nejmladším. Nikdo ji nepozná, nemůže poznati, neb se z ní stala dospělá, krásná žena a k tomu herečka, velká umělkyně. Konečně však všichni přece se poznají a tu Maja do klidu a tiha a jednotvárnosti farářského života vnese jako z ruce a do srdce Petrova vhodí ji skru nových požadavků a touhu po skutečném životě. Sama cítí k němu velikou náklonnost, ano, miluje jej, ale, zemanví poměry a okolí, v jakém Petr žije, z útrpnosti k druhým nedá mu lásku svou znáti. Za to do nitra Petrova vhozená jiskra vyhoří do plamenů. — Petr se zamiluje, pozná život a rozhodne se, že se do semikate nevrátí. Strýc tím překvapí a matce způsobí bolest. — Doktor Votava však vezme na sebe úkol prostředníka. Maju, která se na faře, poněvadž druhého dne odjížděla, vrátiti již nechtěla, přemluví a přivede, by se se všemi rozloučila, i s Petrem, a tomuto by rozhodnutí jeho rozmluvila. Maja tak učiní a za cenu vlastní lásky a vlastního štěstí, kterouž seceu práve přinášíme nkázku, vrátí Petra semikate. Sama odejde a Petr dívá se za ni a za životem bezmocem. . . Vše před námi mizí a plyne jako — oblaka.)

Maya (all decided, as soon as she sees him). — Mr. Petr, I have come to say good by to you. Petr (Extremely surprised and confused). Miss — you here? Maya. Did not Dr. Votava tell you? Petr. He did not. I thought he came alone. Maya. Mr. Petr, I did not mean to come to you any more. For your sake — and — for my sake. But I am coming again — and for the last time, because it had to be. Give me your hand. Petr (gives her his hand). Did I do any harm to you? Maya (she smiles slightly and sadly). You — to me? (Shakes her head.) I — to you. And therefore, first of all, forgive me (stops, not finishing). Yes, forgive me. It is the last cordial and kind word I shall say to you. (Stops.) Will you forgive me? Petr (confused). Yes. Maya (pretending calmness). Thank you. And now, know why I have come again. I come to tell you, Mr. Petr, that you have sinned awfully against your mother. I will not mention your

uncle, although you have also wounded him. But you have inexorably wronged your mother. Petr (surprised). — I? Maya. You an I, both of us. But I want to be strong again. I want to rise again and go away from here straight, unburdened, and in silence. Petr (embarrassed). And I also, Maya. Never. You will humble yourself and remain. Petr. I cannot. Maya (with emphasis). You will humble yourself and remain. You are to-day capable of nothing else but humbleness. If you do not know it to-day you will know it to-morrow, or soon enough. Because you were born for lowliness and resignation — and my path leads another way and to other places. It is giddy — bold — but so narrow that no one can walk alongside of me. I throw down every one who would dare to walk at my side. Petr. And even me? Maya. You, first of all. Petr. Then I will go without you. Maya. Where to? Petr. After you. Maya. You shall not dare it! Before me there are sky-touching peaks, but behind me are chasms and chasms. Behind me there are dead bodies, multitudes of dead bodies of those who, like you, wanted to mate with me. And these who wanted to come with me were stronger than you are. They were free, their feet were not fettered. Petr. Nor shall my feet be fettered hereafter. Maya. They are and shall, though you may not know it. Do you suppose that I need to remind you of your mother? I need not. And even if she were not, you cannot follow in my paths. Turn back, you fool. Petr (resolutely). — I don't believe you. You scorn me for the sake of my old mother, out of sympathy for her naive love, for the sake of her religious promise. Maya (with a short, contemptuous smile). Ach. You childish simpleton. — What would your mother mean to me in such a moment, if I wanted you come with me? What would all her creed, that is to me a strange creed, be to me? What would I care for her happiness, the happiness of a stranger, if I wanted you at my side? Do you think that you were the first or only one? Know it, then, since you must! I lied to you the other day when I said that I only loved once and purely. It was the impulse of the moment. I said it because the moment, that charming moment, amused me. I was thirsty for your warm, unpolluted blood, and I grasped your hands and laid my head on your chest like a vampire. But it was only for the moment. I am, poor boy, used to greater whirlwinds of passion, to warmer sensations, and your petty, feverish fantasy hardly was enough for one quiet evening. Mr. Petr, you would be ridiculous if for one such petty moment you would be wrecking your entire future, your entire life. Petr (he had been listening to her, with a growing consternation. — Now he breaks out.) You lie! You lie! Only to get rid of me. Maya (coldly and harshly). Yes, I lie, but not for the purpose of getting rid of you. You would not even be able to reach beyond your own petty environment. You would soon sink under the surface without a stir on my part. Petr. Why did you come back? You would not have come back if the things you say were true! Maya. Why I came back? Because I pitied you. I pity all weak people and that pity is the only beautiful feature of my traceful life. I do not feel sorry for strong people — they are my equals — the people of my blood — to such I grant with passion a moment at my side. Perhaps only for this reason that I should add sweetness to their toilsome life, before an early death. And that is why I have come to unbecome you from your delusions. See, even such a Christian mission amuses me at times. Petr. I don't believe you.

