

A PRODUCTION BOOK FOR A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

by

445

Rodney M. Wilson

B. A., State College of Iowa, 1961

A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Speech

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
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1966

Approved by:

Wallace Dace by Donald B. Benton
Major Professor

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EXPLANATION FOR PLATE I

Program for A Streetcar Named Desire



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A Streetcar Named Desire

CAST

| | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Eunice Hubbell | Leanna Lenhart |
| Stanley Kowalski..... | John Dillon |
| Stella Kowalski | Ardis Horsch |
| Steve Hubbell..... | Larry Hovey |
| Harold Mitchell..... | Frank Siegle |
| Blanche DuBois | Lisa Valenti |
| Pablo Gonzales..... | Jeff Kless |
| A Young Collector..... | Tom Gillen |
| Woman..... | Yolanda Dozier |
| Mexican Woman..... | Glenda Apt |
| Nurse..... | Linda Rowland |
| Doctor | Phil Moore |

The action takes place in and around the squalid Kowalski flat in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana.

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Act I-Scene 1 | A summer evening. |
| Act I-Scene 2 | 6 p.m. the following evening. |
| Act I-Scene 3 | Later that night. |
| Act I-Scene 4 | Early the following morning. |

INTERMISSION

| | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Act II-Scene 1 | Some weeks later. |
| Act II-Scene 2 | Later, about 2 a.m. |

INTERMISSION

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Act III-Scene 1 | Some weeks later. |
| Act III-Scene 2 | Three quarters of an hour later. |
| Act III-Scene 3 | A while later that evening. |
| Act III-Scene 4 | A few hours later, same night. |
| Act III-Scene 5 | Some days later. |

PRODUCTION STAFF

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Stage Manager | Susan Moore |
| Assistant Stage Manager..... | Jean Shackelford |
| Scenery | Daryl M. Wedwick, Technical Production Class |
| Lighting..... | Boyd Masten*, Suzanne Biggs, Bill Blackwell |
| Properties | Dee Haun, Karen Comerford, Sheryl McNevin |
| Makeup..... | Glenda Apt*, The Makeup Class |
| Costumes | Jean Shackelford*, Deedee Miller |
| Sound..... | Susan Moore |
| Posters | Jamie Aiken |
| Business Manager..... | Pamela Malik |
| House Manager..... | Ardis Horsch |

*crew head

Thesis advisor: Wallace Dace, Associate Professor of Speech
Technical advisor: Carl Hinrichs

THEATRE STAFF FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SPEECH

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Director | Dennis Denning |
| Associate Director | Wallace Dace |
| Technical Director | Carl Hinrichs |
| Costumes | Betty Cleary |
| Wardrobe Mistress | Lydia Aseneta |
| Shop Foreman | Chuck Boles |
| Head, Department of Speech | Norma Bunton |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| University News Bureau | Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bird |
| <u>The Manhattan Mercury</u> | KSAC |
| <u>The Collegian</u> | KMAN |

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE" IS PRODUCED BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE
DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE

EXPLANATION FOR PLATE II

Manhattan Mercury Review by Dr. Jordan Y. Miller
May 19, 1966

Top Performance Given By Actors In 'Streetcar'

The choice of plays and the quality of the productions of the Kansas State Players has been of a very high level over the past few years, and the final presentation of the current season, "A Streetcar Named Desire," stands unquestionably among the best. Last night's near capacity audience in the Purple Masque theatre was obviously deeply moved. The prolonged and enthusiastic applause was for a performance of the highest caliber.

This is undoubtedly Tennessee Williams' finest achievement. His portrait of the deeply disturbed Blanche DuBois, grasping wildly at the last few straws that might save her tarnished dignity, and her life, in the midst of a brutally animalistic world, is surely one of the great characterizations of the modern American theatre. It is a pleasure to report that young Lisa Valenti has caught the complexities of this character with great skill. In voice and movement she shows plainly from her first entrance that here is a person experiencing profound emotional difficulties.

In a long, tiring role, difficult for the most accomplished professional to sustain, Miss Valenti never falters. Her near-seduction of the innocent newsboy and her lengthy revelation of a good portion of her past to her suitor, Mitch, are particularly outstanding scenes.

Williams' picture of the ape-man Stanley Kowalski, vulgar, uncouth, yet amazingly sympathetic in his primitive defense of his cave, is also an unforgettable creation. John Dillon, the "old pro" of the Players, handles another difficult role with his familiar polish. His crude but crafty battle against the intruder remains convincing throughout.

The supporting cast is equal to these two antagonists. Ardis Horsch as Stella, torn between her earthy love for her mate and the frantic pleas of her sister to get away from it all, gives a highly sensitive performance. In a far less spectacular role, she conveys a genuine affection toward Stanley as well as a profound concern for the welfare of her sister. Frank Siegle as the mother-oriented Mitch, whose love could be the saving grace in Blanche's terrifying decline, is equally effective. In lesser, but important roles, Leanna Lenhart and Larry Hovey as the ever-fighting ever-loving Hubbell's create a fine impression in their profane but genuinely human neighborliness, always ready to aid the constantly troubled Kowalskis.

Rod Wilson, the director, has undertaken an ambitious play for young amateur talent, but he has obviously handled them superbly. The scenery by Technical Director Daryl Wedwick, even within the confines of the Purple Masque's tiny acting area, meets Williams' requirements in nearly every respect.

This is strong drama, exhausting to perform as well as to watch. But Williams at his best is well worth watching, and "A Streetcar Named Desire" is Williams at his best. Performances are tonight through Saturday at 8 p.m. You should go and watch.
— Jordan Y. Miller

BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

The works of Tennessee Williams to many often seem to be confusing and contradictory, but they are no more so than the accounts of the author's life. The major source of information on Williams is the playwright himself. And what better source, one would think. There appear to be some distortions, however, in the story as pictured by Williams. His mother and other biographers do not paint the somewhat exaggerated and confusing picture that Williams has created.

A point in question is the date of birth of the playwright. This is for most biographical studies the starting point from which the story grows. In this story, however, there seems to be some confusion as to the actual date of birth. For some time the year 1914 was given as the year of Williams' birth. This confusion seems to arise from the fact that in 1939, in order to enter a playwriting contest that the Group Theatre of New York was sponsoring for writers under 25, Williams cut three years off his age, and, after he was awarded a special citation, he did not bother to restore the years. The accepted date of birth now seems to be March 26, 1911.

He also was believed to have been born in a rectory where his grandfather, an Episcopalian minister, was living at the time. His mother, however, disputes this and contends that he

was indeed born in a hospital in Columbus, Mississippi, at which her father was serving as an Episcopal minister. Many of the other distortions and exaggerations found in the story of Williams are not so easily explained or clarified.

Born Thomas Lanier Williams, he was the son of Cornelius Coffin Williams and Edwina Dakin Williams, a Southern family of the dying aristocracy. Thomas was to cling to his ties with the South and in later years to proclaim himself a Southern writer.

For the first seven years of his life, Williams, his mother and sister Rose (born two years prior to Williams in 1909) lived with their maternal grandparents. The Williams' family moved continually from parish to parish. They lived in numerous Mississippi and Tennessee towns. It was the life of a Southern gentleman that Williams came to live in these early years; this was to color his outlook on life for the remainder of his life. He has described his family background on several occasions, and the contrast between the family of his mother and that of his father always pictures a conflict that is to remain an area of struggle in the values and thoughts of Williams for all time.

He pictures his father's family as barbaric, drinking, swearing, gambling, crude beings that created a life of ugliness.

ness; whereas he pictures his mother's family as the gentle aristocratic example of the old South. In his mind the house of his maternal grandfather was always that of peace and tranquility until his father would visit them about every two weeks; then it was filled with loud voices, heavy steps, and the sound of slamming doors. Within these pictures we find what seems to be the basis for the class struggle that haunts all of his major works. For within his recollections of his own family life, this theme comes to life as an imposing ghost. In A Streetcar Named Desire many of the attributes that we find in Stanley are in reality those of his own father. The same is true of the characteristics of Blanche which he has drawn from the make up of his mother.

Benjamin Nelson reveals in his work on Williams a picture of Tennessee's father. In reality Tennessee's father, Cornelius Williams, a blunt, stocky man with a quick and violent temper, traced his ancestry back to one of the oldest and most prominent families in Tennessee. He was reared by an older sister and spent his early years in Bell-Buckle Military Academy which seemed to stimulate his love for military life. While attending the University of Tennessee law school, he resigned to become a second lieutenant in the Spanish-American War. A proud and

hard man, he liked his alcohol and rough humor and he used profanity with the ready easiness of a man who knew and insisted upon his place in the center of his world.

Edwina Dakin's parents were of Quaker-Germanic stock, gentle and patrician. Edwina's mother was a lovely and charming woman, and her father a stately dignified minister for whom the term "gentleman" was fitting and proper. Edwina herself was a small, bird-like, beautiful young woman, composed and proper to the point of puritanism. She was as unlike her husband as two people could be and almost from its inception her marriage to Williams became a struggle. Her parents, with whom the couple lived, had little regard for the salesman, and he in turn was cold to them.

As a salesman Williams spent many days away from the so called home that he and Edwina had formed. The birth of the two children did not seem to mend the growing breach between the two. The only change that took place in the family situation was that Edwina became more and more absorbed in the children and her relationship with her husband became less significant. All her love and attention was given to the children to the point of over-bearing protection and concern.

Tom seems to have been a weak and sickly boy from the beginning. This was not helped by the sheltered life which he led. Because his father spent much of his time away from home, the only home that Tom knew was that of his grandparents, where he lived with his mother, sister, grandmother and grandfather up to the age of seven. He was continually surrounded by women and his only playmate was his sister Rose. They formed such a close relationship that the rest of the world was completely excluded. They both sought all companionship in one another. They would spend hours playing all sorts of games together and spent almost no time with any other friends. It would appear that, surrounded by feminine influence and manners, Tom did not absorb the masculine mannerisms and ways that a boy does when he is under the influence of his father and other male images. The soft, mild-mannered ways of his grandfather and the others seemed to provide the model that colored his life and created his inability to accept the male role of his father in the world of reality.

At the age of five, Tom almost died when he contracted a serious case of diphtheria. The illness left him partially paralyzed and with a kidney ailment. In bed for months, it was two years before he was able to regain complete use of

his legs; he missed a full year of school; and as a consequence, both his mother and grandmother became increasingly protective. Mrs. Williams was afraid to allow him to play with other children and, in his own words, he became delicate and sissified.

The most shattering experience of his life was yet to occur. In 1918 his father was promoted to a managerial position with the International Shoe Company's subsidiary in St. Louis. Leaving the rural leisurely community of Clarksdale and the Reverend and Mrs. Dakin, the Williams' family moved to St. Louis.

The uprooting for Rose and her brother was a violent one which, in their minds, was not less terrifying than a fall from grace. 'It was a tragic move, neither my sister nor I could adjust ourselves to life in a midwestern city.'¹

The family moved into a small apartment during the early years in St. Louis. For Williams it was a dim little apartment in a line of shabby identical structures within a city of concrete and steel. Williams pictures his concept of the apartments they lived in in the setting of The Glass Menagerie. This change from the beautiful and refreshing countrysides of

¹ Benjamin Nelson, Tennessee Williams (New York, 1961), p. 6.

Mississippi to the confines of the city was an unbearable and depressing situation for him. Williams himself describes the change in social status:

In the South we had never been conscious of the fact that we were economically less fortunate than others. We lived as well as anyone else. But in St. Louis we suddenly discovered there were two kinds of people, the rich and the poor and that we belonged more to the latter. . . . If I had been born to this situation I might not have resented it deeply. But it was forced upon my consciousness at the most sensitive age of childhood. It produced a shock and a rebellion that has grown into an inherent part of my work.²

This change in environment caused a greater hostility towards his father than had existed before, but its repercussions did not end there, for the new situation forced him to find greater seclusion within himself and to resent and see with distaste all that surrounded him. Shortly after this move he returned to school, a place for which he held no great love, and at this time he found even greater distaste for it. He was disliked and tormented by those around him for his Southern speech and his lack of masculine mannerisms, and was often chased home by the boys. Even his father began to chide him about his femininity and to call him girls names.

² Nelson, p. 7.

Shortly after their move to St. Louis in 1918, in 1919 a second son was born to the Williams' family and named Walter Dakin. With the birth of her second son, Edwina became quite ill and developed tuberculosis. Tom was once again placed in the care of his grandparents. For Tom this was a happy moment for it revived for him a way of life in which he had found the greatest happiness. Tom as a young man, in fact, reflected his own thoughts of his early life in the home of his grandparents.

Before I was eight my life was completely unshadowed by fear. I lived in a small Mississippi town. My mother and my sister and I lived with our grandparents while my father travelled around the state, selling clothing to men. My sister and I were gloriously happy. We sailed paper boats in wash-tubs of water, cut lovely paper-dolls out of huge mail-order catalogs, kept two white rabbits under the back porch, baked mud pies in the sun upon the front walk, climbed up and slid down the big wood pile, collected from neighboring alleys and trash-piles bits of colored glass that were diamonds and rubies and sapphires and emeralds. And in the evenings, when the white moonlight streamed over our bed, before we were asleep, our Negro nurse Ozzie, as warm and black as a moonless Mississippi night, would lean above our bed, telling in a low, rich voice her amazing tales about foxes and bears and rabbits and wolves that behaved like human beings.³

Continually rebuffed by school mates and feeling alone in a city which he hated, he began to withdraw from the world. Because of this he became an avid reader, and this search into

³ Edwina Dakin Williams, Remember Me To Tom (New York, 1963), p. 19.

the realm of literature led him into the creative field of which he was to become a significant part. With his books and Rose he was happy and enjoyed a life full of imagination and creation that was sufficient for him to survive. When he was eleven, however, the companionship and love, the closeness of sharing that he and Rose had known suddenly ended. Rose now reached the period in her life when she was to become a young lady. This change in the physical and mental make-up of Rose was one to which she never adjusted--she became a lost person between childhood and womanhood and never fully accepted the role of a woman. The loss of the companionship of Rose was a difficult experience for Williams. He wrote of her: "My sister had been magically suited to the wild country of childhood but it remained to be seen how she would adapt herself to the uniform and yet more complex world."⁴ With the loss of her companionship, Williams began to occupy all of his time in writing. When he was eleven, Edwina bought him a typewriter and this became his constant companion and friend. His first real composition, written when he was twelve, was inspired by a picture of Tennyson's heroine, the Lady of Shallot. Once he began to write, it became an incessant compulsion with him.

⁴ Nelson, p. 12.

He said, "It came quite naturally to me, because I led such an intense interior life."⁵ At the age of fourteen he received his first writing award and had decided that writing was the career for him. This award consisted of a prize given by the magazine Smart Set for his essay on the subject "Can a Good Wife Be A Good Sport?" For his effort he won twenty-five dollars.

Once again the father image invaded the world of Williams with his condemnation of writing which he felt was a waste of time and showed a lack of responsibility. This, however, did not deter the young writer; and entering every contest he could, he soon won a second prize for the best review of the motion picture Stella Dallas and was awarded ten dollars. During his junior year in high school he published his first short story and received his largest monetary return to date--thirty-five dollars. Written when he was sixteen and published in the July, 1928, issue of Weird Tales, it was titled "The Vengeance of Nitocris" and drew upon a paragraph in the ancient histories of Herodotus. Along with his preoccupation with horror tales he was fascinated by Edna St. Vincent Millay and he wrote many poems. Williams continued to alienate himself from the world

⁵ Nelson, p. 15.

and to lose himself in his writing. In 1929 he graduated from high school and in the autumn of that year entered the University of Missouri at Columbia, Missouri, as a journalism major. His first year at the University was a success. He joined a fraternity, and his grades improved from those that he had achieved previously. At the same time he fell in love with a girl named Hazel Kramer. She had been his partner in high school and the affection which they held for each other continued to grow. She was a year younger than he, and as she finished her high school career and he began his college life, they spent as much of his vacations together as possible. She planned to enter the University of Missouri the next year, but when Father Williams heard, he applied pressure to Hazel's grandfather, who was an employee of the International Shoe Company, to keep his granddaughter from attending the University. She then was forced to attend the University of Wisconsin. With the absence of this relationship, Williams rapidly lost interest in college. He angered his father further by failing his ROTC course. His third year in college was marked by an increasing apathy. It was now 1932, the height of the Depression, and his father, noting that his son's grades were continually slipping, and possessing little patience for the young man's literary ambitions in the face of difficult times, withdrew

the boy from college. He then sent him to a business school for a course in stenography and obtained for him a position with the International Shoe Company at sixty-five dollars per month.

Williams worked for the next three years at the shoe company. He pictures his dislike for the position and his feeling of entrapment in his play The Glass Menagerie. He not only hated the job and all that was connected with it, but he was not competent in the position, and if it had not been for his father, he would have been fired immediately.

Now forced into the man's world of commerce and competition, he could not even find refuge in the women folk at home as he had done in previous years. His mother and Rose had both turned away from him, and he was now completely alone with little or no companionship except for his typewriter. He would come home from the confines of the factory and sit at his typewriter the rest of the night writing anything that came to his mind and would only stop to return to work the next morning. In 1935 the news of the marriage of Hazel and his endless night life carried him to a nervous breakdown. The breakdown was not a serious one, but it resulted in the loss of his job, and he once again retreated to the seclusion of the home of his grand-

parents. It was during this summer visit in Memphis, Tennessee, that he wrote his first play. He met a young lady who lived near his grandparents who was very interested in a small summer theatre called the Rose Arbor and she encouraged Williams to write a play for this group. So he wrote a comedy called Cairo! Shanghai! Bombay! and it was produced that summer and appears to have been very well received. The play involved two young sailors who while on shore leave pick up two girls and have a series of riotous adventures.

That fall he returned to St. Louis with an apparent desire to complete his college education and a passion for the writing of plays, for he enrolled at Washington University of St. Louis and became involved with a small group of writers and poets. He began to turn out plays just as rapidly and frantically as he had done in the previous years with his other writing. He now became strong friends with another member of this literary group by the name of Clark Mills McBurney. They spent many of their free hours together and most of his writing took place in the basement of the McBurney home. This period was not only one of creation but of extensive reading and study into the art of which he was to become a leader. He read Rimbaud and Rilke, Garcia Lorca, Chekhov, Wilde, Melville, Stephen Crane and

D. H. Lawrence. At one point Williams began a play about Lawrence, with whom he was particularly taken, but the drama did not materialize for a few years until he revised and completed it under the title, I Rise In Flame, Cried the Phoenix. The writers that seemed to most interest Williams were Lorca, Chekhov and Lawrence. Williams loved the beautiful lyricism of the works of Lorca and found particular fascination in the theme of Chekhov's of one civilization giving way helplessly but inevitably before another, and indeed this became a major theme of Williams--in particular the sacrifice of the Southern way of life to contemporary society. Benjamin Nelson states that Williams seemed to be fascinated by the Russian writer's ability to exaggerate a momentary experience. This technique of illumination was the goal of the young Southern writer.

More than any other, however, Williams was captivated by the poetry and, in fact, the life of Hart Crane, whose tragic family life rang true in Williams' own background. Crane committed suicide in 1932, and his life and death Williams pictured as the tragedy of a poet. This experience with Crane had an immense effect upon Williams, and he has used many of the poems of Crane in thoughts that he has conveyed. The Signet book version of A Streetcar Named Desire includes a poem of Hart Crane. The poem reads:

And so it was I entered the broken world
 To trace the visionary company of live, its voice
 An instant in the wind (I know not whither hurled)
 But not for long to hold each desperate choice.

"The Broken Tower" by Hart Crane

In 1936 Williams wrote a short story which was to later become the basis for the plays 27 Wagons Full of Cotton and eventually, Baby Doll.

The second play of Williams to be performed, a romantic drama about a young married couple, was entitled The Magic Tower. For this endeavor he was presented with a sterling silver cake dish. At last Williams was a senior at Washington University, and during this year he became a member of the theatre group the Mummies. They were leftist, rebellious, Bohemian and super-charged with daring and inventiveness. This period with the Mummies more than any other established Williams as a playwright in his own mind. The first work that Williams wrote for the Mummies was in connection with a presentation of Irwin Shaw's one-act pacifist drama, Bury the Dead. Williams was asked to write a curtain-raiser to finish out the two hour program that was needed. He wrote a pacifist sketch called Headlines which received its initial presentation on Armistice Day of 1936 and was well received by both audience and press. Since its function, however, was to introduce the Shaw play, Williams' name

was not even mentioned on the program. Williams was elated with his association with the Mummers and his new status as a playwright who was being produced.

In college he entered a playwriting contest sponsored by the drama department with his play, Me, Vashya! The play dealt with a munitions maker who during World War I sold his products alternately to the highest bidders. The play did not win the contest, and Williams, who has always been extremely sensitive to whatever he feels to be snub or lack of deserved recognition, became furious with Professor William G. B. Carson and began to lose interest in school. His grades declined rapidly and in a letter he denounced both the university and the dean. For this or his failing grade in Greek he was dropped from the university in June of 1937. This period was also one of home problems and the growth of a greater gap between him and all members of his family. His only concern was his sister Rose, and even their situation seemed to worsen, so he turned once more to his work. In 1936 he wrote Candles to the Sun, a violent story of Alabama coal miners. A year later the Mummers presented it to an enthusiastic response from audience and critics alike. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch summed it up as a drama of "Poverty, degeneracy, accidents

on the fifth level below ground, a strike and a brutal murder, ending with beans for everybody, hope and the singing of 'solidarity forever.'"⁶

In 1937 Rose Williams finally had to be committed to a hospital because of decline in her mental state. Rather than have her committed to an asylum for life, the family had a prefrontal lobotomy performed which rendered her passive and meant that she would need constant care for the rest of her life. She was then committed to a sanitarium. Because of this Rose became an integral part of Williams' life and work. He completely separated himself from any home life for he saw it as a relationship in which he had been tormented and misunderstood and which finally destroyed Rose. In September of 1937 he left St. Louis and enrolled at the University of Iowa. With help from his grandmother and through various odd jobs, he was able to pay the expenses of his education. At Iowa he wrote two new full-length plays and revised the earlier written Fugitive Kind. He sent the new script to the Mummens who produced it in the winter of 1938. The play was heavily criticised for its lack of unity. Williams was always open to criticism except when he had a work that he felt was complete, and

⁶ Nelson, p. 33.

then the criticism became for him a personal attack.

