

GRANDPA. About that.

HEND. You've been receiving it for years.

GRANDPA. I have. 1901, if you want the exact date.

HEND. Well, the Government is only concerned from 1914 on. That's when the income tax started. *(Pause.)*

GRANDPA. Well?

HEND. Well—it seems, Mr. Vanderhof, that you owe the Government twenty-four years' back income tax.

ED. *(Coming down as ESSIE joins him.)* Wait a minute! You can't go back that far—that's outlawed.

HEND. *(Calmly regarding him.)* M-m-m! What's your name?

ED. What difference does that make?

HEND. Ever file an income tax return?

ED. *(Turns to ESSIE, ESSIE steps in.)* No, sir.

HEND. Ah! What was your income last year?

ED. Ah—twenty-eight dollars and fifty cents, wasn't it, Essie?

ESSIE. Yes, sir.

HEND. If you please! *(Dismissing ED and ESSIE. They drift U.S.)* Now, Mr. Vanderhof, you know there's quite a penalty for not filing an income tax return.

PENNY. Penalty?

GRANDPA. Look, Mr. Henderson, let me ask you something.

HEND. Well?

GRANDPA. Suppose I pay you this money—mind you, I don't say I'm going to pay it—but just for the sake of argument—what's the Government going to do with it?

HEND. How do you mean?

GRANDPA. Well, what do I get for my money? If I go into Macy's and buy something, there it *is*—I see it. What's the Government give me?

HEND. Why, the Government gives you everything. It protects you.

GRANDPA. What from?

HEND. Well—invasion. Foreigners that might come over here and take everything you've got.

GRANDPA. Oh, I don't think they're going to do that.

HEND. If you didn't pay an income tax, they would. How do you think the Government keeps up the Army and Navy? All those battleships . . .

GRANDPA. Last time we used battleships was in the Spanish-American War, and what did we get out of it? Cuba—and we gave that back. I wouldn't mind paying if it were something sensible.

HEND. Sensible? Well, what about Congress, and the Supreme Court, and the President? We've got to pay *them*, don't we?

GRANDPA. Not with my money—no, sir.

HEND. *(Furious. Rises, picks up papers.)* Now wait a minute! I'm not here to argue with you. *(Crossing L.)* All I know is that you haven't paid an income tax and you've got to pay it!

GRANDPA. They've got to show me.

HEND. *(Yelling.)* We don't have to show you! I just told you! All those buildings down in Washington, *(To PENNY. She nods.)* and Interstate Commerce, and the Constitution!

GRANDPA. The Constitution was paid for long ago. And Interstate Commerce—what *is* Interstate Commerce, anyhow?

HEND. *(Business of look at PENNY—at ED—at GRANDPA. With murderous calm, crosses and places his hands on table.)* There are forty-eight states—see? And if there weren't Interstate Commerce, nothing could go from one state to another. See?

GRANDPA. Why not? They got fences?

HEND. *(To GRANDPA.)* No, they haven't got fences. They've got *laws*! *(Crossing up to arch L.)* My God, I never came across anything like *this* before!

GRANDPA. Well, I might pay about seventy-five dollars, but that's all it's worth.

HEND. You'll pay every cent of it, like everybody else!

ED. *(Who has lost interest.)* Listen, Essie—listen to this a minute.

(The xylophone again; ESSIE goes into her dance.)

HEND. *(Going right ahead, battling against the music.)* And let me tell you something else! You'll go to jail *(PENNY rises.)* if you don't pay, do you hear that? That's the law, and if you think you're bigger than the law, you've got another think coming. You're no better than anybody else, and the sooner you get that through your head, the better . . . you'll hear from the United States Government, that's all I can say. . . . *(The music has stopped. He is backing out of the room.)*

GRANDPA. *(Quietly.)* Look out for those snakes.

HEND. *(Jumping; exits off L.)* Jesus! *(An explosion from the hall. He exits through hall door.)*

ED. How was that, Essie?

ESSIE. Fine, Ed.

PAUL. *(Entering from hall with DE PINNA.)* How did that sound to you folks? *(ESSIE sits on couch.)*