Maya. You cannot believe me. I understand you. In your pious naiveness you have learned to classify people into good and bad only. Into apostles and devils, into saint and sinners. You do not know that human nature is an undivided composite element which contains parts of both — evil and good. That it often does good in order to effect evil and sometimes acts evilly to bring about good. The strength, that yearning strength of my life, has given me a plenitude of different passions and sentiments, but when I was tired of everything, my glory, my art, and my passions, I went out to seek something different, something unusual — the enchantment of primitive memories and recollections, those small dainty flowers that grew alongside of the paths of my childhood, the fairy tales of my once unspotted soul. That is why I was so good when I came here again after so many years, that is why I gloried in that evening. But how long could it have lasted? In its footprints I felt the coming storm — storm — storm — the element of my life. And to-day it is all over, it is victoriously and freezingly clear. Petr (crushed). So you refuse me. Maya (hardly able to overcome herself). Yes. Entirely! Those are the remains of that undivided composite element of human nature — that I am discarding wholly. For that to me is also a victory, and I am always victorious. Bow your head, Petr, and look down, as you ever did, on the ground. As for me — I am going high up after the shining glory — into the airy clouds. Petr (sinks down on the bench near the house. His head in his palms). Maya (stands alongside of him, erect, feelingless, majestic, victorious). Petr (after a pause). And do you know what you have done? Maya. I do. You will return to your faith and to your calling. Petr (half straightened). And what if I do not? What if I perish? Maya. How? Petr. Perhaps with my own hand. Maya (smiles scornfully). You will not kill yourself. You are too weak to do that, just as I would be too strong. Life, my friend, is not a romance or melodrama where people shoot themselves so easily. Life has a healing power even for those who know but little of its tremendous scope. — And you, Petr, you are a tender, flexible little tree — life will bend you, but not break you. There is no need for it. (Stops a while and then says commandingly): Rise, Petr! Petr (unintentionally rises). Maya. And give me your hand. (She takes his hand). From this last pressure of your hand I want to extract some pleasure. I want to leave here victorious. I want to know that I have convinced you. Petr. Convinced me of what? Maya. That I do not deserve that you should love me. That I am not worthy of your sacrifice. Petr. It would be all in vain. Maya. Yes, it would be all in vain. But your mother is awaiting you in the hall there. — is that also in vain? Petr. You are terrible! Maya. I am. Because, look, I do not want to be otherwise. — (After a while.) Well. Petr (quietly). You know best what I will have to do. Maya (with a flash of joy, which she suppresses quickly). — And what will happen? Petr (overcome). I will return. Maya. Surely? Petr. Surely. Votava (during the last phrases he has been unnoticed standing on the threshold. Now, when both Petr and Maya are silent for a while, he says, looking at his watch). Well, Miss Zemanova, we must be going or we shall miss our train. Maya. All right, all right, doctor — we will go. Votava (to Petr). And how about you, my friend? Maya. We are agreed, are we not, Mr. Petr?

Petr (from his depths). Yes. Votava (with satisfaction). Really? Maya (with the last strength of her bravado). And you doubted it, doctor? Go, Mr. Petr, go and tell your mother. She surely is waiting. Petr (suddenly giving her his hand). Thank you. Maya (hardly able to overcome herself). And I thank you also. Petr (goes into the house). Maya (sinks on the bench where before Petr was sitting.) (Pause.) Votava. So, really, he will stay? Maya (with a sigh). He will. Votava. One really should not wonder. He could not have done otherwise. Maya (looks at him). And do you know, doctor, that this result was bought with blood? Votava (calmly). Ach, well, that'll pass. Maya (smiling sorrowfully). And do you know that I paid for it with my own blood? That I have thrown myself into mud and stepped on myself, that I have been smiting my own face, that I have slandered myself, in order to save him — for his mother? Votava (surprised). But, Miss — Maya. And look, I must not even cry. Although I would so much, so much like to cry. But he must not see that it has hurt me. Do you think that his was the greatest sacrifice? Votava (taking her hand). I understand you, and I admire you. Maya (rises). Even that is not necessary, doctor. Am I not a comedian? Votava. But, say — Maya. Yes, and this was a desperate comedy — the worst comedy of my life. Now, the curtain has fallen. And we will go. Kocianova (coming out of the parsonage). Votava (to Kocianova). Well, did I not tell you, Mrs. Kocianova? What unnecessary worries you have again caused yourself. Kocianova (hurrying to Maya). It is possible, Miss? May God Almighty reward you. Maya. Everything is possible, Mrs. Kocianova, if we have a will. Kocianova (looks at her but does not understand). Maya (quickly). And those that have no will should not attempt anything. (Kissing her.) May God preserve you. Good by. And may you all be as happy as you were heretofore. Give my regards to the reverend father. I will not be able to see him any more. Kocianova (crying). My dear soul, my golden soul. Maya (to Votava). Let's be off. (Wants to go.) Votava. And are you not going to say good by to Mr. Petr? (He calls into the hall.) Mr. Petr, come here to say good by. Petr (comes on the threshold). Maya (gives him her hand). — Good by, Mr. Petr, and may you be well and happy. Votava. And say I will come to see you again next year. Maya. No, no, Mr. Petr — good by for good — forever. (She goes quickly toward the gate.) Kocianova (escorts her). Votava (giving his hand to Petr). Well, so good by, comrade, and as I say, you have done excellently. (Goes after them.) (Quiet. Dr. Votava, Maya, and Kocianova are gone. After a while the rumbling of a departing carriage is heard.) Kocianova (returns after a while). Petrichek, my golden Petrichek. (She hurries to him.) — Well, Petrichek, what are you looking at so sadly? Petr (quietly). I — am — looking — at those — clouds.



DR. JAMES W. NOVÁK. český subní lékař.

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