The other two plays were written for the late Professor E. C. Mabie's seminar in play writing. The first of these was titled Spring Storm. Williams read this for the class, and when he had finished he describes Professor Mabie's reaction in this way:

When I had finished reading, the good professor's eyes had a glassy look as though he had drifted into a state of trance. There was a long and all but unendurable silence. Everyone seemed more or less embarrassed. At last the professor pushed back his chair, thus dismissing the seminar, and remarked casually and kindly, "Well, we all have to paint our nudes!"⁷

The second play was begun at Iowa but finished in St. Louis in the summer of 1938. It was entitled Not About Nightingales and dealt with a prison riot based on an actual occurrence at that time: the literal roasting alive of a group of convicts sent for disciplining to a hot room called "The Klondike." He felt this was his best work to date.

In the spring of 1938 at the age of twenty-seven, Williams received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Iowa. He submitted his new play to the Mummings, but the Depression hit the group at this time and for lack of finances they were forced to close. With the death of the Mummings all

⁷ Nelson, p. 36.

that had held him in St. Louis had ended. He moved to Chicago and attempted to find a position with the W.P.A. Writers' project. He was unsuccessful because his work was deemed lacking in the social content and protest which were the cardinal virtues attributed to writing by the project. Also, he could not prove his family was destitute, since it obviously was not; and thirdly his manner and traces of refinement made him seem too light hearted and in his own words "decadent" to the conscientious and ruggedly energetic forces behind the Chicago project.

He then moved back to St. Louis, and in an attempt to at last break all the old family ties he set out for New Orleans. In New Orleans he tried for the second time to join the Writers' Project or the Theatre Project and was again unsuccessful. Williams then took assorted jobs to survive in the city. He began to develop in this winter of 1938-39 the characteristics of a Bohemian. His friends were the strange and bizarre characters of the French quarter and his link with this society was to color a major portion of his plays. He became a vagabond as many were in this area, and this sense of freedom from the restrictions of society and the rules that chained it was to be an inspiration to him. His life in New Orleans was filled with companionship of procurers, homosexuals and prostitutes

and many others of the night world that surrounded him. He found in New Orleans two cities--that of day and that of night--and he chose, it seems, to become one of the night. His life became wild experience of drinking, sex, excitement and everything to excess. For the first time he was able to give way to his passions, desires and frustrations. If he could never be the man his father wanted, he would be, here in New Orleans, what he wanted.

I found the kind of freedom I had always needed. And the shock of it against the puritanism of my nature has given me a subject⁸, a theme, which I have never ceased exploiting.

The Puritan and Bohemian clashed now in this new life and this struggle of the two ways of life was to become the major theme of many of his works. It was also at this time that he dropped his name Thomas and took the name Tennessee. Many reasons have been given but they all boil down to the point that he seems to have preferred this name for his writing career, and it seemed to give a strength to his name and character that Thomas lacked. He also remarked to his mother at one time that everyone had the name Thomas, so his dislike for this name seems to have had a long history.

⁸ Nelson, p. 39.

This winter Tennessee wrote one-act plays dealing for the most part with the individual's struggle for freedom in the face of hopeless odds. Some of these were incorporated into a collection titled American Blues, which is marked by the social consciousness of its author.

The greatest turning point in Williams' life came when he read an article in which he learned that the Group Theatre of New York was sponsoring a playwriting contest for writers twenty-five years of age or younger. Although he was now twenty-eight, he entered the contest. He submitted his four long plays, Candles to the Sun, The Fugitive Kind, Spring Storm, and Not About Nightingales, together with a group of the one-act American Blues selection he had written during the winter. He seems to have forgotten the contest after entering it and at this time packed up his few belongings and took off for California in the spring of 1939 after an adventurous and penniless trip through the Southwest. Williams took a job in a bootery in Culver City, and he and his companion settled on a pigeon ranch ten miles away.

Early that spring, Williams returned from work to find a letter waiting for him. It contained a citation from the Group Theatre which read: To Tennessee Williams, twenty-four years old, of New Orleans, for American Blues a group of

three sketches which constitute a full-length play. Far more important for the moment, however, was a check for 100 dollars included with the citation. Williams was overjoyed at this honor, and to celebrate he quit his job at the Bootery and with his friend he went to Tijuana and then back as far as Laguana Beach where they spent the summer living on the hundred dollar award. It was at this time that Audrey Wood, an agent in New York, took notice of the works of Williams and wrote him in California offering her services as an agent. Williams' first reply asked her to read his works first and to see if she was still interested. She did so and wrote him once again offering her services and this time he replied.

My personal affairs are in quite a muddle right now. I am high and dry on the beach. I would jump into the arms of any agent who could assure me the quick sale of anything--even my soul to the devil.⁹

So he and Miss Wood joined company in a league that was to become a very close relationship and a very successful one. In June of that year Miss Wood sent him a Rockefeller Fellowship application and twenty-five dollars from Story magazine which had bought one of his short stories, "The Field of Blue Children." He was grateful for this financial aid and was able now

⁹ Nelson, p. 43.

to have his typewriter repaired and continue his writing. When the money was gone, he returned to St. Louis with some money that his grandmother had sent him. In the autumn of 1939 he finished his new long play Battle of Angels. He believed that this was the best thing that he had written, but Miss Wood had no luck at all in interesting anyone in the work. In December, however, he received word from her that he had been awarded a Rockefeller Grant for a thousand dollars and that he was to come immediately to New York. Williams arrived in New York and enrolled at the New School for Social Research where Theresa Helburn and John Gassner were conducting a seminar in advanced playwriting. Attending the seminar for the spring session of 1940, Williams completed a new draft of Battle of Angels which Gassner proclaimed one of the finest new scripts he had seen in a number of years. As a director of the Theatre Guild, Gassner was urging them to take an option on the play. Not yet thirty years old, Tennessee Williams was going to have a play produced by the most venerable organization in the American theatre. He left the school for the summer and journeyed to New Mexico where he visited with Mrs. Lawrence and obtained her permission to begin a play about her husband. He finished the final revision of Battle of Angels at the same time and returned to New York to begin work with the Theatre Guild on its production.

The play opened in Boston at the Wilbur Theatre December 30, 1940, and as the performance got under way, it was apparent that something was wrong. At first the audience was shocked into silence. Then hisses and boos began and soon reached such volume that the actors' words were drowned out. Williams later recalled the tragic night with wonderment. "I never heard of an audience getting so infuriated."¹⁰ The reaction "made Miriam Hopkins who played the lead so mad she began to scream her lines above the hissing. Then they stamped their feet, and after a while most of them got up and left, banging their seats behind them."¹¹

The critics groped for words. Only one reviewer was favorable; he wrote that Williams' talent was "most interesting." The review in the Globe started "one of the most incredible dramas ever presented in Boston . . ." To another critic Val was a "half-wit living a defensive life against predatory women."¹² What Tennessee Williams had conceived as the "tragedy of a wandering poet who brought both salvation and destruction to a love-starved Southern woman, thereby incurring his own

¹⁰ Nancy M. Tischler, Tennessee Williams: Rebellious Puritan (New York, 1965), p. 82.

¹¹ Tischler, p. 82.

¹² Tischler, p. 83.

crucifixion, became to the watch and ward society indecent exposure of a hillbilly Lothario."¹³ The Boston City Council demanded that the play be closed till censored to meet Boston moral standards. The attack on the charge of morality was a complete surprise to Williams who said:

Why had I never dreamed that such struggles could strike many people as filthy and seem to them unfit for articulation? Oh, if I had written a play full of licentious wiggling in filmy costumes, replete with allusions to the latrine, a play that was built about some titillating and vulgarly ribald predicament in a bedroom--why then I would feel apprehensive about its moral valuation. However it seemed to me that if Battle of Angels was nothing else, it certainly was clean, it was certainly idealistic.¹⁴

The audience's reaction left Williams very resentful and the reception to what would remain his favorite work almost destroyed his desire to write. He was very discouraged and had lost the first battle in his constant struggle to achieve any form of security and recognition. The Theatre Guild gave him two hundred dollars and advised him to go off somewhere and rewrite the play, which he did. When he had finished it, he sent it back to the Theatre Guild; however, they had decided to abandon the play altogether, and this was a real blow to

¹³ Tischler, p. 83.

¹⁴ Tischler, p. 85.

its author. They did, however, express their belief that he could write and advised him to continue doing so and the next play might be accepted.

He once again returned to New Orleans and settled for the next two years in a slum area in the Vieux Carre. With the Rockefeller Grant and the small royalty from his one-acts, he began to revise what he considered his greatest work, Battle of Angels. While in New Orleans he wrote several short stories and one-acts depicting the people, the mood, and the scene of New Orleans. In this period he wrote the following works which in some cases were to be the basis for later works. The Lady of Larkspur Lotion pictures the Southern belle turned prostitute. Like Portrait of a Madonna, it is an early sketch of a completely degenerate Blanche DuBois. Lord Byron's Love Letter is the story of an old woman who, years before had had an illegitimate child by Lord Byron and still preserves his letters and the idealized memory of the romance that started in Greece. By displaying these letters to tourists she earns enough money to continue her meager existence in the Quarter. One Arm is about a one-armed male prostitute who solicited in this region before his arrest for the murder of a male client. In The Angel in the Alcove, a male artist rapes a young writer

who lives in the same rooming house. And Auto Da-Fe records the sick thoughts of a mamma's boy as he turns his pyromaniac fantasies into the mission of cleansing the corrupt Vieux Carre with fire.

His other stories and plays of this time are also of this same cast of the deranged, artistic, lonely, and mutilated--of prostitutes, homosexuals, nymphomaniacs, painters, writers, neurotics--the sick or frightened or confused or alone. New Orleans and his own situation appear to have given Williams an obsession for the outcast theme. Williams now journeyed to Mexico City and further work on Battle of Angels. He then heard from the New York Drama School that they wished to revive the play for Broadway. Williams rushed to New York, but by the time he arrived they had decided not to do the play. Williams spent the following winter in Greenwich Village where he worked as a waiter in a nightclub. This period in his life was meager and very unhappy. He did, however, collaborate with a friend, Donald Windham, on a comedy called You Touched Me! a play that was to open on Broadway in three years. This was 1943 and he took various jobs to stay alive, but when the Rockefeller Grant ran out he had to retreat to his grandparent's home. He later received notice from Miss Wood to come to New York where she had obtained a position with M.G.M. for him

paying two hundred and fifty dollars a week. He went to New York and then to Hollywood.

Williams was under a six-month contract to M.G.M. on the basis of his one-acters and Battle of Angels. He was assigned to write scenarios of pictures that he felt were junk, and when assigned to write his second scenario for a child star, he refused. After his unsuccessful attempts at writing several scripts, he submitted a synopsis for a film he referred to as the Gentleman Caller. Shortly after this he was told to pick up his pay and be on his way. With his pay he spent the rest of his contract time at the beach writing the Gentleman Caller, which he renamed The Glass Menagerie. At the same time he wrote a short story titled The Mattress in the Tomato Patch, which describes "his solidly contented landlady, the tanned athletes who roamed the beach and the house, and the richness of the sun-worshipping life--symbolized by the lushness of a bowlful of ripe tomatoes on his desk."¹⁵

This was a very happy period for Williams, for once he had enough money to survive on and a good idea for a new play. He sent it at once to Miss Wood, and she was so moved with it

¹⁵ Tischler, p. 92.

that she began at once to try to find the right person to direct this very delicate and moving creation. She sent it to Eddie Dowling, for she thought that he could produce it with the proper touch. The play is in most respects a play of his own life and family, but it was far more difficult for him to write than most would believe. The play opened in Chicago to rave reviews and cries from the audience for the author. The play proceeded to New York where it was greeted with anticipation. Once again the audience called for the author. The Glass Menagerie was given the Critics' Award on April 10, 1945 and ran for nearly two years on Broadway. Williams was, however, not convinced that he could write any succeeding plays that would win such acclaim. In fact, some critics suggested that the play's success was due to the actors and director rather than the talent of the playwright.

As his income began to rise, Williams signed fifty per cent of his earnings over to his mother. He then sold the play to Warner Brothers for the movie version. So at last Williams seems to have found real success.

With the success of The Glass Menagerie, Williams found himself with more friends and admirers than he knew existed; he was besieged by reporters and columnists, and he found

himself in a sophisticated New York hotel, living on room service and adulation. Williams hated this fake life--this life of pretense. With The Glass Menagerie established, Donald Winham immediately set about preparing their collaboration of You Touched Me! for a Broadway opening. It was almost with a sense of relief that he entered the hospital for the fourth time in five years to have another eye operation. He had a problem with cataracts and the operation like the three preceding, was only partially successful. But the escape from the captive life that he had been living was welcomed by the author. The run of You Touched Me! proved to be a short one of a few months. Williams did not stay in New York to watch it close; he journeyed to Mexico and Texas working alternately on The Poker Night and Summer and Smoke. Just prior to this time William Inge and Williams had become close friends. He now helped Inge by reading many of his plays and giving his thoughts on the creations. Williams' influence on William Inge was paralleled by the encouragement he gave to another young writer Carson McCullers. Carson was a well-known literary personality by the time she met Tennessee Williams. In the summer of 1946, Williams rented a cottage on Nantucket Island where he hoped to spend the summer com-

pleting Summer and Smoke. But in June he once again felt that he was going to die of a heart attack before the end of the summer. This idea had plagued him since his illness at the age of five. In a state of panic he wrote to Carson McCullers and asked her to keep him company. She accepted his invitation and spent the summer as his guest. He wrote Summer and Smoke and she began her first play The Member of the Wedding. By the autumn of 1946 Summer and Smoke was completed but open to revision. Williams took it to Margo Jones who was very impressed with it and set to produce it the following summer in her Dallas arena theatre.

In the early months of 1947 he went to Key West with his grandfather where he hoped to finish the second play. His grandmother had died of cancer in 1943, and once again one of the few members of his family whom he loved and held dear was removed from him. After her death he spent a great deal of time with his grandfather, determined to show his grandfather the affection and attention he was never able to express to his grandmother.

In Key West Williams completely rewrote The Poker Night in a month and sent it to Audrey Wood who read it in February of 1947 and was overwhelmed by it. Miss Wood arranged for

Irene Selznick to meet Williams, for she hoped that Mrs. Selznick would produce the play for Williams.

Williams then returned to New York to be present for the casting and to revise Summer and Smoke for production by Margo Jones. Elia Kazan was signed as director of The Poker Night. The parts of the two leading female protagonists, Blanche DuBois and her sister Stella, went to Jessica Tandy and Kim Hunter; Karl Malden was chosen to portray Blanche's timid suitor, Harold Mitchell; and a young actor named Marlon Brando was chosen for the role of the virile and brutish Stanley Kowalski. Prior to the opening rehearsals, Williams changed the name of the play to A Streetcar Named Desire.

With the opening of The Glass Menagerie on March 31, 1945, Tennessee Williams was acclaimed as a successful playwright. Not until the opening of A Streetcar Named Desire on December 3, 1947, did Williams truly reach success. He was from this time forward one of the country's leading playwrights, and his life as well as his works became public record. Since that time he has averaged a play every two years. The majority of his plays have been financially successful and most of them have been well received by the critics. The plays in the order of their production on Broadway are Summer and Smoke, 1948,

Rose Tattoo, 1951, Camino Real, 1953, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, 1955, Orpheus Descending, 1957, Suddenly Last Summer, 1958, Sweet Bird of Youth, 1959, Period of Adjustment, 1960, The Night of the Iguana, 1961, and The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Any More, 1963. His greatest commercial and critical successes have been The Glass Menagerie, A Streetcar Named Desire, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, and The Night of the Iguana. These plays not only had the longest runs, but they all received the Drama Critics Circle Award and two of them, A Streetcar Named Desire and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, were given the Pulitzer Prize.

Williams is still a relatively young man, so it remains to be seen how many more successes he will have. No matter what his further contributions, however, he will always hold a very significant position in American drama.

THEMATIC MATERIAL

A Streetcar Named Desire opened in New York on December 3, 1947, at the Barrymore Theatre to rave reviews and enormous popular acclaim. Brooks Atkinson wrote in his review, "Almost unbearably tragic." He commented on the audience reaction, "Profoundly moved. . . . For they have been sitting all evening in the presence of truth, and that is a rare and wonderful experience. Since Blanche is created on the stage as a distinct individual, experiences identical with hers can never be repeated. She and the play, that is woven about her, are unique."¹⁶

Joseph Wood Krutch wrote, "In spite of the sensational quality of the story the author's perceptions remain subtle and delicate and he is amazingly aware of nuances even in situations where nuance might seem to be inevitably obliterated by violence. . . . His plays will be immediately recognizable by their familiar themes and a sensibility as unique as that of a lyric poet."¹⁷

This was not the first time Williams had received great

¹⁶ Signi Falk, *Tennessee Williams* (New York, 1961), p. 89-90.

¹⁷ Falk, p. 90.

acclaim however, for he was not a new figure in the theatrical world. He had spent a long and arduous apprenticeship in the theatre. Like Moliere, he learned his craft away from the influences of the commercial theatre. He began his theatrical career with a group called "The Mummers" of St. Louis, Missouri. Williams said of his experience with this group:

The Mummers of St. Louis were my professional youth. They were the disorderly theatre group of St. Louis, standing socially, if not also artistically, opposite to the usual little theatre group . . .

Dynamism was what The Mummers had, and for about five years--roughly from about 1935 to 1940--they burned like one of Miss Millay's improvident little candles--and then expired. Yes, there was about them that kind of excessive romanticism which is the best and purest part of life.

They put on bad shows sometimes, but they never put on a show that didn't deliver a punch to the solar plexus, maybe not in the first act, maybe not in the second, but always at last a good hard punch was delivered, and it made a difference in the lives of the spectators that they had come to that place and seen that show.¹⁸

It was during the thirties that Williams began to experiment seriously with his idea of dramatic form. The short plays of the series 27 Wagons Full of Cotton and American Blues

¹⁸ Esther Merle Jackson, The Broken World of Tennessee Williams (Madison & Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1965), p. xiv.

were his early experimentations, but they are indications of what was to come in later years. Williams returned to many of his early works for the basis of his later creations. Many of his longer works are combinations of short stories and poetic themes. Williams suggests that each of his plays represents, "a glimpse of reality, a momentary image drawn out of the flux."¹⁹ Williams writes of his continuing effort to record his changing vision, "A play is never old until you stop working on it."²⁰

Before the acclaim accorded A Streetcar Named Desire, Williams had another major success with The Glass Menagerie, which opened in 1945.

The question of what Tennessee Williams is attempting to say in A Streetcar Named Desire and the form that he uses to achieve his purpose is the question that is to be considered in the following paragraphs. When asked what his plays mean and what they are about, Williams retorts, "They are about life."²¹

¹⁹ Jackson, p. xvi.

²⁰ Jackson, p. xvi.

²¹ Jackson, p. xvi.

In a seminar on Camino Real in Bochum, Germany, in 1953, the scholars at this meeting identified Williams' linguistic structure as, "expressionist in kind, but his form has been clothed in symbolic contents which are specifically related to the American imagination."²²

For Williams, "the play is an ordered progression of concrete images, images which together give sensible shape to what he calls the lyric moment."²³ Williams himself describes the lyric moment in this way:

In a play time is arrested in the sense of being confined by a sort of legerdemain, events are made to remain events, rather than being reduced so quickly to mere occurrences. The audience can sit back in a comforting dusk to watch a world which is flooded with light and in which emotion and action have a dimension and dignity that they would likewise have in real existence, if only the shattering intrusion of time could be locked out.²⁴

The concept of the race against time becomes a significant factor in most of Williams' plays. In A Streetcar Named Desire a major factor in Blanche's struggle is the lack of time. She has lost her beauty and is afraid that she is no longer able to turn the trick. With a little more time she might have been

²² Jackson, p. 54.

²³ Jackson, p. 39.

²⁴ Jackson, p. 34.

saved by Mitch. Her whole struggle is in fact an attempt to make time stand still for she wants to live in a time that has gone. The play is not only a struggle of two cultures but of two centuries with ways of life that are not compatible.

Williams goes on to describe his form as "personal lyricism." It is as he describes it:

The outcry of prisoner to prisoner from the cell in solitary where each is confined for the duration of his life. . . . It is a lonely idea, a lonely condition, so terrifying to think of that we usually don't. And so we talk to each other, write and wire each other, call each other short and long distance across land and sea, clasp hands with each other at meeting and parting, fight each other and even destroy each other because of this always somewhat thwarted effort to break through walls to each other. As a character in a play once said, "We're all of us sentenced to solitary confinement inside our own skins."²⁵

This entire concept is a reality in A Streetcar Named Desire. For the entire play is the outcry of one human being to another, the outcry of loneliness and need for love. Blanche comes to Stella for the help that she needs but is denied it. She then seeks to find security in Mitch but is denied this because of her past. For Blanche's life has been a struggle to find love, companionship, and security for her way of life. She is in turn destroyed because of her inability to break

²⁵ Jackson, p. 29.

through these walls that confine her.

Williams states on his concepts of life and man's struggle,

The great and only possible dignity of man lies in his power deliberately to choose certain moral values by which to live as steadfastly as if he, too, like a character in a play, were immured against the corrupting rush of time. Snatching the eternal out of the desperately fleeting is the great magic trick of human existence. As far as we know, as far as there exists any kind of empiric evidence, there is no way to bear the game of being against non-being in which non-being is the predestined victor on realistic levels.²⁶

Blanche has chosen moral values by which to live and is destroyed in defense of these values. She in reality has not lived up to her values but spiritually to herself she has always been true. In the play she says, "Never inside. I didn't lie in my heart. I was true as God in my heart to all of you--always--always."²⁷ In her world in her own way she never abandoned these values. Even when time had passed them by and new ways had taken their place she struggled to save them and the world that they had created.

Williams has created several myths in the development of

²⁶ Williams, The Rose Tattoo (New York, 1951), preface, p. viii-ix.

²⁷ Williams, Streetcar Named Desire (New York, 1953), p. 85.

his dramatic works. A symbolic representation of the life of man in our times is the myth which has served for the basis of many of his works. It is primarily the image of modern man caught between opposing logics--man in search of a means of reconciliation or salvation. This myth pictures man searching for a structure that will restore meaning to life and resolve the conflict of values that he finds in reality.

In his development of dramatic form he restores the theatre as a place of magic as opposed to the realism in which he found it. For Williams the theatre becomes a place of ritual as it was in the time of the Greeks. Williams' theatre becomes one of sacrificial ritual in which many times the major character is offered up to the gods. Blanche becomes a sacrifice to the world of barbaric realism. Through his rite of the theatre he shows man's search for salvation. Through the myth of the twentieth-century American that he has created he attempts to relate many individually-oriented perceptions to the larger question of the destiny of civilization. In his attempt to picture the twentieth-century American, he sets his plays in various regions of the South such as St. Louis, New Orleans, the Delta, Glorious Hill, Mississippi, and an assortment of Latin American towns. The setting, however, is not the im-

portant thing, for the battle field is, in reality, the modern American mind. Beneath the personal accounts, which form the basis of his dramas, there is a critical struggle between ways of life. In A Streetcar Named Desire, he centers this struggle in the school teacher, Blanche, with her talk of poetry and art, and the laborer, Kowalski, with his life of animal joys.

Blanche describes her antagonist in these terms:

He acts like an animal, has an animal's habits!
 Eats like one, moves like one, talks like one!
 There's even something--subhuman--something not quite to the stage of humanity yet! Yes, something ape-like about him, like one of those pictures I've seen in anthropological studies! Thousands and thousands of years have passed him right by, and there he is--Stanley Kowalski--survivor of the stone age! Bearing the raw meat home from the kill in the jungle! . . . Maybe we are a long way from being made in God's image, but Stella--my sister--there has been some progress since then! Such things as art as poetry and music--such kinds of new light have come into the world since then! In some kinds of people some tenderer feelings have had some little beginning! That we have got to make grow! and cling to, and hold as our flag! In this dark march to whatever it is we're approaching . . . Don't--don't hang back with the brutes!²⁸

One of the most controversial aspects of the drama of Tennessee Williams is the anti-heroic protagonist as an image of man. Williams tends to reject the Aristotelian concept of

²⁸ Williams, Streetcar, p. 50-51.

the protagonist and to replace it with an anti-hero. The anti-hero is the personification of the humanity neither good, knowledgeable, nor courageous. In A Streetcar Named Desire we find that Blanche is suffering because of her own transgressions. She is the personification of the anti-heroic image of man because of her lack of understanding that killed her young husband and her inability to maintain her values in the real world. This is the inner conflict--the conflict that comes to life in her struggle with Stanley. In A Streetcar Named Desire the playwright cautions the viewer against social regression, against the capitulation of humanity to the laws of the jungle. Williams pictures man struggling to maintain his position on the edge of a razor blade. He depicts man in a state of barbarism or about to fall or be dragged into this pit.

Williams sees in the human condition a constant threat of diminution.

It is this continual rush of time, so violent that it appears to be screaming, that deprives our actual lives of so much dignity and meaning and it is perhaps, more than anything else, the arrest of time which has taken place in a completed work of art that gives to certain plays their feeling of depth and significance.²⁹

²⁹ Jackson, p. 29-30.

In A Streetcar Named Desire Blanche is racing against time, for time has caused her beauty to fade, and her home, position, and dignity to be lost. As we find her, she is in a constant struggle with time to win Mitch and find security. Williams suggests that security is something unobtainable and that life is a struggle for security. This struggle is against time which will inevitably bring death.

Williams conceives drama in very individualized terms. Each of his plays takes the shape of a vision proceeding from the consciousness of the protagonist. In The Glass Menagerie, the play represents the memory of the hero, while in A Streetcar Named Desire the spectator observes the conflict as it appears in the mind of Blanche. Williams uses varied rationales to account for the angle of distortion in these visions. His interpretative devices--memory, insanity, intoxication, dreams and death are used by Williams to alienate the audience from the falseness of the stage so that they may share in a world of truth. In the prologue to The Glass Menagerie, the poet-figure explains to the audience:

Yes, I have tricks in my pocket, I have things, up my sleeve. But I am the opposite of a stage magician. He gives you illusion that has the appearance of truth. I give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion.³⁰

³⁰ Williams, The Glass Menagerie (New York, 1945), p. 5.

Perhaps the most familiar formation within Williams' linguistic structure is one that may be described as his psychological myth. In the drama of Williams, the psychological myth attempts to determine how, not why, life occurs. Williams' psychological myth may be traced to many sources. David Sievers, in his study of Freud on Broadway, gives this explanation to Williams' use of sexual psychology in A Streetcar Named Desire, "Williams arranges in compelling theatrical pattern the agonized sexual anxiety of a girl caught between id and ego-ideal."³¹ Mr. Sievers believes that this sexual anxiety is representative of many problems or conflicts within the character. In Blanche her sexual desire is used in a vain attempt to find security and relieve the loneliness and despair that fills her world. Williams follows Freud's concepts in establishing human personality in its animal origins. For both, sex is the symbol of being. As Blanche says, "The opposite of death is desire."³² Sexual desire then for Williams is an expression of life and proof that death has not won out.

In each of his plays Williams follows a general pattern

³¹ Jackson, p. 61.

³² Williams, Streetcar, p. 86.

of image-making. Each of his plays represents an attempt to give exposition to poetic vision. Each of his plays is composed of symbolic figures which become the play's lyric components. In A Streetcar Named Desire, Williams creates symbols which have progressive insanity as their rational. The symbol of the polka music that was playing at the time of her young husband's death is a major symbolic instrument in the progression of Blanche's insanity. Williams uses insanity like intoxication and the dream as a kind of instrumentation for the organization and interpretation of experience. The insanity mechanism has advantages over the device of memory, especially for works which have tragic implications, for it suggests extremity in human circumstances. The question of insanity in A Streetcar Named Desire is, in this sense, an extension of a problem affecting earlier plays. The development of this theme however comes to full bloom with the creation of Blanche.

In her book The Broken World of Tennessee Williams, Esther Jackson writes that Williams sees man as the great sinner, the transgressor against moral law. Like St. Paul, Williams views human existence as a condition necessarily marked by unavoidable transgression. Williams depicts man as a creature in need of salvation, in search of a power such as

human love. It is obvious then that much of Christian theology, especially its progression of sin, suffering, guilt, punishment, and expiation appears throughout his works.

Williams prescribes a theological resolution for human suffering. He superimposes on his dark cycle of suffering a transcendent progression of love, sympathy, contrition, sacrifice, and understanding. Here we find the basis for the creation of Blanche. For all of the above conditions go to make up the intricate characteristics of this creation.

This is but a brief account of the development and meaning of the writing of Tennessee Williams and will serve as a background for the study of A Streetcar Named Desire.

In discussing the thematic material of A Streetcar Named Desire, one must discuss the character of Blanche DuBois, for she is the embodiment of the theme of the play. She is the personification of the thoughts and ideas of the playwright. To separate the character from the play destroys the play itself. As Blanche is the embodiment of the major theme of the play, so Stanley is necessary as the representation of that against which Blanche is struggling. Stella is that which they are both trying to control.

The story of Blanche DuBois evolved slowly before it crystallized in A Streetcar Named Desire. Battle of Angels, You Touched Me, The Glass Menagerie, and Summer and Smoke all show traces of Blanche DuBois in their heroines. Her development can also be traced to two early one-act plays. The first, written in 1939, The Lady of Larkspur Lotion, tells the story of a crumbling Southern ex-belle who vainly attempts to cling to respectability in a battered rooming house in New Orleans by fostering the illusion that she is awaiting dividends from her rubber plantation in Brazil. The second is titled Portrait of a Madonna and deals with an aged Southern spinster about to be taken from her rented room to an asylum. She has been suffering from the delusion that she is being raped by a young man that she had loved as a girl and lost because of her in-

ability to communicate her feelings to him. On the day she is to be taken to the asylum, she announces that she is going to bear his child, and, as the play closes, she is led away by the doctor, who treats her with kindness and gallantry. The earliest reflection of Blanche in Williams' writing is in a scene called Blanche's Chair in the Moon. It is a sketch of a woman sitting in the darkness before an open window through which the light of the moon streams in upon her. These works and characters all served as a basis for the creation of A Streetcar Named Desire.

A Streetcar Named Desire has a rather simple plot. The scene opens on the working class rent district in New Orleans where Blanche's younger sister, Stella, and her husband, Stanley, live. Blanche has just arrived by the Streetcar (Desire) and views the neighborhood with horror, in disbelief that her sister can be living in so "sordid" an area. Blanche and Stella were brought up on a beautiful old Southern plantation, mortgaged and decaying, but still diffusing the refined atmosphere of aristocracy. All that was beautiful in the society and way-of-life in the Old South is reflected in Blanche. She rejects all that is ugly in the world and creates for herself a world of what-ought-to-be. She at all times strives to protect and assert the self-image that she has created for herself.

This image of the Southern belle is that which brings her into conflict with Stanley. For Stanley is the type of person that controls the real world, which Blanche is unable to face. Blanche, delicate, sensitive, and artistic, offers nothing the Stanleys want in their world. The world of her choice is that of the tender and beautiful of the spirit and heart.

Blanche's story, and sometimes the theme of the play, is described as a search for protection. In wishing to marry Mitch, she seeks a "cleft in the rock of the world that I could hide in,"³³ and she also explains the beginning of her many affairs with men as a search for protection: . . . "After the death of Allan--intimacies was all I seemed able to fill my empty heart with . . . I think it was panic, just panic, that drove me from one to another, hunting for some protection."³⁴

A Streetcar Named Desire describes a triangle, the apex of which is Stella (star). She is the sister of Blanche, an impoverished Southern gentlewoman, and the wife of Stanley, a lusty barbarian of Polish immigrant descent. Stella has escaped her past at Belle Reve and has found happiness and satisfaction in the sexually rooted love of Stanley. Her life

³³ Williams, Streetcar, p. 85.

³⁴ Williams, Streetcar, p. 85.

with Stanley is content until Blanche reenters the picture.

Blanche enters, delicate as a moth and dressed in immaculate white, looking as if she were going to a garden party. Blanche, frail and neurotic, had stayed on at Belle Reve after Stella's escape. Blanche, after watching the plantation slip through the fingers of her male ancestors, was forced to watch the tubercular deaths of her mother and her other sister.

Although Blanche is the catalyst around whose visit the play revolves, Stella is the key figure. Her previously unconscious choice of Stanley's sexuality is now put on trial. Stella desperately tries to shield Blanche from Stanley as she struggles to equate her love for Blanche and her former values.

Stanley is pictured as the primitive hero, the epitome of the romantic admiration of the little man for the vigorous virility of a male hero. Stanley is the deification of sex, which Williams describes:

Animal joy in his being is implicit in all his movements and attitudes. Since earliest manhood, the center of his life has been pleasure with women, the giving and taking of it, not with weak indulgence, dependently, but with the power and pride of a richly feathered male bird among hens. Branching out from this complete and satisfying center are all the auxiliary channels of his life, such as his heartiness with men, his appreciation of rough humor, his love of good drink and food and games, his car, his radio, everything that is his, that bears his emblem of the gaudy seed-bearer. He sizes

up women at a glance with sexual classifications, crude images flashing into his mind and determining the way he smiles at them.³⁵

Stanley Kowalski makes his initial appearance in the play bearing a package of raw meat which he throws to his wife who cries out as to what he has thrown at her. Immediately we are presented with the image of a crude, animalistic man. But if Kowalski is a brute, he is not a fool, and he possesses an animal shrewdness and vitality.

Elia Kazan believes that the power of the play lies largely in its poignant theme, which Kazan expresses as "A message from the dark interior. This little twisted, pathetic, confused bit of light and culture puts out a cry. It is snuffed out by the crude forces of violence, and this cry is the play."³⁶ Williams is said to have summed up the theme with, "If we don't watch out, the apes will take over."³⁷

A Streetcar Named Desire pictures the Southern gentleman as the last representative of a dying culture. She is engaged in a struggle which she is too delicate and refined to

³⁵ Falk, p. 82.

³⁶ Elia Kazan, Directors on Directing, ed. Toby Cole & Helen Krich Chivoy (New York, 1963), p. 364.

³⁷ Nancy M. Tischler, Tennessee Williams: Rebellious Puritan (New York, 1961), p. 137.

withstand. The crudeness and decay that surrounds her, as represented by Stanley Kowalski, drives her to madness as the only salvation for her way of life.

Kazan says, "This play is a poetic tragedy. We are shown the final dissolution of a person of worth, who once had great potential, and who, even as she goes down, has worth exceeding that of the healthy, coarse-grained figures who kill her."³⁸ Kazan sees the play as a conflict between two civilizations-- "The dying aristocracy and the vital, modern, cynical democracy."³⁹

Blanche represents tradition and idealism, seeing herself as she would like to be, denying what she is, trying to appear special and different. Mr. Kazan says,

This image of herself cannot be accomplished in reality, certainly not in the South of our day and time, it is her effort and practice to accomplish it in fantasy. . . . The audience at the beginning should see her bad effect on Stella, want Stanley to tell her off. He does. He exposes her and then gradually, as they see how genuinely in pain, how actually desperate she is, how warm, tender and loving she can be (the Mitch story), how frightened with need she is--then they begin to go with her. They begin to realize that they are sitting in at the death of something extraordinary . . . colorful, varied, passionate, lost, witty, imaginative, of her own integrity

³⁸ Kazan, p. 365.

³⁹ Kazan, p. 365.

. . . and then they feel the tragedy.⁴⁰

The clash between Blanche and Stanley is inevitable, for they represent conflicting views of life. The struggle is really in the minds of the two and more so in the mind of Blanche in her struggle to maintain her position in the face of the over-powering odds of an animal world represented in Stanley.

The first clash between Blanche and Stanley arises over the loss of the plantation which he dreamed of owning. He suspects that she has squandered the property. He then tears into her trunk, which contains the last material possessions of Blanche and Belle Reve. His lack of taste for quality is shown as he throws from the trunk showy pieces of clothing and costume jewelry which he thinks are expensive. When he touches the love letters written by her dead husband, she shows her contempt for him and all he represents. She says that the touch of his hands contaminate them and that she will have to burn them. She also shows her sorrow and the effect that all of the things Stanley represents have had on her life when she tells of how she hurt her husband and protests that Stanley will not hurt her as she hurt him. Blanche goes on

⁴⁰ Kazan, p. 367.

to show the ever growing struggle of her way of life with that of Stanley's by stating that the plantation was lost because of the "epic fornications" of her ancestors. Blanche's un-stableness is also shown in this scene as she flirts with Stanley but always returns to her warped delusion of herself. Stanley is also given a clue as to how to get revenge at this time. For though Stanley is somewhat barbaric and crude he is quite clever, especially when it comes to protecting his home and his way of life.

The next major conflict comes in the third scene of act one. The scene opens with the famous poker party for which the play was originally titled. The scene calls for brilliant colors for the characters to represent coarse men at their physical prime--men as powerful as primary colors.

In her scenes with Mitch, Blanche reveals more of her true self than at any other time. She admits to him of her sorrow and of her need to cover up ugly truth as she does symbolically by covering the naked light bulb. She is afraid of what the light of truth would reveal if it were left uncovered-to touch upon her. In this scene the audience sees the kind of world that Blanche wants and must have for survival. Through the talk of poetry and art, the placing of the lantern over the lights, and the playing of music, she

creates a world in which she can survive. She states, "We have created an enchantment" and later in the play when Mitch confronts her with the truth about herself she says, "I don't want realism, I want magic. Yes, yes, magic! I try to give that to people. I do misrepresent things to them. I don't tell the truth, I tell what ought to be the truth. And if that's a sin, then let me be damned for it!"⁴¹

Stanley breaks the enchantment that is created and heightens the conflict of the two worlds by destroying the radio that has helped to create the atmosphere that Blanche must have. Stanley finishes his show of animal force by striking out against Stella and then calling for her as a wolf does his mate. Stella has accepted this way of life and being perfectly contented with it, comes back to him. She finds complete fulfillment in their sexually oriented life. Blanche once again reveals herself to Mitch as in need by saying, "There's so much confusion in the world. Thank you for being so kind! I need kindness now."⁴² She also reveals her abhorrence of violence.

The following scene reveals that Stella is the treasure

⁴¹ Williams, Streetcar, p. 84.

⁴² Williams, Streetcar, p. 43.

that is sought by both Blanche and Stanley, for they are both working to win her to their side. Blanche attempts to turn Stella against Stanley by describing him as an ape, survivor of the stone age. Stanley, however, overhears these comments and is more than ever determined to rid himself and his home of the plague with which Blanche has infested their lives. Stanley begins his revenge as he questions Blanche about a man named Shaw and the hotel Flamingo and the town of Laurel. Stanley strikes home as is revealed by Blanche in later scenes. Blanche attempts to reveal her plight to Stella but she veils it all in half-truths. Her sentimentally expressed lines anticipate the lurid confession which comes later. She explains that soft people have to seek the favor of hard ones, have to play a seductive role, be soft, resort to magic to pay for a night's lodging. She explains that she has been running from one shelter to another trying to escape the storm, that she has depended on men's lovemaking to give her a sense of existence. To Stella, whose approach to sex is frank and simple, this talk is only morbid.

Blanche, realizing that she can not win over Stella, turns to Mitch as her only hope of salvation. She sees in him an opportunity. She says, "I want to rest." I want to breathe

quietly again! Yes--I want Mitch. I want him very badly! Just think! If it happens! I can leave here and not be anyone's problem. . . ."43 Blanche who flirted so indecently with Stanley, who exhibited herself before the poker players, who called a strange young man collecting for papers a young Arabian prince and kissed him softly on the mouth, plays as prim and coy with Mitch as if she were sixteen and pure. At the same time, this Southern gentlewoman sets the scene as if for a seduction, indicating perhaps that she is slightly confused. And then, a remark from Mitch about loneliness brings her confession about her early marriage and the tragic episode in which she discovers he is a homosexual and he kills himself. This confession which Blanche makes to Mitch reveals the major theme of the play, that of loneliness and the search for something to fill her empty heart. She also reveals that Allan shot himself because she expressed her disgust for him. We see that she feels responsible for this. Even in her early years she was in conflict with truth. It had proved to be more than she could bear when the head of the ugly world of truth itself had invaded her world of art and beauty, trying to destroy a way of life that she had created for herself. Mitch, lonely and seeking love, asks, "You need somebody. And I need

somebody, too. Could it be you and me Blanche?"⁴⁴ When at last she seems to have found a resting place, someone that she can cling to, Stanley re-enters the picture with greater determination than ever to destroy her. Stanley has discovered the truth of Blanche's past and hastily repeats the information to Mitch and Stella, destroying Blanche's last hope for survival in the world of reality. Stanley has also bought a bus ticket back to Laurel, which in reality is death itself for she can not return there. She then moves deeper into her dream world in order to save and protect herself.

Mitch appears to confront her with all the accusations of which he has learned and demands to see her in the light of truth and reality. Still hoping to win Mitch she confesses all to him. She tells the hideous story of her degradation, her intimacies with strangers after her husband's death, the affair with the seventeen-year-old boy, and her dismissal from her teaching job. She needs Mitch, she says, as a refuge from the world. She tells him of the endless acquaintances she has had with the dying. She confesses another episode from her past, that of the army camp and her many gentlemen callers from the camp. Mitch is, however, tied to his mother and his one op-

⁴⁴ Williams, Streetcar, p. 68.

portunity for sexual happiness is destroyed by the fact that Blanche, as he puts it, is not clean enough to bring into the house with his mother. Once Blanche has confessed her real background, he decides to take what he has been missing all summer. She, however, drives him from the house by yelling fire. The scene is loaded with symbolic elements. A Mexican woman is peddling tin flowers, the kind displayed at funerals, and calling in Spanish that she is selling flowers for the dead. It is against the background of the old woman's cries that Blanche insists that she never lied in her heart. Her legacy has been death, all the hideous dying that she faced alone as Belle Reve slipped from her hands. The opposite of death, as stated by Blanche herself, is desire.

Stanley returns from the hospital to find Blanche dressed in fine feathers and with a new story as to what her future plans are. She has now received a wire from her one-time sweetheart. She plays the role of the aristocrat, the woman of refinement and beautiful spirit and refers to Mitch and Stanley as swine. Stanley, angered by her superior attitude, attacks her, calling her a liar and challenging her to face the facts, to look at herself in a rag-picker's outfit, and to recall that she may think herself as a queen but she has been swilling down his liquor. The speech gives an interesting

contrast between the blunt realist, who sees the powder and perfume and the paper lanterns over the light bulb for what they are, and the romantic dreamer, who lives in her imagination.

The scene moves to a fever pitch and becomes the most exciting and terrifying scene in the entire play. Blanche becomes the trapped animal with nowhere to go--no place to hide. The frantic phone calls are used to show her hysterical state of mind and desperation in her position. Stanley re-enters the scene in the pajamas he wore on his wedding night. As Blanche tries for one last attempt at escape she grabs a bottle and breaks it to protect herself. The pitch of the scene increases as Stanley moves in and the music of the jazz piano begins. Stanley forces her to drop the bottle and with these dramatic words "Drop that bottle top! Drop it! We've had this date with each other from the beginning!"⁴⁵ he carries her to the bed. Blanche suffers her final degradation and is forced completely into her imaginative world. This act of injustice is the breaking point and the death of her attempt to survive in a world of brutal reality.

In the final scene which occurs weeks later, Blanche now

⁴⁵ Williams, Streetcar, p. 94.

obviously deranged dresses to leave as if she were going to dinner with Shep Huntleigh. She recognizes that the doctor is not the man she was expecting and goes into a fit of panic. The doctor with his kindness is able to soothe her and as she leaves clinging to his arm she says, "Whoever you are I have always depended on the kindness of strangers."⁴⁶ Broken by her experience in the real world, she escapes completely into her own world and she does so like an aristocrat.

⁴⁶ Williams, Streetcar, p. 102-103.

INTERPRETATION AND CHARACTER MATERIAL

In this thesis production of A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams the theme of class conflict was to be the major theme of the production. This theme of clash of two social classes became the pivotal point around which the entire production would revolve. The intention of the director then was to structure the acting and development of each scene so as to stress this central theme. The clear development of the major theme could be achieved only if the minor themes that are prevalent within the play were properly pointed up to create that theme. These minor themes are found within the character of Blanche and are brought to the forefront by her struggle with Stanley.

The minor theme of loneliness is shown to its greatest extent in the relationship of Blanche and Mitch. Both are individuals desperately attempting to achieve some kind of meaningful human communication and contact, but because of their respective characters and the situation in which they find themselves, are unable to succeed. Blanche's search for love and security is what has led her into the life that fills her past. This search for security has been for protection of a way of life that is being crushed by the world. Blanche sees

herself as something special and her way of life as superior to that of the rest of society; however, this can not be maintained without protection and security supplied by someone else. Kazan states that this is what makes the play universal.

Blanche's special relation to all women is that she is at that critical point where the one thing above all else that she is dependent on: her attraction for men, is beginning to go. Blanche is like all women, dependent on a man looking for one to hang onto: only more so.⁴⁷

Blanche's affairs with many men have been an attempt, as she states, to fill her empty heart.

This has been Blanche's search since the death of her young husband. This one concept is that which has brought her to the situation in which she now finds herself. For she has now reached the end of the line by coming to her sister's home as a last hope of refuge.

More than any other aspect in the character of Blanche, loneliness is the one that causes her to suffer the countless attacks that under any other circumstances she would never have endured. This aspect within the character and play provides the motivation that must exist as the reason that keeps her from fleeing. Without this the production would pose many problems, for the audience would question her motivation for

⁴⁷ Elia Kazan, Directors on Directing (New York, 1963), p. 370.

being here and for staying. This element must then be brought immediately to light so that there will be no questions about her remaining. This was done by stressing in Act I the build up and emphasis of Blanche's speech:

. . . I guess you're hoping I'll say I'll put up at a hotel, but I'm not going to put up at a hotel. I want to be near you, Stella: I've got to be with people, I can't be alone! Because-- as you must have noticed--I'm not very well!⁴⁸

In the speech that follows concerning her battle with the death that surrounded her, she also reveals her state of loneliness, for no condition could contain greater aloneness than that in which one is surrounded only by death. In this speech as well Blanche seems to suggest that Stella owes her help for all that suffering that she had to face alone, while Stella found love and security in her Polack.

Mitch's loneliness, like Blanche's, began with the loss of someone he loved. He attempts to find fulfillment in remaining with his mother, but this is not enough. In Blanche he finds his one hope of salvation as she finds the same in him. This search for love and the security that it alone can bring gives vivid expression to the theme of loneliness.

A second and very significant minor theme is that of

⁴⁸ Williams, Streetcar, p. 13-14.

sexual conflict. This theme is pointed up primarily in the struggle between the romanticised version of sex and love as viewed by Blanche and that of the animalistic and overpowering position that it plays in the lives of Stanley and Stella. This theme more than any of the others points to the major theme of class conflict, for the role of sex in the life of man is a major area of conflict in the struggle of the two cultures. This conflict of sexual concepts is also brought to light in the very struggle that exists within Blanche herself. Blanche will not face her physical or sensual side. She thinks of sex and calls it "brutal desire." Although she gives in to this aspect of her make up in her attempt to escape loneliness, she can not relegate herself to this type of existence, and for her it is a sin. She, however, is able to separate the sins that she commits from her refined and cultured self. The picture that she holds of herself as the lady on a pedestal is never damaged by the moments of brutal desire. As she states, she has always been true to herself in her heart. She has never done anything which would in any way discolor her image of herself as a pure and virginal lady. This conflict within the personality of Blanche is given expression several times throughout the play--the undressing in the doorway so that she can be observed by the men at the poker party, the flirting

with Stanley, the use of French as she asks Mitch to come to bed with her, and more than any other time, the incident with the news boy. In this particular scene she shows for the first time completely the real strength of her sexual desire as she attempts to subdue the young man. She states that she must be good and keep her hands off children. The contrast is most strongly shown as the scene moves from this revelation of sexual need to the entrance of Mitch and her demand that he be a galland cavalier and bow to her before he presents the bouquet of flowers. The contrast is further revealed in the physical attributes of the young paper boy and that of the older and much less physically attractive Mitch. The selection of a newsboy who creates in the minds of the audience a figure that could be a prince out of the Arabian knights as Blanche calls him helps to enhance this contrast. The sexual conflict is further given emphasis by the inadequacies of the young poet husband. Blanche was not able to satisfy his need or he hers. The death of the young man was in some respect the result of this inability to fullfill the needs of each other or at least to keep their relationship on a level that could survive in the romanticized poetic world of which Blanche dreamed. This struggle for sexual freedom which dominates the entire play is a major fac-

tor in the development of the major theme of class struggle, for this freedom is a factor which dominates the new society and is a major pillar on which it rests. Whereas the limited sexuality is the central petal of the rosy society of which Blanche is the lone survivor. The question is posed: Will this be a world dominated by a society in which sex satisfaction is the dominant factor or one that is dominated by beauty and culture?

The secondary theme which must be dealt with in the light of the major theme of class conflict is that of illusion and reality. Blanche is the personification of an illusionary world which she has created--not just a world of the past but a past as she chooses to remember it. Even the story of her husband's death is distorted to create for her a special world to show that she is better than that which surrounds her. This illusionary world is constantly tinged with reality although she is not able to face the reality of her own promiscuity, alcoholism, and sins that she has committed. Thus, she creates a fantasy world for herself. Whenever Blanche is faced with reality that she will not accept, she retreats into her dream world. In the scenes with both Stanley and Mitch whenever a subject which she can not face is suggested, she simply with-

draws into her own world.

Stanley is the representative of reality, and as the play develops he is the figure that forces Blanche to face reality, and in doing so he causes her complete retreat into her world of fantasy. In her world Blanche finds seclusion from death, violence, sex, loss of Belle Reve, and the abuses of the world. Stanley represents a world of sex, drink, poker games--all that suggests crudeness and barbarism. Stanley destroys her ability to maintain her world of fantasy in the midst of reality by questioning her about her marriage and the loss of Belle Reve. He further destroys her one chance for survival by revealing her sordid past to Mitch. His final act of sexual degradation is the crushing blow that completes her retreat into a world of fantasy within her mind.

The production was directed with the intention of portraying a conflict within the actual presentation itself. Precisely, a style of fantasy and extreme reality was the intention of the director by creating within some scenes a reality of life to point of stark realism, whereas in the scenes of fantasy creating a fairy-tale mood of illusion. This was attempted by using, within the scenes of reality with Stanley, every aspect of the crude world that he represents to

the extreme. For example, in the card scene an illusion of reality that gave to the play almost unbearable crudeness was accomplished by the use of vulgar and gutteral language and actions on the part of the card players. The scene is further stressed by the use of almost animal movements and physical positions of the four men. In contrast all that which is beautiful and of worth in the character of Blanche and that which she represents is shown. The stress within the scenes was structured in such a way as to create hopefully a distaste for the world of reality as represented by Stanley with the brutality of his destruction of all that is good within Blanche, yet picture for the audience the right in Stanley's fight to save himself and his home.

The play itself is structured and was directed in such a way as to create an atmosphere of dislike for Blanche at the beginning and an attitude of mutual companionship with all that Stanley represents. This was accomplished by making Blanche appear a domineering, cold, affected, overdressed, superior, excessive-drinking individual that would immediately alienate the audience and cause them to favor Stanley. This atmosphere was created by exaggeration of the many weaknesses found within the character of Blanche. The over use of heavy smoking and drinking was given even further emphasis by the use of an ex-

tended period of time in the beginning of the play. Blanche was also directed to overplay all her dominant scenes, such as the many scenes when she treats Stella as a slave and those in which she attacks her. Her extreme nervous state was given added stress in the opening of the play with her rebuking of Eunice who had only attempted to make her feel welcome in the rather strange surroundings. The characteristic of superiority that is a dominant factor in Blanche was stressed in her reactions to the crude surroundings in which she finds herself. As the play progresses the desire was to have the audience sway from the feeling of dislike and distrust of Blanche to one of sympathy and hope that she would find a place of refuge. This was attempted by giving the greatest amount of sincerity to the scenes in which she reveals the tragedies of her past. The audience must see the beauty and refinement in her dream world and desire along with her a world of such beauty. In the entire play Blanche must be the center of each scene and the audience must follow her every action and with the proper development she should be able to draw them to her so that they experience the destruction of a noble character of great worth.

This play above all in the director's opinion is a mood play. An atmosphere of a low, earthy, brassy, crude and over-

indulgent environment must be created from the very opening. By the use of loud voices and colors, extreme action, and bright lights this mood was portrayed to create a contrast with the entrance of Blanche. The intent was to so contrast the bright setting and opening atmosphere with that soft delicacy of Blanche so that upon her entrance she would be the object of all attention. She has been suggested as a moth, a butterfly, and this was the desired effect of this production. She says of herself " . . . Soft people, soft people have got to shimmer and glow. They've got to put on soft colors, the colors of butterfly wings and put a paper lantern over the light . . ."⁴⁹ This was not only a major factor in the development of the character of Blanche but in the costuming of this character. The use of soft flowing pastel garments aided in the creation once again of an atmosphere of softness and delicacy and a character out of the Southern plantation tradition. This was used once again to give an extreme contrast between Blanche and Stanley. He and his group were then costumed in strong dark colors to create a bright, crude and flashy picture. Stanley has been described as the gaudy seed bearer, and gaudy was the intent of characterization and costuming. The peacock strutting be-

⁴⁹ Williams, Streetcar, p. 56.

fore his mate in a display of all that should interest her formed the basis for the development of the character of Stanley. Since he is the center of his world, all that exists revolves around him. His wife, his job, his friends--all exist for his pleasure and manipulation, thus when this role is challenged by Blanche, all should be aware that he will fight to the death to maintain his position. For him the destruction of another human being who challenges him is a necessity in a way of life that is real and right.

Stanley is one of the new breed; even his name, Kowalski, suggests a roughness and crudeness. In this production every attempt was made to create a personality that rebukes all that is cultivated, all that seems to represent the advancement of man from the cave years. The prominence of not only crude language but crude actions was the basic criterion for the development of the character along with equipping him with a walk and mode of action that showed a pride in himself and lack of any physical gesture or pose that would in any way demonstrate refinement. The constant use of the dangling cigarettes, the pose with feet on chairs and table, the constant removal of all unnecessary clothing to reveal as much of the cave man body as possible, and the constant use of a loud and commanding

voice emits the image of this new breed. These characteristics were once again stressed for the effect of contrast between the two characters as well as the contrast between the two ways of life.

Within the play there are even for Stanley moments of tenderness. The most outstanding scene is in act one toward the end of scene three where he demands that Stella return to him. His embrace, kneeling, the softness of his voice, the tenderness of the caress and the carrying of her to the bed create for him an aspect of tenderness that has not been revealed before. There are several instances in which he shows a tenderness and love for Stella that creates a feeling of sympathy for him. Even this crude and barbarous being has within himself a bit of softness. These scenes were enriched by not only tender and loving words but through the use of physical actions and positions on the part of Stanley and Stella which furthered the desired mood. These actions were, however, always undergirded with the end result of sexual activity. Although this is the basis for all that Stanley and Stella seem to share, it is in contrast with the lack of emotional security that is found in Blanche. Stella and Stanley have found security and satisfaction in their relationship no matter how base it may be. Blanche's reaction to this situation--one of apparent disbelief and fear for Stella--is based on the fact that she has not been

able to lower her standards and accept this type of situation as a way of life for herself. She needs to rest, to settle down, but even in her last hope, Mitch, she will not use sexual activity to capture him and thereby save herself from ultimate destruction. All of this is used to point up the frantic situation in which Blanche finds herself and to show that she can not long survive in this environment.

In the presentation and direction of the play the intention was to reveal to the audience the facade that Blanche has created for herself. This was attempted by creating for Blanche a two-faced character. In the presence of Stella the Southern accent, genteel manners, and affected ways of the Southern belle were there only to convince Stella that she was the same pure and refined lady of the South. But in her scenes with Mitch, we worked to intensify her refinement, Southern speech, affected mannerism, and all genteel qualities. With him she was back on the plantation being courted by her gallant Southern gentleman. In the scenes with Stanley, because of fright, she often times became more earthy than at any other time. In her struggle with him, she reveals bits of her past experience simply through her actions. She understood Stanley better than Stella and how to get what she wanted from him. Rather than lose her place of refuge she would flirt with him and tempt him and speak and

act on his level if need be.

In the development of the character of Stella the object once again was to create a contrast with that of the character of Blanche, to show that although they had been raised under the same circumstances Stella has been able to free herself from the old world and find happiness in a world that demands little from her. She has found in the sexually-oriented world of her husband a satisfaction and tranquility in which she can survive. She must, however, be a character in which a struggle can be created as she becomes the goal of attention for both Stanley and Blanche. Although the attempt was to make Stella tranquil and slow in comparison to Blanche, it was also desired that we be able to see the inner conflict and struggle as she is torn between Stanley and Blanche. This struggle is shown within Stella by development of movement and action that showed some indecision on her part whenever a choice between the forces was demanded; however, the choice must always be that which Stanley represents if Stella is to save herself from the position in which Blanche now finds herself. Stella also represents a possibility of survival for Blanche. If she can just compromise with forces of Stanley's world, she might be saved. This glimmer of hope, however, is very small and the refusal of Stella to allow Blanche to shift for herself dooms this pos-

sibility. This concept was developed and shown through the constant servile position that Stella takes to Blanche. She waits on her every whim and thereby maintains Blanche's position as a lady that will never be able to accept a lower station. Stella's character was constructed around these major ideas and implemented by the use of a slow and somewhat hesitant manner. Her costumes were selected so as to picture a woman who had little concern about her appearance and was not concerned with show but only with the attention of her husband. She was meant to show that she had found contentment in her expression of physical love for Stanley and her complete dependence upon him for life itself.

Harold Mitchell is most important in the play as the last hope for the salvation of Blanche. They are much alike in many ways, for they both lack the love and security that each of them needs. They are lonely beyond measure and it seems that in each other they can find the fulfillment of their need. Mitch as directed was to be a contrast with Stanley. He was to be soft and tender with respect for the finer things in life. Life with mother had created in him a compassion for others and an insight into personality that Stanley lacked. He could see the need that Blanche possessed and sympathize

with her, for his need was as great as her own. The intention was that Mitch also should be slow moving in speech and action, be a ready receiver for the romanticized version of Blanche's past and a willing actor in the romantic life that she creates. Mitch, like Stella, must also show an inner conflict as he battles between the stories that he has learned from Stanley and his desire to have Blanche. This inner struggle must carry over into the scene in which he denounces her, but in which he hopes above all else that she will be able to convince him of her purity so that he can bring her into the house with his mother. She confesses all to him, but really in a sense this is not what he wants, for it she is all that he has learned he can never possess her in marriage. In this character as in all within the play the object of contrast is of great importance. The struggle that possesses Mitch is not dead even in the last scene of the play, for he attacks Stanley as the representative of the forces that have caused the death of Blanche. But Mitch can only live by the way of life in which he has been conceived.

The entire play was directed and produced around the creation of a mood of contrast and conflict, to present a picture of a wandering soul of beauty in a last desperate struggle to save itself from being crushed by all that is

crude and meaningless in the world.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE III

PRODUCTION
SET



EXPLANATION OF PLATE IV
Eunice, Woman, and Blanche

Plate I



EXPLANATION OF PLATE V

Pablo, Mitch, Stanley and Steve

FLAVOR



EXPLANATION OF PLATE VI

Stanley and Stella

PLATE VI



EXPLANATION OF PLATE VII

Blanche and Collector

PLATE VII



EXPLANATION OF PLATE VIII

Stanley and Stella

DEAD WIFE



EXPLANATION OF PLATE IX

Stanley and Blanche



SETTING

Description

The setting for A Streetcar Named Desire was a challenge to construct within the confines of the Purple Masque Theatre. Although the theatre posed a few problems we developed a set which met our needs in almost every way. The squalid dwelling of the Kowalskis must be far more than squalid, however, should only be suggestive and not use extreme realism. It, like the play itself, should create an illusion. It should, however, contribute greatly to the mood of the presentation.

The original set that is called for requires a scrim back wall and a spiral stair case leading to the Hubbells. These two accessories were impossible in our theatre and were eliminated. This, however, did not in any way cause the presentation to suffer. In place of the spiral stair case a small level of three steps was devised which led to the entrance of the Hubbell apartment which was positioned directly behind that of the Kowalskis. These few steps gave levels for the actors to work from and created a feeling of separation of the two dwellings.

The stage was then divided into three areas consisting of a porch or landing area directly in front of the door to

the Hubbell apartment and leading to the Kowalski apartment. Following the idea of suggestion in setting only a door post with a door bell was used to give the illusion of an entrance to the Kowalski kitchen.

The second area was the Kowalski kitchen which contained several pieces of furniture. The center of the room contained a small table and three chairs. There were also a kitchen sink and wooden icebox in the stage left corner of the room. In the stage right corner of the room was a folded roll-away bed on which Blanche was to sleep.

The third area, which is the bedroom, is divided from the rest of the set by a raised level. The room contained an iron bed along the upstage wall and at the stage right end of this bed was the entrance to the bathroom. This entrance and the room itself played a very important role in the play. For it was in this room in her many baths that Blanche finds seclusion and symbolically through her baths cleansed her soul and body. The room also became a point of controversy for Stanley and Blanche as she seemed to have it occupied whenever he desired its use. The bedroom contained also a small chest in the upstage right corner and in the down stage corner a small dressing table. When the actor used the dressing table, he was in a position of full front to the audience. With only the suggestion

of a mirror frame we carried through the idea of suggestion and not reality. The down stage left corner of the room contained a small arm chair and stand with a telephone on it.

In the construction and design of the set there needed to be a light in the bedroom. This light became a focal point for a great deal of action and had significant symbolic meaning. This was the light which Blanche covered with a paper lantern and in this way shut out all light that would reveal what was real. The setting called for a lamp fixture that extended from the wall. This was not possible, so I devised the use of an exposed light bulb hung from the ceiling. This light then was in the center of the room and was easily accessible for use and became a more prominent symbol of the world created by Blanche.

The use of a portion of an oval window to indicate the separation of the bedroom and kitchen and to hang the drapery that separates the two rooms once again helped to create an illusion of reality. The entire set was designed and constructed to create an atmosphere of the slum environment of New Orleans. The absence of a great deal of open area helped to give the feeling of confinement that Blanche must feel throughout the play.

Color

The color for the two rooms was selected to give warmth and to create a feeling of age. The kitchen was painted in a light green and then aged with shading and streaking to give a run down appearance. The bedroom was painted in a grey blue with a subdued pattern in grey to give the faded appearance of wall paper. The outer area was painted to give a suggestion of brick exterior.

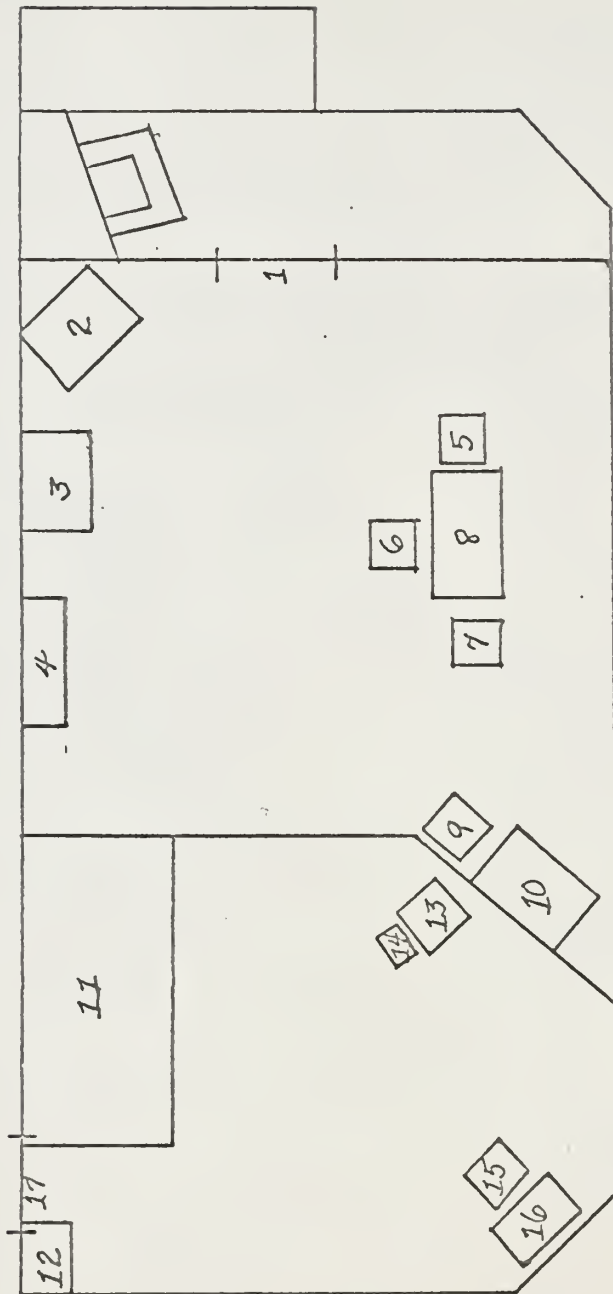
EXPLANATION OF PLATE X

Floor Plan

PLATE X

- 1 - stage right entrance
- 2 - icebox
- 3 - sink
- 4 - daybed
- 5 - chair
- 6 - chair
- 7 - chair
- 8 - kitchen table
- 9 - chair

- 10 - trunk
- 11 - bed
- 12 - bureau
- 13 - armchair
- 14 - end table
- 15 - stool
- 16 - vanity table
- 17 - bathroom entrance



Scale - 1/4" = 1'

PROPERTY LIST

Act I - Scene 1

Package of meat
 Small suitcase
 Broom
 Small photo of Stanley in frame
 Bag of peanuts
 T-shirt
 Small bottle of cologne
 Apple in dish
 Gloves, hat, purse for Blanche
 Bottle of whiskey and glass
 Bottle of soda water
 Bottle of coke
 2 movie magazines
 Handkerchief for Blanche

Act I - Scene 2

Trunk with various articles of gaudy wardrobe for Blanche,
 dresses, silks and fur pieces, etc.
 Jewel box full of costume jewelry
 Tiara
 Atomizer
 Hat, gloves, bag for Blanche
 Powder puff
 Cigarettes in package
 Matches
 Old letter in envelopes tied with ribbon
 Several legal papers in envelope
 Foot locker
 2 lunch pails
 Newspaper
 Basket (for Woman)
 Plate with ham and liverwurst
 Paper money--two or three bills
 2 manilla envelopes
 Tin deed box
 A carton with coke in it
 Case of beer

Act I - Scene 3

Cigarettes and matches

2 decks of playing cards
 2 whiskey bottles with some whiskey in them
 Coins and bills
 Hand towel
 Bathrobe
 Slippers
 Sen-sen in small envelope
 Matches
 Beer bottles and some empty bottles and some with beer in them
 Empty beer cases
 Watch for Mitch
 Paper bag with paper lantern in it
 Face powder and puff in case for Blanche
 Nightgown
 Cigarette holder
 Cigarette case with cigarettes
 Cigarette trays

Act I - Scene 4

Broom
 Eyebrow pencil
 Powder box
 Bottle of beer
 Kleenex
 Paper money and coins in purse

Act II - Scene 1

Letter paper, pen, ink
 Socks
 Sewing materials and sewing box
 Package of laundry
 Necktie
 Bottle of whiskey and glass
 Palm leaf fan
 Cigarette and holder
 Wrist watch
 Small bunch of flowers
 3 slips
 Small notebook
 Bottle of cologne
 Bottle of coke with opener and glass
 Lady's purse

Cigarette lighter
Gossamer scarf

Act II - Scene 2

Flowers
Lady's purse
Doll
Candle stuck in bottle
Trunk key
Bottle of whiskey and 2 glasses
Kleenex

Act III - Scene 1

Pillows
Fans
Slipcovers
Whiskey in glass with ice cubes
Bath towel
Bus ticket
Dishes and silver for four
Party favors, including colored napkins
Birthday cake
Lunch pail
Small box of pink birthday cake candles
Hairbrush

Act III - Scene 2

2 pork chops
Envelope with bus ticket

Act III - Scene 3

Drinking glass
Bottle of Southern Comfort

Act III - Scene 4

Whiskey bottle and glass
Paper box in which are bottles of beer and whiskey, bottle
opener and pretzel sticks

Pair of red silk pajamas
Miscellaneous finery for Blanche's trunk, also jewel box
Rhinestone tiara

Act III - Scene 5

Slips and other articles of clothing for Blanche
Jewel box
Ribbons
Hair brush
Small black bag
Silver toilet articles
Dish with grapes and other fruit
Domino costume
Woman's jacket
Suitcase

LIGHTING

Description

The lighting for this production was of major concern for the intention to set a mood could be achieved with lighting as with nothing else. The use of bright and intense lighting in the loud and glaring group scenes was meant to create an atmosphere of brilliance and glaring color. Bright lighting for a mood of brilliance was desired at particular times as a contrast with the very subdued lighting of others. In many of Blanche's scenes she talks of leaving the lights off, and at these times especially, as little illumination was used as necessary to make the faces of the actors and their expressions visible. The use of a candle in the one Mitch and Blanche scene provided an opportunity for greater light for this very moving scene. The lighting of the poker party scenes was created by a strong spot light on the table and players while the rest of the stage remained in very dim light. This was done once again to create a feeling of brilliance and gaudiness.

The three areas of the stage were set up so that each area could be lighted individually. This was used many times in order to provide emphasis on the area being used and not just have general lighting over the entire stage.

Special spot lights were also used in the last dream sequence of Blanche to give the idea that she has slipped even further into her dream world and she is almost to the point of no return. Special spot lighting was also used in the porch area for several duo scenes.

For the most part the lighting helped greatly to achieve a feeling of brilliance and gaudiness and provided the extreme contrast with the softness and mystery of the very subdued scenes. This contrast was desired to create an atmosphere of conflicting extremes in the setting of the play to further emphasize the struggle of extremes as found in the characters of Blanche and Stanley.

Lighting Cue Sheet

1. House lights fade out.
2. Stage lights up full.
3. Lights fade out quickly.
4. House lights up dim.
5. House lights fade out.
6. Stage lights up full.
7. Lights fade out.
8. House lights up dim.
9. House lights out.
10. Special table spot up.
11. Porch special up.
12. Complete stage lights up dim.
13. Bedroom area lights up bright.
14. Complete stage lights dim.
15. Stage lights out.
16. House lights up dim.
17. House lights out.
18. Full stage lights up.
19. Stage lights out.
20. House lights up full.
21. House lights out.

22. Stage lights up full.
23. Stage lights down medium.
24. Stage lights out.
25. House lights up dim.
26. House lights out.
27. Porch special up dim.
28. Complete stage up dim.
29. Bedroom up medium.
30. Stage lights out.
31. House lights up full.
32. House lights out.
33. Stage lights up full.
34. Stage lights out.
35. House lights up dim.
36. House lights out.
37. Stage lights up medium.
38. Stage lights out.
39. House lights up dim.
40. House lights out.
41. Stage lights up dim.
42. Bedroom area up medium.
43. Porch area up medium.
44. Stage lights out.

45. House lights up dim.
46. House lights out.
47. Special Blanche spot up.
48. Special fade out and fade in complete stage lights dim.
49. Complete stage lights up medium.
50. Kitchen and porch area fade out.
51. Stage lights out.
52. House lights up dim.
53. House lights out.
54. Stage lights up full.
55. Stage lights fade out.
56. House lights up full.

Lighting Instruments

| Area | Kind | # | Watts | Gel |
|--------|--|-----|-------|---------------------------|
| Area 1 | 6" Leko | 101 | 750 | NCP (no color pl) |
| | 6" Fresnel | 102 | 500 | Blue |
| | 6" Fresnel | 103 | 500 | Straw |
| | 6" Fresnel | 104 | 500 | SPL (Special Lavender) |
| | 6" Leko | PS | 750 | Blue Green |
| Area 2 | 6" Fresnel | 201 | 500 | NCB (no color bl) |
| | 6" Fresnel | 202 | 500 | SPL |
| | 6" Fresnel | 203 | 500 | SPL |
| | 6" Fresnel | 204 | 500 | Amber |
| | 6" Fresnel (tall top hat) | TS | 500 | SPL |
| Area 3 | 6" Fresnel | 301 | 500 | NCB |
| | 6" Fresnel | 302 | 500 | SPL |
| | 6" Fresnel | 303 | 500 | NCP |
| | 6" Fresnel | 304 | 500 | Amber |
| | 10" Fresnel | RS | 1000 | Blue |
| | Commercial (double 2-way switch) | BS | | Clear |

PS - Porch Special

RS - Rape Special

BS - Bulb Special

TS - Table Special

Sound Cue Sheet

1. Jazz music in the distance.
2. Sound of train in the distance.
3. Sound of cat outside.
4. Sound of Varsouviana in the distance.
5. Fade in jazz music.
6. Jazz music continues through change.
7. Sound of Varsouviana in the distance.
8. Sound of jazz music in the distance.
9. Sound of jazz music continues through the change.
10. Sound of radio from the bedroom.
11. Fade in of jazz music.
12. Sound of train in the distance.
13. Sound of thunder in the distance.
14. Sound of chimes in the distance.
15. Sound of Varsouviana in the distance.
16. Sound of orchestra through the change.
17. Phone rings in bedroom.
18. Phone rings in bedroom.
19. Sound of Varsouviana played in the distance.
20. Sound of Varsouviana played in the distance.
21. Sound of Varsouviana played in the distance.
22. Sound of Varsouviana played in the distance.

23. Orchestra playing in the distance.
24. Sound of chimes in the distance.
25. Sound of Varsouviana in background as play ends.

A Streetcar Named Desire

by

Tennessee Williams

(Lights come up slowly, revealing the two rooms of the Kowalski apartment in the French quarter of New Orleans. Stella Kowalski lounges in a rickety armchair, fanning herself with a palm-leaf fan, and eating chocolates from a paper bag. She is reading a movie magazine. Living room is empty. There is an imaginary wall between the two rooms. In living room, a low door opens upon a roofless porch. On stair are seated two persons, a languid Negro woman, who fans herself with a palm-leaf fan, and Eunice Hubbell, occupant of the apartment above, who is eating peanuts and reading a "confession" magazine. Stanley Kowalski enters, followed by Harold Mitchell--Mitch--his friend. Stanley hurries along street towards door of his apartment. Mitch lopes along behind Stanley trying to keep up with the former's stride. Music is still heard. Lights have grown brighter.)

Stanley

(Opening his door, bellowing into living room. He enters from porch to above table center.)

Hey, Stella! Hey, there, Stella, baby!

(Mitch waits down right for Stanley.)

Stella

(Jumping up from armchair, comes into living room.)

Don't holler at me like that.

Stanley

(Tossing package of meat, covered with blood, to Stella.)

Catch!

Stella
 (Catching package.)
 What!

Stanley
 Meat!
 (Stanley and Mitch start out down left.)

Stella
 (Running to front door with package.)
 Stanley! Where are you going?

Stanley
 (Off.)
 Bowling!

Stella
 (Leaning out door, calling.)
 Can I come watch?

Stanley
 (Farther off.)
 Come on!

Stella
 Be over soon!
 (Eunice enters from porch. Stella pats Eunice's shoulder.)
 Hello, Eunice. How are you?

Eunice
 I'm all right.
 (Stella puts meat package on table in living room and then exits.)
 (Eunice leans forward, calls after Stella.)
 Tell Steve to get him a poor boy's sandwich, 'cause nothing's left here.

(Stella comes out onto porch, closing apartment door behind her. Stella hurries out down left. Eunice and Negro woman laugh. Eunice crosses to porch.)

Negro Woman
 (Nudges Eunice with her elbow.)
 What was that package he threw at her?
 (She laughs.)

Eunice

(Amused.)

You hush now!

Negro Woman

(Imitating Stanley's gesture of throwing meat.)

Catch what!

(Women laugh together. Blanche Dubois enters from up left. She is carrying a small suitcase in one hand and a slip of paper in other. As she looks about, her expression is one of shocked disbelief. Her appearance is incongruous to the setting. She looks as if she were arriving at a summer tea or cocktail party in the garden district. She is about five years older than Stella. There is something about her uncertain manner that suggests a moth. Music fades away. She is carrying her suitcase in her left hand. Lights in street commence to dim, and interior lighting in apartment brightens. Eunice and Negro woman enter from porch.)

Eunice

(Looks at Blanche--then at Negro woman, back at Blanche.--To Blanche.)

What's the matter, honey? Are you lost?

Blanche

(Standing just to left of stair, speaking with a faintly hysterical humor.)

They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, transfer to one called Cemetery, and ride six blocks and get off at Elysian Fields!

Eunice

That's where you are at now.

Blanche

At Elysian Fields?

Eunice

This here is Elysian Fields.

(Negro woman laughs.)

Blanche

They mustn't have--understood--what number I wanted . . .

Eunice

What number you lookin' for?

Blanche

(Refers wearily to slip of paper in her hand.)

Six thirty-two.

Eunice

(Indicating number "632" beside door of apartment.)

You don't have to look no further.

(Negro woman laughs.)

Blanche

(Crosses down left. Uncomprehendingly.)

I'm looking for my sister, Stella DuBois--I mean--Mrs. Stanley Kowalski.

(Negro woman nudges Eunice, yawns broadly.)

Eunice

That's the party. You just did miss her, though.

(Negro woman rises, stretches, moves a step down right.)

Blanche

This? Can this be her home?

Eunice

She's got the front part and I've got the back.

Blanche

Oh. She's out?

Eunice

(Pointing off down left.)

You noticed that bowling alley around the corner?

Blanche

I'm not sure I did.

Eunice

Well, that's where she's at--watchin' her husband bowl.

(Negro woman laughs.)

You want to leave your suitcase here an' go find her?

Blanche
(Moving downstage on porch.)

No . . .

Negro woman
I'll go tell her she come.

Blanche
(Putting down suitcase.)
Thanks.

(Negro woman yawns, stretches, fanning herself, slouches out down left, drawling a "Yo' welcome" to Blanche's "Thank you.")

Eunice
(Rising.)
She wasn't expecting you?

Blanche
(Crumpling slip of paper, throwing it away.)
No. No, not tonight.

Eunice
(Puts bag of raisins in dress pocket.)
Well, why don't you just go in and make yourself at home till they get back?
(Crosses up on first step.)

Blanche
How could I do that?

Eunice
(Coming down step.)
We own this place, so I can let you in.
(Eunice slaps front door with flat of her right palm, and it flies open. Eunice leads Blanche in. Blanche enters living room, stands with some trepidation, just above table. Takes in the room. Eunice looks at Blanche, then at her suitcase, then picks up Blanche's suitcase, steps into room, sets suitcase beside kitchen cabinet, picks up broom from floor near door. Puts broom against right side of ice-box, then notices Blanche's expression. Eunice moves to pick up two of Stella's dresses which have been lying

on day-bed, and starts toward bedroom with them. She has closed front door. Blanche follows Eunice in bedroom doorway. Eunice, as she picks up broom.)

It's kinda messed up right now, but when it's clean it's real sweet.

Blanche
(Looking about.)

Is it?

Eunice
Uh-huh, I think so. So you're Stella's sister?

Blanche
(Putting down suitcase and lifting her veil.)
Yes.
(Wanting to get rid of Eunice. Counter cross.)
Thanks for letting me in.

Eunice
(In bedroom, spreading or brushing bed a bit.)
Por nada, as the Mexicans say--por nada!
(Pause.)
Stella spoke of you.
(She disposes of dresses in bedroom on bed and on her way back, picks up apple from a small dish on radio table just inside bedroom door.)

Blanche
(Takes off gloves.)
Yes?

Eunice
I think she said you taught school.
(Has returned, stands center.)

Blanche
Yes.

Eunice
And you're from Mississippi, huh?
(Wipes apple on sleeve of dress. Eat apple up left at icebox.)

Blanche
Yes.

Eunice

She showed me a picture of your home place, the plantation.
(To table and sit on table.)

Blanche

Belle Reve?

Eunice

A great big place with white columns.

Blanche

--Yes . . .

Eunice

Sure must be a job to keep up, a place like that.

Blanche

If you will excuse me, I'm just about to drop.

Eunice

Sure, honey. Why don't you set down?
(Eats apple.)

Blanche

What I meant was I'd like to be left alone.

Eunice

(Apple at mouth--pauses--pats foot--rises.
Offended.)

Well, I don't need a wall of bricks to fall on me!
(Rises and stays at table.)

Blanche

I didn't mean to be rude, but--

Eunice

I'll just drop by the bowling alley and hustle her up.
(Exits.)

(Blanche looks about her. Crosses to cabinet and icebox and pours drink at cabinet. Downs it. Lights cigarette. Pours another drink and crosses to living room chair, then sits.)

Blanche

I've got to keep hold of myself.

(Stella hurries in from down left, followed

by Eunice. Stella rushes into apartment and enters up left stage of table. Eunice goes up spiral stairs to her apartment.)

Stella

(Calling out joyfully as she opens door.)

Blanche! Blanche!

(For a moment, the sisters stare at one another. Stella rushes into her sister's arms up center in living room.)

Blanche

Stella, oh Stella, Stella! Stella for Star!

(Her following speeches are delivered with a feverish vivacity as if she feared for either of them to stop and think.)

Now, then, let me look at you.

(Turns away down right.)

But don't you look at me, Stella, no, no, no, not till later, not till I've bathed and rested! I won't be looked at in this merciless glare! Come back here, now! Oh, my baby! Stella! Stella for Star!

(Embraces Stella again. Near center of living room. Leads Stella to living room chair and sits her down.)

I thought you would never come back to this horrible place! What am I saying? I didn't mean to say that. I meant to be nice about it and say--oh, what a convenient location and such----Precious lamb, you haven't said a word to me.

(Crosses to center stage.)

Stella

You haven't given me a chance to honey.

(She laughs, embraces Blanche, but her glance at her sister is a little anxious.)

Blanche

Well, now, you talk. Open your pretty mouth and talk while I look around for some liquor.

(Crosses to kitchen.)

I know you must have some liquor on the place. Where can it be, I wonder? Oh, I spy! I spy!

(Crosses to kitchen cabinet. Blanche takes bottle and glass from it. They nearly slip from her grasp. She is shaking, panting for breath, and tries to laugh. Stella moves to left of Blanche, takes bottle, and leads

Blanche to number three table and then crosses to kitchen.)

Stella

Blanche, you sit down and let me pour the drinks.

(Blanche retreats to center of living room, Stella brings bottle and glass to table right. Pouring a shot.)

I don't know what we've got to mix with. Maybe a coke's in the ice-box.

Blanche

No coke, honey. Not with my nerves tonight.

(Stella puts bottle on table, puts the stopper in it. Blanche crosses center with her drink as Stella goes to ice-box, opens it and peers inside.)

Where--where is----?

Stella

(At ice-box.)

Stanley? Bowling! He loves it.

(Blanche drinks.)

They're having a--

(Grabs bottle in ice-box.)

--found some soda!--tournament!

Blanche

Just water, baby, to chase it.

(Stella returns to table with coke, jar of water, bottle-opener, which she has picked up from top of ice-box.)

Now, don't get worried. Your sister hasn't turned into a drunkard. She's just all shaken up and hot and tired and dirty.

(Crosses a bit left.)

You sit down and explain this place to me. What on earth are you doing in a place like this?

Stella

(Puts water-jar on table. Sits in chair number two above table, opens coke, sips it.)

Now, Blanche.

Blanche

Oh, I'm not going to be hypocritical. I'm going to be honestly critical. Never, never, never in my worst dreams could I picture---

(Rises and gestures toward apartment. Turning back to Stella.)

Only Poe! Only Mr. Edgar Allan Poe--could do it justice!
(Gestures towards street.)

Out there, I suppose, is the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir!

(Laughs.)

Stella

No, honey--those are the L.&N. tracks.

Blanche

(Taking step towards Stella.)

No, how seriously, putting joking aside. Why didn't you tell me? Why didn't you write me? Honey, why didn't you let me know?

(A step nearer.)

Stella

Tell you what, Blanche?

Blanche

Why, that you had to live in these conditions?

Stella

(Rises. Crosses upstage and places coke in kitchen.)

Aren't you being a little intense about it? It's not that bad at all! New Orleans isn't like other cities.

(Puts hands gently on Blanche.)

Blanche

(Moving from Stella's touch.)

This has got nothing to do with New Orleans. You might as well say--

(Pats Stella on downstage shoulder with right hand.)

--forgive me, blessed baby. The subject is closed.

(Moves down right one step.)

Stella

(Starting left, above Blanche.)

Thanks.

Blanche

(Restraining Stella with her voice. Looks into her shaking glass, then crosses to left of table.)

You're all I've got in the world, and you're not glad to

see me!

Stella

(Crosses to Blanche.)

Why, Blanche, you know that's not true.

Blanche

(Turns to her.)

NO?--I'd forgotten how quiet you are.

Stella

You never did give me a chance to say much, honey. So I just got in the habit of being quiet around you.

(Exits into bedroom to tidy it.)

Blanche

That's a good habit to get into.

(Takes another sip from drink. Crosses to bedroom.)

You haven't asked me yet how I happened to get away from the school before the spring term ended.

Stella

(Picks up garments from bed.)

Well, I thought you'd volunteer that information if you wanted to tell me.

Blanche

(Brings drink into bedroom, pauses above armchair.)

You thought I'd been fired?

Stella

No. I--thought you might have resigned. . . .

Blanche

(Crosses and leans on vanity.)

I was so exhausted by all I'd been through my--nerves just broke. I was on the verge of--lunacy, almost! So Mr. Graves--Mr. Graves is the high school superintendent--he suggested I take a leave of absence.--I couldn't put all of those details into the wire . . . Oh, this buzzes right through me and feels so good!

Stella

(Crosses and sits on chair.)

Won't you have another?

Blanche

No, one's my limit.
(Checks self in mirror.)

Stella

Sure?

Blanche

(Looks in mirror above dressing table, turns to Stella.)

You haven't said a word about my appearance.
(Takes off hat, takes it up to bureau and returns.)

Stella

You look just fine.

Blanche

(Removes hat and gloves, puts them on dressing table. Keeps purse on left arm. Primps at mirror.)

God love you for a liar! Daylight never exposed so total a ruin! But you--you've put on some weight, yes, you're just as plump as a little partridge!

(Stella stands up as Blanche regards her.)

And it's so becoming to you!

Stella

Now, Blanche-----

Blanche

(Crossing down left.)

Yes, it is, it is, or I wouldn't say it! You just have to watch a little around the hips.

(Pushes her down right.)

You messy child, you, you've spilt something on that pretty white lace collar!

(Turns her to face Blanche.)

About your hair--you ought to have it cut in a feather bob with your dainty features!

(Looks at Stella's hands.)

You have a maid, don't you?

Stella

(Crosses to vanity.)

No. With only two rooms it's--

Blanche

What? Two rooms, did you say?

Stella

Yes, this one and----

(She is embarrassed. Gestures toward living room.)

Blanche

(Steps toward living room.)

And the other one?

(Blanche crosses first to kitchen table to pour drink. Stella crosses to kitchen.)

I'm going to take just one tiny little nip more, just to put the stopper on, so to speak. . . .

(Crosses to cabinet. She pours a drink.)

Then put the bottle away. Put the bottle away! So I won't be tempted.

(She drinks, extends bottle to Stella, who takes it, puts it back into cabinet. Blanche drinks, puts down glass. Stella crosses to above table. Blanche puts purse on table.

Taking off her jacket, she whirls left.)

I want you to take a look at my figure!d I haven't put on one ounce in ten years. I weigh now what I weighed the summer you left Belle Reve. The summer Dad died and you left us.

(She starts drifting up center. Carries jacket.)

Stella

(Stella is above table, speaks a little wearily.)

It's just incredible, Blanche, how well you're looking.

Blanche

(Up center, touching her forehead shakily.)

Stella, there's--only two rooms? I don't see where you're going to put me.

Stella

(Gestures toward daybed.)

We're going to put you right here.

Blanche

(Coming to day-bed, punching it.)

What kind of bed's this?

Stella

Does it feel all right?

Blanche
 (Dubiously. Gestures to bedroom.)
 Wonderful, honey. I don't like a bed that gives much.
 (She crosses into arch between rooms, where
 Stella lies on bed.)
 But there's no door between the rooms, and Stanley--will
 it be decent?
 (Turns towards Stella.)

Stella
 Stanley is Polish, you know.
 (Crosses to bedroom bed and sits.)

Blanche
 (Crosses to bedroom.)
 Oh, yes. That's something like Irish, isn't it?

Stella
 Well-----

Blanche
 I brought some nice clothes to meet all your lovely
 friends in.

Stella
 I'm afraid you won't think they are lovely.

Blanche
 What are they like?

Stella
 They're Stanley's friends.

Blanche
 (Crosses to bedroom chair.)
 Polacks?

Stella
 They're a mixed lot.

Blanche
 (Sits.)
 Heterogeneous--types?

Stella
 Oh, yes. Yes, types is right!

Blanche
 Well--anyhow--I brought some nice clothes, and I'll wear

them. I guess you're hoping I'll say I'll put up at a hotel, but I'm not going to put up at a hotel. I want to be near you, Stella; I've got to be with people, I can't be alone! Because--as you must have noticed--I'm--not very well!

(Her voice drops, her look is frightened.
Stella crosses to Blanche.)

Stella

You seem a little bit nervous or overwrought or something.

Blanche

Will Stanley like me, or will I be just a visiting in-law? I couldn't stand that, Stella.

(Turns to Stella.)

Stella

(Turns to Blanche. Crosses center.)

You'll get along fine together, if you'll just try not to--well--compare him with men we went out with at home.

Blanche

Is he so--different?

Stella

Yes. A different species.

Blanche

In what way; what's he like?

Stella

Oh, you can't describe someone you're in love with.

(Crosses to vanity, picks up photo of Stanley.)

Here's a picture of him!

Blanche

(Crosses to vanity and takes photo.)

An officer?

Stella

A Master Sergeant in the Engineers' Corps. Those are decorations!

Blanche

He must have had those on when you met him?

Stella

I assure you I wasn't just blinded by all the brass. But of course there were things to adjust myself to later on.

Blanche
Such as his civilian background! How did he take it when
you told him I was coming?
(Crosses to bedroom chair.)

Stella
Oh, Stanley doesn't know yet.

Blanche
(Frightened.)
You--haven't told him?

Stella
He's on the road a good deal.

Blanche
(Crosses to vanity.)
Oh. He travels?

Stella
Yes.

Blanche
Good! I mean--isn't it?

Stella
(Takes photo.)
I can hardly stand it when he's away for a night. . .

Blanche
Why, Stella!

Stella
When he's away for a week, I nearly go wild!

Blanche
(Crossing up left.)
Gracious!

Stella
And when he comes back I cry on his lap like a baby.

Blanche
(Crosses to head of bed.)
I guess that is what is meant by being in love . . .
(Stella looks up with a radiant smile.)
Stella-----

Stella
What?

Blanche

(With hesitancy.)

I haven't asked you the things you probably thought I was going to ask you. So I expect you to be understanding about what I have to tell you.

Stella

What, Blanche?

(Her face turns anxious.)

Blanche

(Crosses to down left chair. Faces away.)

Well, Stella--you're going to reproach me. I know that you're bound to reproach me--but before you do--take into consideration--you left! I stayed and struggled!

(Turns toward her.)

You came to New Orleans and looked after yourself! I stayed at Belle Reve and tried to hold it together! I'm not meaning this in any reproachful way, but all the burden descended on my shoulders.

Stella

The best I could do was make my own living, Blanche.

Blanche

(Beginning to shake with a new intensity.

Moves up and down stage area.)

I know, I know. But you are the one that abandoned Belle Reve, not I! I stayed and fought for it, bled for it, almost died for it!

Stella

(Rises)

Stop this hysterical outburst and tell me what's happened? What do you mean fought and bled? What kind of----?

Blanche

I knew you would, Stella. I knew you would take this attitude about it!

Stella

(Sits slowly and easily.)

About--what?--Please?

Blanche

The loss--the loss . . .

(Turns away.)

Stella

(Turns and crosses to Blanche.)

Belle Reve? Lost, is it?

Blanche

(Crosses to living room, to her purse on table, gets out small bottle of cologne, dabs a bit of it behind her ears.)

Yes, Stella.

(A train passes noisily along the L. & N. tracks outside. There is no long pause in dialogue for train effect.)

Stella

(Leaves photo on bed. Rises, crosses to above left and stops at door. Looks at Blanche.)

But how did it go? What happened?

Blanche

(Crosses to down left of table.)

You're a fine one to ask me how it went!

Stella

(A step nearer.)

Blanche!

Blanche

(Faces toward and to the left.)

You're a fine one to stand there accusing me of it!

Stella

(Crosses to down right chair.)

Blanche!

Blanche

(Facing audience directly.)

I, I, I took the blows on my face and my body! All of those deaths! The long parade to the graveyard! Father, Mother! Margaret--that dreadful way! So big with it she couldn't be put in a coffin! But had to be burned like rubbish! You just came home in time for the funerals.

(Turns on Stella strongly and crosses to behind number three.)

And funerals are pretty compared to deaths. Funerals are quiet, but deaths--not always. Sometimes their breathing is hoarse, sometimes it rattles, sometimes they cry out

to you, Don't let me go! Even the old sometimes say, Don't let me go! As if you were able to stop them! Funerals are quiet with pretty flowers. And oh, what gorgeous boxes they pack them away in! Unless you were there at the bed when they cried out, Hold me! You'd never suspect there was the struggle for breath and bleeding. You didn't dream, but I saw! Saw! Saw! And now you sit there telling me with your eyes that I let the place go. How in hell did you think all that sickness and dying was paid for? Death is expensive, Miss Stella! And old Cousin Jessie, right after Margaret's, hers! Why, the Grim Reaper had put up his tent on our doorstep!--Stella! Bella Reve was his headquarters! Honey, that's how it slipped through my fingers! Which of them left us a fortune? Which of them left us a cent of insurance, even? Only poor Jessie--one hundred to pay for her coffin! That was all, Stella! And I with my pitiful salary at the school! Yes, accuse me! Stand there thinking I let the place go! I let the place go! Where were you? In bed with your Polack!

Stella

Blanche! You be still! That's enough!
(Crosses to bathroom.)

Blanche

(Crosses to doorway.)

Where are you going?

Stella

(Pausing on steps leading to bathroom.)

I'm going to the bathroom to wash my face.

Blanche

Oh, Stella, Stella, you're crying!

Stella

Does that surprise you?

Blanche

Forgive me--I didn't mean to----

(Crosses to vanity. Sound of men's voices heard from off right. Stella goes into bathroom, closing door behind her. When men appear, and Blanche realizes it must be Stanley returning, she moves uncertainly from bathroom door to dressing table, looking apprehensively towards front door.)

Stanley enter down left, followed by Steve and Mitch. Stanley pauses near door, Steve by foot of spiral stair, and Mitch is slightly above and to right of them, about to go out up left. As men enter, we hear some of following dialogue.)

Stanley

Is that how he got it?

Steve

Sure that's how he got it.--He hit the old weather-bird for three hundred bucks on a six-number-ticket.

Mitch

Don't tell him those things; he'll believe it.
(Starts out, up left.)

Stanley

(Restraining Mitch.)
Hey, Mitch--come back here.

Dialogue resumes as follows. Blanche, at sound of voices, retires down right in bedroom. Picks up Stanley's photo from dressing table, looks at it, puts it down. When Stanley enters apartment, she darts up left, hides behind screen at head of bed.)

Steve

(Enters from porch.)
Hey, are we playin' poker tomorrow?

Stanley

Sure--at Mitch's.

Mitch

(Hearing this, returns quickly to stair rail, down right.)
No--not at my place. My mother's still sick!

Stanley

Okay, at my place. . . .

(Mitch starts out again.)

But you bring the beer!

(Mitch pretends not to hear, calls out "Goodnight, all," and goes out up left,

singing. Eunice's voice is heard from above.)

Eunice

Break it up down there!

(Stanley reminds Mitch again to bring beer.)

I made the spaghetti dish, and I ate it myself!

Steve

(Speaking as he goes upstairs. His comments are punctuated with various colorful expletives from Eunice.)

I told you and phoned you that we was playin' Jack's Beer.

Eunice

You never phoned me once!

Steve

Told you at breakfast, phoned you at lunch!

Eunice

Never mind! Why don't you get yourself home once in a while?

(Exits up steps on porch.)

Steve

God damn it! Do you want it in the newspaper?

(Disappears upstairs. Door slams shut above. Stanley has entered his apartment, closing door behind him. Notices meat on table in living room, takes it to ice-box. Blanche moves to door between rooms, looking at Stanley.)

Blanche

(In doorway between rooms.)

You must be Stanley. I'm Blanche.

Stanley

(Taking off bowling jacket.)

Stella's sister?

Blanche

Yes.

Stanley

(Moving towards her. Blanche shrinks back a bit.)

H'lo. Where's the little woman?

(Passes below Blanche and goes into bedroom, leaves coat on bed.)

Blanche
In the bathroom.

Stanley
Oh.
(Crosses back into living room.)
Didn't know you were coming in town.
(Crosses to kitchen cabinet.)
Where you from, Blanche?

Blanche
Why--I--live in Laurel.

Stanley
(Bringing liquor bottle and glass to table.)
In Laurel, huh? Oh, yeah. Yeah, in Laurel, that's
right. Not in my territory.
(Holds up bottle to observe its depletion.)
Liquor goes fast in hot weather. Have a shot?
(Crosses down left of table. Pours a drink.)

Blanche
No--I--rarely touch it..

Stanley
(Smiling at Blanche.)
Some people rarely touch it, but it touches them often.
(Crosses to her. Drinks.)

Blanche
(Faintly.)
Ha-ha.

Stanley
(Places glass on table, takes bottle to
cabinet, crosses again above Blanche.)
My shirt's stickin' to me. Do you mind if I make myself
comfortable?
(Crosses to bed, taking off his shirt.)

Blanche
(Moving toward her purse on table in living
room.)
Please, please do.

Stanley
Be comfortable. That's my motto up where I come from.

Blanche
(She has picked up her purse, and looks in it.)

It's mine too. It's hard to stay looking fresh in hot weather. I haven't washed or even powdered--and--
(Looks at his half-naked figure.)

Here you are!

(Puts cologne-soaked handkerchief to her face, turns away.)

Stanley

You know you can catch cold sitting around in damp things especially when you've been exercising hard like bowling is. You're a teacher, aren't you?

(Crosses to table and sits number two.)

Blanche

Yes.

Stanley

What do you teach?

Blanche

English.

Stanley

I never was a very good English student. How long are you here for, Blanche?

Blanche

I--don't know yet.

Stanley

You going to shack up here?

Blanche

I thought I would if it's not inconvenient to you-all.

Stanley

Good.

Blanche

Travelling wears me out.

(Crosses and sits number four.)

Stanley

Well, take it easy.

(A cat screams off right, and Blanche jumps involuntarily toward Stanley, who is amused.)

Blanche

What's that?

Stanley

Them's cats!

(Grins. Crosses to bedroom, then to bathroom imitating a cat. Calls.)

Hey, Stella!

Stella

(From bathroom.)

Yes, Stanley!

Stanley

Haven't fallen in, have you?

I'm afraid I'll strike you as being the unrefined type.

Stella's spoke of you a good deal.

(Crosses up stage of chair number two.)

You were married once, weren't you?

Blanche

Yes, when I was quite young.

Stanley

What happened?

Blanche

The boy--the boy died.

(Distant lilt of the "Varsouviana" is heard. Blanche, listening to music, moves choppily to left seat.)

I'm afraid I'm--going to be sick.

(Music grows more insistent. She tries to deny the sound, looking fearfully about her. Lights down slowly as she rises. When music reaches a crescendo, she suddenly leaps to her feet, pressing her hands against her ears. The lights fade out quickly and curtain down. Cut Varsouviana. In darkness, the sound of the jazz band playing a blues number comes up full. They play through change.)

ACT I

Scene 2

(Six o'clock the following evening. Blanche is in bathroom, taking a bath. Stella, attired in a slip, is seated at dressing table in bedroom, completing her toilette. Her dress is on back of chair by dressing table. Blanche's trunk has arrived and is down right of living room chair. It is open, and offers a view of some rather impressive, if gaudy, wardrobe. On chair above living room table, some of Blanche's dresses have been carelessly dropped. A heart-shaped jewel-box, full of jewels, a rhinestone tiara, and a perfume atomizer lie on table.)

Stanley

(To Stella.) (Crosses to bedroom doorway.)
Hiyah, sweetheart.

Stella

Oh, Stanley!

Stanley

(Indicating dresses, looking at trunk. Comes to living room.)

What's all that crap?

Stella

Oh, Stan!

(She runs into his arms and kisses him, which he accepts with lordly composure, and pats her behind familiarly.)

I'm taking Blanche to Galatoire's for supper and then to a show because it's your poker night.

Stanley

How about my supper, huh? I'm not going to no Galatoire's for supper.

Stella

(Crosses to chair number two.)

I put you a cold plate on ice.

Stanley

(Going to ice-box.)

Well . . .

Stella

I'm going to try to keep Blanche out till the party breaks up, because I don't know how she would take it! . . .

Stanley

(Has taken a plate from ice-box and crosses to table to number four and sits. Shows plate to Stella. Plate contains some cold ham and a couple of slices of liverwurst.)

Isn't that just dandy!

(Eats some meat.)

Stella

(Crosses to number three, kneels on chair above table.

So we'll go to one of the little places in the Quarter afterwards, and you'd better give me some money.

(Looks in his upper pocket for money, extracts some bills.)

Stanley

Where is she?

Stella

She's soaking in a hot tub to quiet her nerves. She's terribly upset.

Stanley

Over what?

Stella

She's been through such an ordeal.

Stanley

Yeah?

(Gives Stella the money.)

Stella

Stan, we've--lost Belle Reve!

Stanley

The place in the country?

Stella

Yes.

Stanley

How?

Stella

(Separating money, and putting some of it back in his pocket.)

Oh, it had to be--sacrificed or something.

(A pause, while Stanley considers. Stella crosses to Stanley, hand on shoulder.)

When she comes in, be sure to say something nice about her appearance. And don't mention the baby. I haven't said anything yet, I'm waiting until she gets in a quieter conditio..

Stanley

(Ominously.)

So?

Stella

And try to understand her and be nice to her, Stan.

(A look passes between Stanley and Stella.)

She wasn't expecting to find us in such a small place. You see, I'd tried to gloss things over a little in my letters.

Stanley

So?

Stella

(Crosses to him, standing just at his left.)

And admire her dress, and tell her she's looking wonderful. That's important to Blanche. Her little weakness!

Stanley

Yeah. I get the idea. Now let's skip back a little to where you said the place was disposed of.

(Stella crosses behind Stanley.)

Stella

Oh!--yes . . .

Stanley

(Grabbing a corner of Stella's dress and restraining her as she starts to move left.)

How about that? Let's have a few more details on that subjeck.

Stella

It's best not to talk much about it until she's calmed down.

Stanley

So that's the deal, huh? Sister Blanche cannot be an-

noyed with business details right now!

Stella
You saw how she was last night.

Stanley
Um-huh, I saw how she was. Now let's have a gander at the bill of sale.

Stella
I haven't seen any.

Stanley
(Rises.)
What do you mean to tell me!--She didn't show you no papers, no deed of sale or nothing like that?

Stella
It seems like it wasn't sold.

Stanley
Well, what in hell was it, then, give away? To charity?
(Crosses to Stella and grabs her.)

Stella
Shh! She'll hear you.

Stanley
I don't care if she hears me. Let's see the papers!

Stella
(Directly to him.)
There weren't any papers, she didn't show any papers, I don't care about papers!
(Crosses to living room chair.)

Stanley
Listen; did you ever hear of the Napoleonic Code?

Stella
No, Stanley, I haven't heard of the Napoleonic Code.

Stanley
Let me enlighten you on a point or two.
- (Follows her and sits her down in living room chair.)

Stella
Yes?

Stanley

In the State of Louisiana we have what is known as the Napoleonic Code according to which what belongs to the wife belongs to the husband also and vice versa. For instance, if I had a piece of property, or you had a piece of property----

(Spins her around.)

Stella

My head is swimming!

Stanley

All right. I'll wait till she gets through soaking in a hot tub and then I'll inquire if she's acquainted with the Napoleonic Code. It looks to me like you've been swindled, baby, and when you get swindled under the Napoleonic Code, I get swindled, too. And I don't like to be swindled.

(Crosses to living room table. Sits number four.)

Stella

There's plenty of time to ask her questions later, but if you do now she'll go to pieces again. I don't understand what happened to Belle Reve, but you don't know how ridiculous you are being when you suggest that my sister or I or anyone else of our family could have perpetrated a swindle on anyone.

(Moves to Stanley.)

Stanley

Then where's the money, if the place was sold?

Stella

Not sold--lost, lost!

(Crosses to right of number two.)

Stanley!

Stanley

(Crosses in front of table to trunk. Pulling some dresses from trunk, tossing them on couch.)

Will you just open your eyes to this stuff! You think she got them out of a teacher's pay?

Stella

Hush!

Stanley

Look at these feathers and furs that she comes here to preen herself in! What's this here? A solid gold dress I believe!

(Holds up gold dress.)

And this one.

(He flings out another dress.)

What is these here? Fox pieces?

(Holds up a white fox fur piece. She reaches for it. He grabs her and talks into her face.)

Genuine fox fur pieces a half a mile long! Where are your fox pieces, Stella? Bushy snow white ones, no less! Where are your white fox pieces?

Stella

Those are inexpensive summer furs that Blanche has had a long time.

Stanley

I got an acquaintance who deals in this sort of merchandise. I'll have him in here to make an appraisal of it.

Stella

Don't be such an idiot, Stanley.

Stanley

I'm willing to bet you there's a thousand dollars invested in this stuff here.

(Spies jewel-vox out of the corner of his eye. Turns to table.)

And what have we here? The treasure chest of a pirate?

(Moves to table, flips open heart-shaped jewel-vox.)

Stella

Oh, Stanley!

Stanley

(Crosses in front of table and around with pearls.)

Pearls! Ropes of them! What is this sister of yours, a deep-sea diver?

(Holding up bracelet, after dumping pearls on table.)

Bracelets of solid gold! Where are your pearls and gold bracelets?

(Stella takes bracelet from him, crosses to above table, puts it in Jewel-box.)

Stella

Shh! Be still, Stanley!

Stanley

(Picking up tiara from table.)

And what is this--diamonds? A crown for an empress!

(Moves left center, holding up tiara.)

Stella

(Restoring jewels to box.)

A rhinestone tiara she wore to a costume ball.

Stanley

What's rhinestone?

Stella

(Taking tiara from him, putting it in jewel-box.)

Next door to glass.

Stanley

Are you kidding?

(Crosses to trunk.)

I have an acquaintance that works in a jewelry store.

He's coming up here to make an appraisal of this.

(Gestures toward trunk.)

Here's your plantation or what was left of it, here!

Stella

(Crosses to number four.)

You have no idea how stupid and horrid you're being.

Now leave that trunk alone before she comes out of the bathroom!

Stanley

(Crosses to number two.)

The Kowalskis and the DuBois' have different notions.

Stella

(Angrily.)

Indeed they have, thank heavens!

(Crosses up left to door.)

I'm going outside. You come out with me while Blanche is getting dressed.

Stanley

Since when do you give me orders?

(Blanche opens bathroom door--turns back into bathroom to pick up dress. Crosses behind center chair.)

Stella

(Facing him.)

Are you going to stay here and insult her?

Stanley

You're damn' tootin' I'm goin' to stay here.

(Takes out a cigarette, lights it. Takes out another, puts it behind his ear. He crosses to down left to table and sits on it. Stella stands down left on porch, and lights cigarette, which she has taken from her purse. Blanche opens bathroom door, and emerges, wearing wrapper. Crosses to doorway and trunk for dress.)

Blanche

Hello, Stanley! Here I am, all freshly bathed and scented, and feeling like a brand-new human being!

Stanley

That's good.

Blanche

(A step right.)

Excuse me while I slip on my pretty new dress!

Stanley

(Not getting hint.)

Sure, go right ahead, Blanche.

(Realizing what she wants, he rises, crosses into bedroom. Blanche stands modestly upstage by her trunk to let Stanley pass, then closes curtains between rooms as she says "Thank You." Throws robe on vanity. Sees trunk has been disturbed. Crosses to bedroom.)

Blanche

I understand there's to be a little card party to which we ladies are cordially not invited!

Stanley

(Ominously.)

That's right!

Blanche

Where's Stella?

(Surveys her disordered wardrobe in trunk.)

Stanley

Out on the porch.

Blanche

(Puts on her dress. After quick look at porch.)

I'm going to ask a favor of you in a moment.

(Stella moves to a position of right of spiral stair, facing right.)

Stanley

What could that be, I wonder?

Blanche

Some buttons in back! You may enter!

(Stanley crosses to bedroom.)

How do I look?

Stanley

You look O. K.

Blanche

Many thanks! Now the buttons!

(Turns her back to him, stands down left center.)

Stanley

(Stanley comes to her, makes clumsy attempt to fasten hooks.)

I can't do nothing with them.

Blanche

You men with your big clumsy fingers. May I have a drag on your cig?

Stanley

(Giving her cigarette from behind his ear.)

Here--have one for yourself.

Blanche

(Crosses to number two to get dress put in trunk.)

Why, thanks! It looks like my trunk has exploded.

Stanley

(Lighting her cigarette, after crossing to upstage table.)

Me and Stella were helping you unpack.

Blanche

(Moving to her trunk, picks up fur piece.)

Well, you certainly did a fast and thorough job of it.

Stanley

It looks like you raided some stylish shops in Paris.

(Moves to right of her.)

Blanche

(Arranging dress in trunk. Puts furs in trunk.)

Yes--clothes are my passion!

Stanley

(Crosses to left of Blanche.)

What does it cost for a string of fur pieces like that?

Blanche

Why, those were a tribute from an admirer of mine.

(Puts on fur.)

Stanley

He must have had a lot of admiration.

Blanche

(Posing in fur.)

In my youth I excited some admiration. But look at me now.

(Crosses down front of table to behind number four. Smiles at him radiantly.)

Would you think it possible that I was ever considered to be--attractive?

Stanley

Your looks are okay.

Blanche

(Laughs, puts fur back in trunk.)

I was fishing for a compliment, Stanley.

Stanley

I don't go in for that stuff.

Blanche

What--stuff?

Stanley

(Crosses behind number two.)

Compliments to women about their looks. I never met a woman that didn't know if she was good-looking or not without being told, and some of them give themselves credit for more than they've got. I once went out with a dame who said to me, "I am the glamorous type,"
(Imitates girl, Placing his hand daintily at back of his neck.)

I am the glamorous type!" I said, "So what?"

Blanche

(Going to trunk with jewel-box.)

And what did she say then?

Stanley

She didn't say nothing. That shut her up like a clam.

Blanche

Did it end the romance?

Stanley

(Crosses upstage of table and sits number four.)

It ended the conversation--that was all. Some men are took in by this Hollywood glamor stuff and some men are not.

Blanche

I'm sure you belong in the second category.

Stanley

That's right.

Blanche

I cannot imagine any witch of a woman casting a spell over you.

Stanley

That's--right.

Blanche

You're simple, straightforward and honest, a bit on the primitive side, I should think. To interest you a woman would have to-----

(Pauses with an indefinite gesture.)

Stanley

(Following at her right.)

Lay her cards on the table.

Blanche

Well, I never cared for wishy-washy people; that was why, when you walked in here last night, I said to myself, "My sister has married a man!" Of course, that was all I could tell about you at the moment.

(Pats his shoulder.)

Stanley

(Stands up. Booming.)

All right! How about cuttin' the re-bop!

Blanche

(With mock covering, hands over her ears. Moves a step left.)

Ouuu!

(Stella, hearing commotion, rushes into room.)

Stella

Stanley! You come out here and let Blanche finish dressing!

Blanche

I've finished dressing, honey.

Stella

Well, you come out then.

Stanley

Your sister and I are having a little talk.

(Continues looking at Blanche.)

Blanche

Now, just a moment----

(Crosses to door.)

Honey, do me a favor. Run to the drug store and get me a lemon coke with plenty of chipped ice in it! Will you do that for me, sweetie? Please--please----

(Stanley crosses down front to trunk.)

Stella

(Reluctantly.)

Yes.

(Stella goes out down left. Blanche closes front door, and turns to Stanley. Stanley extinguishes cigarette on table. Blanche puts out cigarette in tray on table.)

Crosses down to behind table.)

Blanche

The poor little thing was out there listening to us, and I have an idea she doesn't understand you as well as I do. . . . All right, now, Mr. Kowalski, let us proceed without any more digression. I'm ready to answer all questions. I've nothing to hide. What is it?

(Sprays herself with atomizer she picks up from table.)

Stanley

(Moving closer to her. Patiently.)

In the state of Louisiana there is such a thing as the Napoleonic Code, according to which whatever belongs to the wife belongs to the husband and vice versa.

Blanche

My, but you have an impressive, judicial air!

(She sprays him with atomizer, laughs.)

Stanley

(Seizing her right wrist.)

If I didn't know you was my wife's sister I'd get ideas about you.

(Releases her hands.)

Blanche

Such as what?

Stanley

(Pushing her hand aside.)

Don't play so dumb. You know what!

Blanche

(Puts atomizer on table.)

All right, cards on the table.

(Gestures cards while crossing in front of table.)

That suits me. I know I fib a good deal.

(Down right at trunk.)

After all, a woman's charm is fifty per cent illusion, but when a thing is important I tell the truth, and this is the truth: I haven't cheated my sister or you or anyone else as long as I have lived.

Stanley

Where are the papers? In the trunk?

Blanche
 Everything I own is in that trunk. What in the name of heaven are you thinking of? What's in the back of that little boy's mind of yours?

(Blanche crosses behind Stanley. Stanley crosses to trunk and opens it. Blanche crosses to trunk.)

Let me do that, it'll be faster and simpler!

(Takes out tin deed-box and sits on trunk.)

I keep my papers mostly in this tin box.

Stanley
 (Looking over her shoulder into drawer.)
 What's them underneath?

Blanche
 Love letters, yellowing with antiquity, all from one boy.
 ("Varsouviana" is heard in background.
 Stanley grabs up letters and crosses to center bedroom. Blanche, with a cry, replaces tin box in second drawer of trunk.)

Give those back to me!

(She follows. Stanley pulls ribbon off letters, holds Blanche off, as she comes at him from left side, then from behind, in an attempt to get letters.)

Stanley
 I'll have a look at them first.

Blanche
 (Tugging at Stanley's right arm.)
 The touch of your hand insults them!

Stanley
 (Looking at letters.)
 Don't pull that stuff!

Blanche
 (Struggling to get letters.)
 Now that you've touched them, I'll burn them!
 (Letters scatter to floor. Blanche runs above Stanley to center, falls to her knees, gathers letters up, ties ribbon around them.)

Stanley

What are they?

Blanche

(On her knees.)

Poems, a dead boy wrote. I hurt him the way that you would like to hurt me, but you can't! I'm not young and vulnerable any more. But my young husband was, and I-- never mind about that.

Stanley

(Crosses to living room center stage.)

What do you mean by saying you'll have to burn them?

Blanche

(Tying up letters.)

I'm sorry. I must have lost my head for a moment. Everyone has something he won't let others touch because of their--intimate nature . . .

("Varsouviana" fades off. Crosses to Stanley and gives him box of letters.)

Ambler and Ambler.

Stanley

What is Ambler and Ambler?

Blanche

(Looks in tin box.)

A firm that made loans on the place.

(Piles tin box on top of envelope. Turns away from him.)

Stanley

Then it was lost on a mortgage!

Blanche

That must've been what happened.

Stanley

I don't want no ifs, ands or buts! What's all the rest of the papers?

Blanche

(Looking into last envelope of papers at trunk. Crosses to trunk and sits.)

There are thousands of papers stretching back over hundreds of years affecting Belle Reve, as piece by

piece our improvident grandfathers and father and uncles and brothers exchanged the land for the epic fornications-- to put it plainly. The four-letter word deprived us of our plantation, till finally all that was left, and Stella can verify that, was the house itself and about twenty acres of ground, including a graveyard to which now all but Stella and I have retreated.

(Dumping them into his hands on table after crossing to Stanley. Stanley sits number three.)

Here they all are, all papers! I hereby endow you with them! Take them, peruse them--commit them to memory, even! I think it's wonderfully fitting that Belle Reve should finally be this bunch of old papers in your big, capable hands.

(Jazz music offstage. Drops empty envelope on table right stage. Crosses to door.)

I wonder if Stella's come back with my lemon coke?

Stanley

(Collecting papers.)

I have a lawyer acquaintance will study these out.

Blanche

Present them to him with a box of aspirin tablets.

Stanley

(Still seated, somewhat sheepish. Crosses center.)

You see, under the Napoleonic Code--a man has to take an interest in his wife's affairs--especially now that she's going to have a baby.

Blanche

Stella? Stella's going to have a baby?

(Leans on icebox. Stanley crosses to bed and sits.)

I didn't know she was going to have a baby.

(Stella appears from down left with coke in a carton. Blanche hurries across to Stella, takes her out on to porch. Blanche crosses right of table.)

Stella, Stella for star! How lovely to have a baby! It's all right. Everything's all right.

Stella

I'm sorry he did that to you.

Blanche

Oh, I guess he's just not the type that goes for jasmine

perfume, but maybe he's what we need to mix with our blood now that we've lost Belle Reve. We thrashed it out. I feel a bit shaky, but I think I handled it nicely, I laughed and treated it all as a joke.

(Pacing.)

(Steve and Pablo appear from up right, carrying case of beer.)

I called him a little boy and laughed and flirted. Yes, I was flirting with your husband!

(As men approach.)

The guests are gathering for the poker party.

(Men pass through, tipping their hats to ladies.

Pablo says "Hi, Stell." Inside men start putting beer in ice-box.)

Which way do we go now, Stella--this way?

(Points left.)

Stella

No, this way.

(Leads Blanche off down left.)

Blanche

(Laughing and starting off down left.)

The blind are leading the blind!

(Lights fade--curtain. Jazz music swells and is heard through change.)

ACT I

Scene 3

(The poker night.
Later that night. In living room, Stanley, Mitch, Steve and Pablo are gathered about table, hunched over their cards, smoking, concentrating. Empty beer bottles are strung about, and a couple of liquor bottles, half-empty, are in evidence. One on table. Pablo is in a chair below table, facing upstage. Table is covered with a large scrap of green baize. Music fades off quickly at rise. Mitch is in number two chair; Stanley, number three; Steve, number four. A low exchange of conversation passes between the men. Each has a hand of cards.

Mitch

(Yawning.)

What time is it?

Stanley

What the hell difference does it make?

Steve

He won't quit till he wins a pot. Anything wild in this deal?

Pablo

One-eyed jacks are wild.

(Mitch drinks from bottle.)

Steve

(To Pablo.)

How many cards did you take?

Pablo

Two.

Mitch

(Rising.)

Anyone want a shot?

Stanley

(Taking bottle from Mitch.)

Yeah, me.

(Mitch sits on left end of table, facing left, and tucks some winnings into his pocket.)

Pablo

Why don't somebody go to the Chinaman's and bring back a load of chop suey?

(Cards down. Steve wins.)

Stanley

When I'm losing you want to eat. Get it off the table, Mitch. Nothing belongs on the table but cards, chips and whiskey.

Mitch

(Gets off table. Takes up cards.)

King of on your high horse, ain't you?

(Card business. Mitch looks at his watch.

Stanley deals cards. Mitch sits.)

Well, I ought to go home pretty soon.

Stanley

Shut up.

Mitch

I got a sick mother. She don't go to sleep until I get in at night.

Stanley

Then why don't you stay home with her?

Mitch

She says to go out, so I go, but I don't enjoy it. All the while I keep wondering how she is.

Stanley

Aw, for the sake of Jesus, will you go home then!

Mitch

(Tucking away his winnings. Rises.)

You all are married. But I'll be alone when she goes. I'm going to the bathroom.

(Crosses to bathroom.)

Stanley

Hurry back and we'll fix you a sugar-tit.

Mitch

Aw--lay off!

Pablo

What've you got?

Steve

I got a spade flush. All right, boys--this game is seven card stud. Well ----

(Tells joke as he shuffles cards.)

This ole farmer is out in back of his house sittin' down throwin' corn to the chickens when all at once he hears a loud cackle and this young hen comes lickety-split around the side of the house with the rooster right behind her and gaining on her fast.

Stanley

(Impatiently.)

Deal the cards----

Steve

(Resumes story and deals.)

But when the rooster catches sight of the farmer throwin' the corn he puts on the brakes and lets the hen get away and starts pecking corn. And the old farmer says, "Lord God, I hopes I never gits that hongry!"

(Finishes deal. Pablo and Steve enjoy story.

The three men commence playing in earnest.

Stella and Blanche appear from down left, come onto the porch. Blanche carries a paper lantern in a paper bag.)

Stella

(At closed front door.)

The game is still going on.

Blanche

How do I look?

Stella

Lovely, Blanche.

(Turns to door.)

Blanche

Wait before you open the door till I powder.

(Hands Stella paper bag.)

I felt so hot and frazzled. Do I look done in?

Stella

You look as fresh as a daisy.

Blanche

What nonsense!

(Blanche finishes powdering, takes back her parcel, Stella opens door. Blanche enters first, crossing above table to near door between rooms. Stella pauses above table.)

Stella

(Enters, crosses right to upstage table.)

Well, well, well, I see you boys are still at it!

Stanley

Where you been?

Stella

Blanche and I took in a show. Blanche, this is Mr. Gonzales and Mr. Hubbell.

(Indicates the men.)

Pablo

Hiyah!

Blanche

Please don't get up.

(Absently, Steve starts to rise, looking at his cards.)

Stanley

(Restraining Steve.)

Nobody's going to get up, so don't get worried.

Stella

How much longer is this game going to continue?

(Crosses up a bit.)

Stanley

(Taking a drink.)

Till we get ready to quit.

Blanche

(Crosses to chair number four.)

Poker is so fascinating. Could I kibitz?

(Reaches for a card.)

Stanley

(Slapping at her hand.)

You could not!

Blanche

Excuse me!

(She goes into bedroom. Stella has taken Pablo's coat off couch, hands it across table. Stanley whips it out of her hand, it falls to floor. Pablo yells: "My coat!", jumps up to retrieve it, placing it over back of his chair, resuming his place in game.)

Stanley

Why don't you women go up to Eunice's?

Stella

Because it's nearly two thirty.

(Stella is to right of Stanley. Blanche has gone into bedroom. Puts her hat and gloves on bed and her bag and package on dressing table. Then sits on bed.)

Couldn't you call it quits after one more hand?

(Crosses upstage to bed. Stanley whacks her on the backside.)

That's not fun, Stanley!

(Angrily she crosses to bedroom. Pablo laughs, and men continue playing cards. To Blanche.)

It makes me so mad when he does that in front of people.

Blanche

I think I will bathe.

Stella

Again?

Blanche

My nerves are in knots. Is the bathroom occupied?

(Rises.)

Stella

I don't know.

(Sits in left chair in bedroom. Blanche has crossed to bathroom door, and knocks. Mitch opens door, comes out, towel in hand.)

Blanche

Oh!--good evening!

Mitch

Hello.

(Stares at her.)

Stella

Oh! Blanche, this is Harold Mitchell. My sister, Blanche DuBois.

Blanche

How do you do?

Mitch

(With awkward courtesy.)

How do you do, Miss DuBois?

Stella

How is your mother, Mitch?

(Card game is finished. They rise.)

Mitch

About the same, thanks.

(Stepping down from step to floor.)

She appreciated your sending over that custard.

(He starts forward, awkwardly, but cannot pass between the girls.)

Excuse me, please.

(Girls ad lib--"Oh excuse me," and Mitch makes his way past girls, to living room table and then to door center. Stella removes hat. The girls turn to watch him, smiling at his confusion. At door, he realizes he still is clutching towel. Overcome with embarrassment, he steps back into room and hands it to Stella. Quickly, she puts it on bed rail. He pushes aside curtains and returns to game. Shortly after seating himself, he gets into his shoes. Pablo deals. Girls giggle.)

Blanche

(Moving to center door, unfastening dress.)

That one seems--superior to the others.

Stella

(Puts her hat on bureau, then goes to closet, returns with bathrobe, nightgown and slippers.)

Yes, he is.

Blanche

I thought he had a sort of sensitive look.

(Crosses to vanity.)

Stella

His mother is sick.
(They both giggle.)

Blanche

(Takes off dress.)
Is he married?

Stella

(Takes off shoes.)
No.
(Puts robe on chair.)

Blanche

Is he a wolf?

Stella

(Puts on slippers.)
Why, Blanche!
(Blanche giggles.)
No! I don't think he would be.

Blanche

(Crosses to left chair.)
What does--what does he do?

Stella

(Takes off her dress at dressing table.)
He's on the precision bench in the spare parts department. At the plant that Stanley travels for.

Blanche

Is that something much?

Stella

No, Stanley's the only one of his crowd that's likely to get anywhere.

Blanche

What makes you think Stanley will?
(Puts on slippers.)

Stella

Look at him.

(Stanley is drinking from bottle.)

Blanche

(Crosses to doorway.)
I've looked at him.

Stella

Then you should know.

Blanche

I'm sorry but I haven't noticed the stamp of genius on Stanley's forehead.

Stella

It isn't on his forehead and it isn't genius.

Blanche

Oh. Well, what is it, and where? I would like to know.

Stella

It's a drive he has. Blanche, you're standing in the light.

Blanche

(With a little cry, as if she didn't know!
Crosses to chair and sits.)

Oh, am I! Gracious!

Stella

(In a suppressed aside to Blanche.)

You ought to see their wives.

Blanche

(Almost laughing.)

I can imagine. Big, beefy things, I suppose.

Stella

(Crosses to Blanche--carries robe and night-gown. Giggling.)

You know that one upstairs . . . ?

Blanche

(Also giggling. Crosses to left chair.)

Oh, that horror!

Stella

(Almost overcome with laughter.)

Well, one night--the plaster cracked----!

(She nearly collapses with laughter.

. Blanche crosses to vanity. Blanche
is in Stella's arms, laughing her head off.)

Stanley

(Who is losing at cards.)

You hens cut out that conversation in there!

Stella

(Crossing a step upstage.)

You can't hear us!

Stanley

Well, you can hear me and I said to hush up!

Stella

(Crosses to doorway.)

Look! This is my house and I'll talk as much as I want to!

Blanche

Stella, don't make a row.

Stella

Oh, he's half drunk.

(Picks up towel Mitch left, from bed rail, starts for bathroom. Blanche adjusts screen below bed.)

Stanley

(To Mitch, who has been looking over shoulder into bedroom.)

All right, Mitch--you in?

(Blanche turns on radio.)

Stella

I'll be out in a minute.

(She goes into bathroom, taking robe, slippers, nightgown and towel, closing door.)

Mitch

(Pulling his attention back to game.)

What? Oh, no--I'm out!

(He starts to pull himself together, lacing his shoes, and getting his jacket. Blanche is adjusting screen around foot of bed in bedroom. Radio blares out a rumba.)

Stanley

(Bellowing at bedroom.)

Who turned that on in there?

Blanche

(Peeking through curtains into living room.)

I did. Do you mind?

Stanley

Turn it off!

(Blanche ignores Stanley, turns back to screen.)

Steve

Aw, let the girls have their music!

Pablo

Sure, that's good, Stanley! Leave it on!

Steve

Sounds like Xavier Cugat!

(Stanley jumps up, crosses through curtains to radio. Turns it off. Blanche cries: "Stanley!" Stands regarding Blanche for a long, silent pause, then returns to game. Pablo puts down his cards. Blanche moves dressing table chair into position at lower end of dressing table, facing down right center. Sits. Steve, arguing with Pablo about the game.)

I didn't hear you name it!

Pablo

Didn't name it, Mitch?

Mitch

I wasn't listenin'.

Pablo

What were you doin' then?

Stanley

He was looking through them drapes. Now, deal the hand over again and let's play cards or quit. Some people gets ants when they win!

(Mitch is on his feet, getting his jacket on.)

Sit down!

Mitch

(Puts on his coat. Leaning over table from left side, confidentially.)

I'm going to the "head." Deal me out.

Steve

(Dealing.)

Sure, he's got ants now. Seven five-dollar bills in his

pants pocket folded up tight as spit balls.

(Mitch is taking Sen-Sen from small envelope in jacket pocket. Blanche returns.)

Pablo

Tomorrow you'll see him at the cashier's window getting them changed into quarters.

(Mitch pops Sen-Sen into his mouth, restores envelope to pocket.)

Stanley

And when he goes home, he'll deposit them one by one in a piggy-bank.

Steve

(Dealing.)

All right, boys--this game is Spit in the Ocean.

(Men resume their play. Mitch moves to bath room.)

Blanche

Yes?

(Mitch enters bedroom, spies Blanche. Pulls curtain closed behind him.)

Oh, hello.

Mitch

Hello.

(Mitch makes a little gesture towards bathroom, crosses below her to bathroom door.)

Excuse me.

Blanche

(Sitting at vanity.)

The Little Boys' Room is busy right now.

Mitch

(Pausing at foot of bathroom door, embarrassed.)

We've--been drinking beer.

(Crosses back toward center.)

Blanche

I hate beer.

Mitch

(Up by armchair.)

It's--a hot weather drink.

Blanche

Oh, I don't think so, it always makes me warmer.

(Waving her cigarette-holder.)
Have you got any cigs?

Mitch
(Reaching for his case. Crosses to Blanche.)
Sure.

Blanche
What kind?

Mitch
(Crossing to her right with open case.)
Luckies.

Blanche
(Taking one, fitting it into her cigarette-
holder.)
Oh, good.

(Noticing case.)
What a pretty case, Silver?

Mitch
Yes. Yes, read the inscription.
(She takes case.)

Blanche
(Peering at case.)
Oh, is there an inscription? I can't make it out.
Oh!

(Reads with feigned difficulty.)
"And if God choose, I shall but love thee better after
death!" Why, that's from my favorite sonnet by Mrs.
Browning!

Mitch
(Takes case from her.)
You know it?

Blanche
I certainly do!

Mitch
(Lights her cigarette.)
There's a story connected with that inscription.

Blanche
It sounds like a romance.

Mitch
A pretty sad one. The girl's dead now.

(Card game is finished. Pablo deals new hand.)

Blanche
(In a tone of deep sympathy.)
Oh!

Mitch
She knew she was dying when she give me this. A very strange girl, very sweet--very!

Blanche
She must have been very fond of you. Sick people have such deep sincere attachments.

Mitch
That's right. They certainly do.

Blanche
Sorrow makes for sincerity, I think.

Mitch
It sure brings it out in people.

Blanche
The little there is belongs to people who have know some sorrow.

Mitch
(Crosses to Blanche.)
I believe you are right about that.

Blanche
I'm positive that I am. Show me a person that hasn't known sorrow and I'll show you a superficial person. Listen to me! My tongue is a little thick! You boys are responsible for it. The show let out at eleven and we couldn't come home on account of the poker game so we had to go somewhere and drink. I'm not accustomed to having more than one drink. Two is my limit--and three!

(Laughs.)
Tonight I had three.

Stanley
(Bellowing.)
Mitch!

Mitch

(Crosses to door.)

Deal me out. I'm talking to Miss----

Blanche

DuBois.

Mitch

(Repeating name into living room.)

DuBois.

(Pulls curtains back into place, turns to Blanche.)

Blanche

It's a French name. It means woods and Blanche means white so the two together mean white woods. Like an orchard in spring! You can remember it by that--if you care to.

Mitch

You're French?

Blanche

We are French by extraction. Our first American ancestors were French Huguenots.

Mitch

You are Stella's sister, are you not?

Blanche

Yes, Stella is my precious little sister. I call her little in spite of the fact that she's somewhat older than I.

Mitch

Oh!

Blanche

Just a little. Less than a year.

Mitch

Uh-huh.

Blanche

Will you do something for me?

Mitch

Sure. Yes, what?

(Crosses in to her.)

Blanche

(Moves to chair for lantern and hands it to Mitch.)

I bought this adorable little colored paper lantern at a Chinese shop on Bourbon. Put it over the light bulb! Will you, please?

Mitch

(Unfolding lantern.)

Be glad to.

(Card game is finished. Stanley deals.)

Blanche

I can't stand a naked light bulb, any more than I can a rude remark or a vulgar action.

(Crosses to front of chair.)

Mitch

(Fussing clumsily with lantern, as if it were an accordion.)

I guess we strike you as being a pretty rough bunch.

Blanche

I'm very adaptable--to circumstances.

Mitch

Well, that's a good thing to be. You are visiting Stanley and Stella?

Blanche

Stella hasn't been so well lately, and I came down to help her for a while. She's very run down.

Mitch

You're not----?

Blanche

Married? No. No, I'm an old maid school teacher.
(Sits in bedroom chair.)

Mitch

You may teach school but you're certainly not an old maid.

Blanche

Thank you sir! I appreciate your gallantry!

Mitch

(Working with lantern.)

So you are in the teaching profession?

Blanche

(Moves down to opposite Mitch.)

Yes. Ah, yes . . .

Mitch

(Fussing with lantern, swings bracket downstage.)

Grade school or high school or---?

Stanley

(Bellowing.)

Hey, Mitch!

(Starts up. Men restrain him.)

Mitch

(Bellowing back.)

Coming!

(Blanche collapses into chair by dressing table. Stanley sits, glowering, resumes game.)

Blanche

Gracious, what lung power! I teach high school. In Laurel.

Mitch

(Puts lantern on bracket.)

What do you teach? What subject?

Blanche

You guess!

Mitch

I bet you teach art of music?

(Blanche laughs delicately.)

Of course I could be wrong. You might teach arithmetic.

Blanche

Never arithmetic, sir, never arithmetic!

(Laughs.)

I don't even know my multiplication tables! No, I have the misfortune of being an English instructor. I attempt to instill a bunch of bobby-soxers and drug-store Romeos with a reverence for Hawthorn and Whitman and Poe!

Mitch

(Crosses half way to hor.)

I gues that some of them are more interested in other things.

Blanche

How very right you are! Their literary heritage is not what they treasure above all else! But they're sweet things! And in the spring, it's touching to notice them making their first discovery of love! As if nobody had ever known it before!

(They laugh together. Mitch mutters "Excuse me," and steps back, just as Stella opens bathroom door. He is in her way, and turns around rather foolishly, nearly bumping first into Stella, then almost backing into Blanche, who rises, and looks at lantern.)

Oh, have you finished?

Mitch

Hm?

(Notices lantern.)

Oh, yes!

(Starts to switch on bracket.)

Blanche

No. Wait! I'll turn on the radio!

(She crosses to radio, turns it on, it plays "Wien! Wien!")

Turn on the light above now!

(Mitch snaps on light.)

Oh, look! We've made enchantment!

(Crosses to Mitch at vanity. Begins to dance about the room to music. Stella, standing in bathroom door, applauds. Mitch, standing in doorway, sings and sways to music, enjoying the impromptu completely.)

Stanley

(Declaring hand.)

Three bullets! You dirty greaser!

Pablo

Straight! I got you!

(Stanley leaps up from poker game, rushes through curtains, begins pulling radio out of its socket.)

Blanche

Stella!

Stella

(Shouting at Stanley, rushes across to below him.)

Stanley! What are you doing to my radio?

(He throws radio on floor. Stella clutching at him from behind. He says, "Get the hell out of my way!" Throws her off.)

Drunk--drunk--animal thing, you!

(Blanche opens drapes between rooms. Mitch argues with Stanley about radio. Stella rushes into living room, shoving at Steve, then crossing below table, pushing Pablo. Men rise, Stella returns upstage, pushes Steve.)

Steve

Take it easy, Stella!

(In bedroom, Stanley has stopped below Mitch to tell him, "That's the last time you'll play the radio during my poker game!")

Stella

(Pushing Steve and Pablo over right.)

All of you--please go home! If any one of you have one spark of decency in you--

(Stanley hears rumpus in living room, and charges in. Steve stops him. Pushes Steve aside.)

Blanche

(Crosses with Stanley left.)

Stella, watch out, he's----!

(Stanley takes after Stella, who retreats behind door, up left. Men quickly follow to pull him off.)

Steve

Take it easy, Stanley. Easy, fellow----

Stella

You lay your hands on me and I'll----

(Stanley follows Stella out. Sound of a blow struck behind door. Stella cries out. Blanche screams, clutches Mitch's arm, urging

him to help Stella. Mitch hurries into living room to aid in pulling Stanley off Stella.)

Blanche
(Shrilly. To Mitch. She is at chair in bedroom.)

My sister is going to have a baby!

Mitch

This is terrible!

Blanche
(Retreats below dressing table, stubs out cigarette in ash-tray.)

Lunacy, absolute lunacy!

Mitch

Get him in here, men.

(Pablo up. Each on arms of Stanley and sits him down in number three.)

Stella
(Staggering into doorway.)

Mitch

(Crossing center toward Blanche.)

Poker shouldn't be played in a house with women.

Blanche

There are my sister's clothes! We'll go to that woman's upstairs!

Mitch

(In bedroom.)

Where is the clothes?

Blanche

(Getting coat from closet.)

I've got them! Stella, Stella, precious! Dear, dear little sister, don't be afraid!

(Crosses to Stella, puts coat on shoulders, ushers Stella up spiral stair, murmuring, "Did he hurt you?" etc., consolingly. Mitch follows them to door.)

Mitch

(Repeating.)

Poker should not be played in a house with women.

Stanley

(At table, number three.)

What's the matter? What happened?

(Men get Stanley to his feet. Steve is at his right, Pablo at his left. Mitch comes to right of group.)

Mitch

What happened? I'll tell you what happened. You just blew your top, that's what happened!

Pablo

(Holding Stanley up.)

He's okay now.

Steve

(Holding Stanley up.)

Sure, my boy's okay!

Mitch

Put him on the bed and get a wet towel.

Pablo

I think coffee would do him more good now!

Steve

Let's get him some cold water!

Mitch

Put him under the shower and give him plenty of cold water!

(Gives Steve a shove toward right. Men pull the struggling Stanley right toward bathroom, Mitch following and pushing. Heard through curses and groans of the struggle.)

He shouldn't live with nice women! He don't deserve to! He don't know how to treat 'em! Put him under the shower!

(Jazz band is heard. Men vanish into bathroom, pushing Stanley ahead of them. In bathroom, a terrific struggle, cries, oaths, a crash. Mitch emerges, shaking splashed water from his sleeves. Crossing through two rooms to front door. Sadly, firmly.)

Poker should not be played in a house with women.

(Goes out, looks up spiral stair, exits up right. Pablo and Steve hurry out before Stanley's violence. They gather up money

from table.)

Pablo

(Taking up money and coat from back of chair.)
Let's get the hell out of here!

(Rushes out door, exits down right with a groan. Steve follows him out, starts up spiral stair. Eunice shouts from above: "Steve!" Steve mutters, "Oh-oh!" and hurries out down right. Lights in apartment are dimming. Stanley, after a moment, comes from bathroom. Flops on table, number three, moans. Looks about for Stella, moving uncertainly, weaving through the rooms. Pauses by phone. Takes it up. Tries to recall a number. Finally dials.)

Stanley

(Muttering into phone.)
Eunice, is my girl up there? I want my girl! I'll keep on ringin' till I talk with my baby!

(Slams phone back into place. Stanley stumbles out onto porch. Looks up spiral stair, throws back his head like a baying hound and bellows.)
Stell-lahhhhh!

Eunice

(Above.)
You quit that howlin' down there an' go back to bed!

Stanley

Eunice, I want my girl down here!

Eunice

She ain't comin' down, so you quit! Or you'll git the law on you!

Stanley

Stel-lahh!

Eunice

You can't beat on a woman and then call her back! She won't come, and her goin' to have a baby!

Eunice

I hope they do haul you in and turn the fire hose on you the same as last time!

Stanley
Eunice, I want my girl down here with me!

Eunice
You stinker! You whelp of a Polack, you!
(Slams door above.)

Stanley
(Hollers at bottom of steps with heaven-splitting violence.)

STELL-AHHHH! STELL----

(Stella comes down. Pauses near bottom step. Stanley falls to his knees, pressing his face into her belly. He weeps. Rises, and takes her into his arms, turning onto porch. Her feet are off the ground. As Stella kisses him passionately.)

Don't ever leave me . . . don't ever leave me . . . sweet-heart . . . baby . . .

(Lights in rooms are out, except for a feeble glow through shattered fan-light, a glimmer through paper lantern, and a shaft from open door of bathroom. Stanley carries Stella to their bed. Blanche runs down spiral stair, looks into apartment, hesitantly enters, recoils from what she sees, darts back to porch, closing door behind her. Looks about, distraught. Considers going back upstairs. Turns to Stella's door, finally leans against it with a troubled sigh. Mitch appears from up right. Sees Blanche. Comes to rail to right of spiral stair, leans towards Blanche. Fade off band.)

Blanche
Where is my little sister? Stella--Stella!

Mitch
(On porch.)
Miss DuBois . . .

Blanche
Oh!

Mitch
All quiet on the Potomac now?

Blanche
She ran downstairs and went back in there with him.

Mitch

Sure she did.

Blanche

I'm terrified!

Mitch

(Coming to left of Blanche.)

There's nothing to be scared of. They're crazy about each other.

Blanche

I'm not used to such-----

Mitch

(Crosses to beside her.)

It's a shame this had to happen when you just got here. But don't take it serious.

Blanche

(Crosses down.)

Violence! Is so-----

Mitch

(Gestures toward steps.)

Set down on the steps and have a cigarette with me.
(Gets out case.)

Blanche

I'm not properly dressed.

Mitch

(He sits on bottom step; Blanche, on top step.)

That don't make no difference in the Quarter.

Blanche

Such a pretty silver case.

Mitch

I showed you the inscription, didn't I?

Blanche

Yes.

(Pause. She looks at him.)

There's so much confusion in the world. Thank you for being so kind! I need kindness now.

(Fade out. Street cries commence, and are heard through change.)

ACT I

Scene 4

(Early the following morning. As the lights dim up. Stella is lounging in armchair in bedroom. Blanche enters from Eunice's down steps. Rooms are still in disarray from poker game of night before. Stella's eyes and lips have that almost narcotized tranquillity that is in the faces of eastern idols. Blanche opens door, and hurries into apartment.)

Blanche

(Entering.)

Stella?

Stella

(Stirring lazily.)

Hmmh?

(Blanche crosses to Stella in bedroom.)

Blanche

Baby, my baby sister!

Stella

(Drawing away.)

Blanche, what is the matter with you?

Blanche

(Looking about.)

He's left?

Stella

Stan? Yes.

Blanche

Will he be back?

Stella

He's gone to get the car greased. Why?

Blanche

Why!--I've been half-crazy, Stella! When I found out you'd been insane enough to come back in here after what happened!--I started to rush in after you.

Stella

I'm glad you didn't.

Blanche

What on earth were you thinking of?

(Stella makes an indefinite gesture.)

Answer me! What! What!

Stella

Please, Blanche! Sit down and stop yelling.

Blanche

(Sits at vanity.)

All right, Stella. I will repeat the question quietly now. How could you have come back in this place last night? Why, you must have slept with him!

Stella

(Rises.)

Blanche, I'd forgotten how excitable you are. You're making too much fuss about this.

Blanche

Am I?

Stella

(Kneeling in chair, which faces center, looking in mirror.)

Yes, you are, Blanche. I know how it must have seemed to you, and I'm awful sorry it had to happen, but it wasn't anything as serious as you seem to take it. In the first place when men are drinking and playing poker anything can happen. It's always a powder-keg. He didn't know what he was doing. . . . He was as good as a lamb when I came back and he's really very, very ashamed of himself.

Blanche

And that--that makes it all right?

Stella

No, it isn't all right for anybody to make such a terrible row, but--people do sometimes. Stanley's always smashed things. Why, on our wedding night--soon as we came in here--he snatched off one of my slippers and rushed about the place smashing the light-bulbs with it.

Blanche

He did--what?

Stella

(Arranging dressing table chair to face mirror.)

He smashed all the light-bulbs with the heel of my slipper!

Blanche

(Crossing to above dressing table.)

And you--you let him--you didn't run, you didn't scream?

Stella

I was sort of--thrilled by it.

(Crosses to kitchen.)

Eunice and you had breakfast?

Blanche

Do you suppose I wanted any breakfast?

Stella

There's some coffee left on the stove.

Blanche

(Crosses to doorway.)

You're so--matter of fact about it, Stella.

Stella

What other can I be? He's taken the radio to get it fixed.

(Gurgles pleasantly.)

It didn't hit too hard, so only one tube was smashed.

(Blanche crosses to Stella at upstage table.)

Blanche

And you are standing there smiling!

Stella

What do you want me to do?

Blanche

Pull yourself together and face the facts.

Stella

What are they, in your opinion?

Blanche

In my opinion? You're married to a madman.

Stella

No!

Blanche
 Yes, you are, your fix is worse than mine is! Only you're not old! You can get out.

Stella
 (Crosses to kitchen cabinet.)
 I'm not in anything I want to get out of.

Blanche
 (Incredulously.)
 What--Stella?

Stella
 I said I am not in anything I have a desire to get out of. Look at the mess in this room!--And those empty bottles!

(Surveys mess in living room. Moves above and around table, picking up cards, and putting them down. Blanche sits on trunk.)
 They went through two cases last night!
 (At right of table.)
 He promised this morning he was going to quit having these poker parties, but you know how long such a promise is going to keep. Oh, well, it's his pleasure, like mine is movies and bridge. People have got to tolerate each other's habits, I guess.

Blanche
 I don't understand you.
 (Stella whinnies pleasantly, moves up right for broom.)
 I don't understand your indifference. Is this a Chinese philosophy you've--cultivated?
 (Crosses to Stella, stands below bed.)

Stella
 (Turning to Blanche, swaying broom idly in her hands, straw end in front of Blanche's face.)
 Is what--what?

Blanche
 (Speaking with difficulty as Stella whirls broom before her eyes.)
 This--shuffling about and mumbling--"One tube smashed--beer bottles--mess in the kitchen!"--as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened. Are you deliberately shaking that thing in my face?

Stella
 No.

Blanche
 (Pushing broom aside.)
 Stop it! Put is down! I won't have you cleaning up
 after him!

Stella
 Then who's going to do it? Are you?
 (Hands broom to Blanche.)

Blanche
 (Leaves broom by icebox.)
 I----? I!
 (Crosses to left. Business used by Stella
 in tidying up the room may vary slightly: the
 example herein often holds true.)

Stella
 No, I didn't think so.
 (Moves below table, starts gathering up cards.)

Blanche
 (Crosses down left.)
 Oh, let me think, if only my mind would function!--We've
 got to get hold of some money, that's the way out!

Stella
 I guess that money is always nice to get hold of.

Blanche
 Now listen to me. I have an idea of some kind. Do you
 remember Shep Huntleigh?

Stella
 (Crosses behind table. Puts cards in drawer
 of table.)

No.
 (Kneels by table, gathers up bottles.)

Blanche
 Of course you remember Shep Huntleigh. I went out with
 him at college and wore his pin for a while. Well----

Stella
 Well?

Blanche
 I ran into him last winter. You know I went to Miami
 during the Christmas holidays?

Stella

No.

Blanche

Well, I did. I took the trip as an investment, thinking I'd meet someone with a million dollars.

Stella

(Cleaning. Crosses to table. Takes bottles to kitchen cabinet.)

Did you?

Blanche

Yes, I ran into Shep Huntleigh----I ran into him on Biscayne Boulevard on Christmas eve about dusk . . . getting into his car----Cadillac convertible, must have been a block long!

Stella

(Places upper chair in original position.)

I should think it would have been inconvenient in traffic!

Blanche

(Airily. Crosses upstage.)

You've heard of oil-wells?

Stella

(Pulls table to original position. Takes green baize off table--tucks it under left arm. Replaces ash-tray on table.)

Yes, remotely.

Blanche

He has them all over Texas. Texas is literally spouting gold in his pocket.

Stella

My, my!

Blanche

(Crosses to table.)

Y'know how indifferent I am to money. I think of money in terms of what it does for you. But he could do it, he could certainly do it!

Stella

Do what, Blanche?

Blanche

(Turning to Stella.)

Why--set us up in a--shop!

Stella

(At cabinet.)

What kind of a shop?

Blanche

(Crosses down left.)

Oh, a--shop of some kind!--He could do it with half what his wife throws away at the races.

Stella

Oh, he's married?

Blanche

(Turning back.)

Honey, would I be here if the man weren't married.

(Stella laughs a bit. Blanche darts to phone in bedroom.)

How do I get Western Union?

(Shrilly, into phone.)

Operator! Western Union!

Stella

(Making up bed.)

That's a dial phone, honey.

Blanche

(Sits in bedroom chair.)

I can't dial, I'm too---

Stella

Just dial "0."

Blanche

(Considers a moment, puts phone down, goes to dressing table.)

Give me a pencil. Where is a slip of paper?

(Gets Kleenex and eyebrow pencil from dressing table.)

I've got to write it down first--the message, I mean . . .

(Uses plain table to write. Stella moves into bedroom. Blanche, writing.)

Now then--let me see---- "Darling Shep. Sister and I in desperate situation."

Stella

I beg your pardon!

Blanche

(Thinking aloud.)

"Sister and I in desperate situation. Will explain details

later. Would you be interested in--? Would you be--in-
 terested in . . ."

(Crumples Kleenex, dabs throat.)

You never get anywhere with direct appeals!

Stella

(Laughs. Crosses to chair.)

Darling, don't be so ridiculous!

Blanche

(Rises, crosses to vanity, tosses Kleenex into
 wastebasket above dressing table, throws pencil
 onto dressing table. Picks up purse on dressing
 table.)

But I'll think of something, I've got to think of--some-
 thing! Don't, don't laugh at me, Stella! Please, please
 don't laugh at me--I want you to look at the contents of
 my purse!

(Opens purse, takes out coins.)

Here's what's in it! Sixty-five measly cents in coin of
 the realm!

(Flings coins on vanity. Crosses to left of
 armchair, purse open on left arm.)

Stella

(Crosses to vanity, takes up folded currency.)

Stanley doesn't give me a regular allowance, he likes to
 pay bills himself, but--this morning he gave me ten
 dollars to smooth things over. You take five of it,
 Blanche, and I'll keep the rest.

(Thrusts a bill at Blanche.)

Blanche

(Crosses downstage of Stella.)

Oh, no. No, Stella!

Stella

(Insisting.)

I know how it helps your morale just having a little
 pocket-money on you.

Blanche

(Melodramatically. Sits in chair.)

No, thank you--I'll take to the streets!

Stella

(Puts money in Blanche's purse.)

Talk sense! How did you happen to get so low on funds?

(Closes Blanche's purse.)

Blanche
 Money goes--it just goes places.
 (Rubs forehead.)
 Some time today I've got to get hold of a Bromo!

Stella
 I'll fix you one now.
 (Starts left towards bathroom.)

Blanche
 (Restraining her.)
 Not yet--I've got to keep thinking.

Stella
 (Crosses to head of bed.)
 I wish you'd just let things go, at least for a--while . . .

Blanche
 Stella, I can't live with him! You can, he's your husband.
 How could I stay here with him after last night, with just
 these curtains between us?
 (Tugs at curtains between rooms. Crosses to
 Stella.)

Stella
 Blanche, you saw him at his worst last night.

Blanche
 (Above armchair.)
 On the contrary, I saw him at his best! What such a man
 has to offer is animal force and he gave a wonderful ex-
 hibition of that!--But the only way to live with such
 a man is to--go to bed with him! And that's your job--
 not mine!

Stella
 After you've rested a little, you'll see it's going to
 work out. You don't have to worry about anything while
 you're here. I mean--expenses . . .

Blanche
 (Crosses down stage.)
 Stella, I have a plan for us both to get us both out!

Stella
 (Slamming a powder-box down on dressing table.)
 Will you stop taking it for granted that I am in some-
 thing I want to get out of?

Blanche

I take it for granted that you still have sufficient memory of Belle Reve to find this place and these poker players impossible to live with.

(Crosses to Stella.)

Stella

(Sitting at vanity.)

Well, you're taking entirely too much for granted.

Blanche

I can't believe you're in earnest.

Stella

No?

Blanche

I understand how it happened--a little. You saw him in uniform, an officer, not here but--

Stella

(Wiping picture with Kleenex.)

I'm not sure it would have made any difference where I saw him.

Blanche

Now don't tell me it was one of those mysterious electric things between people!--if you do, I'll laugh in your face.

Stella

(Violently throws paper in basket.)

I am not going to say anything more at all about it.

Blanche

(Crosses left.)

All right, then, don't!

Stella

But there are things that happen between a man and a woman in the dark--that sort of makes everything else seem--unimportant.

(Pause.)

Blanche

(Crosses down center.)

What you are talking about is brutal desire--just--Desire!--the name of that rattle-trap street-car that bangs through the Quarter, up one old narrow street and down another . . .

Stella

Haven't you ever ridden on the street-car?

Blanche

It brought me here--where I'm not wanted and where I'm ashamed to be.

Stella

Then don't you think your superior attitude is a bit out of place?

Blanche

(Crosses to Stella.)

I am not being or feeling at all superior, Stella. Believe me, I'm not! It's just this. This is how I look at it. A man like that is someone to go out with--once--twice--three times when the devil is in you. But live with? Have a child by?

Stella

I have told you I love him.

Blanche

(Crosses to bed.)

Then I tremble for you!--I just--tremble for you . . .

Stella

I can't help your trembling if you insist on trembling!

(Pause. Sound: Whistle and roar of approaching train.)

Blanche

(Above armchair.)

May I--speak--plainly?

Stella

Yes, do. Go ahead. As plainly as you want to.

(They are silent as train roars past. Blanche stands below bed, hands to her ears, face turned to closet, shutting out the racket.

- Under cover of the train's noise, Stanley enters living room from down right. Carries a tin of oil, and is covered with grease. Stands inside door, near ice-box, unseen by

Blanche and Stella, but visible to audience,
overhears the women's conversation.)

Blanche

(Moving down left a bit, above Stella.)

Well--if you'll forgive me--he's common!

Stella

Why, yes, I suppose he is.

Blanche

Suppose! You can't have forgotten that much of our
bringing up, Stella, that you just suppose that any part
of a gentleman's in his nature! Not one particle, no!
Oh, if he was just ordinary!

(Stanley rises and listens.)

--Just--plain--but good and wholesome, but--No--. There's
something downright--bestial--about him!--You're hating me
saying this, aren't you?

(Moves down left.)

Stella

(Coldly.)

Go on and say it all, Blanche.

Blanche

(Moves in left area.)

He acts like an animal, has an animal's habits! Eats
like one, moves like one, talks like one! There's even
something--sub-human--something not quite to the stage
of humanity yet! Yet--something--ape-like about him,
like one of those pictures I've seen in--anthropological
studies!

(Crosses to Stella.)

Thousands and thousands of years have passed him right by,
and there he is--Stanley Kowalski--Survivor of the Stone
Age! Bearing the raw meat home from the kill in the jungle!
And you--you here--waiting for him! Maybe he'll strike
you, or maybe grunt and kiss you! That is if kisses have
been discovered yet!

(Moves upstage.)

Night falls, and the other apes gather! There in front
of the cave, all grunting like him, and swilling and gnaw-
ing and hulking! His poker night!--you call it--this
party of apes! Somebody growls--some creature snatches at
something--the fight is on! God! Maybe we are a long
way from being made in God's image, but Stella--my
sister--there has been some progress since then! Such
things as art--as poetry and music--such kinds of new light

have come into the world since then! In some kinds of people some tenderer feelings have had some little beginning! That we have to make grow! And cling to, and hold as our flag! In this dark march toward whatever it is we're approaching . . . Don't--don't hang back with the brutes!

(Stanley hesitates, licking his lips.
Slams shut front door, and opens ice-box.
Blanche recoils.)

Stanley

Hey! Hey, Stella!

(Gets a beer from ice-box, opens it. Pause and long look between the sisters. Stella kisses Blanche.)

Stella

(Who has listened gravely to Blanche. Crosses in front of Blanche to kitchen.)

Yes, Stanley!

Blanche

(Whispering in agitation to Stella.)

Stella!

(She attempts to restrain Stella, who gets up goes to door between rooms, opens curtains. Blanche can't be seen.)

Stanley

Hiyah, Stella. Blanche back?

Stella

Yes, she's back.

(Blanche rises, moves to door between rooms, crowding close to pillar.)

Stanley

Hiyuh, Blanche.

(He has made a step or two center, and grins at Blanche.)

Stella

(Looking straight at Stanley. Crosses behind him down left.)

Looks like you got under the car.

Stanley

Them darn mechanics at Fritz's don't know their can from

third base!

(Takes drink from beer bottle. Slowly Stella moves below Blanche toward Stanley. Then, with a quick little run, she is in his arms. Stanley, as Stella throws herself fiercely at him in full view of Blanche.)

Hey!

(He swings her up with his body.)

ACT II

Scene I

(Some weeks later. The scene is a point of balance between the play's two sections, Blanche's coming and the events leading up to her violent departure. The important values are the ones that characterize Blanche: its function is to give her dimension as a character and to suggest the intense inner life which makes her a person of greater magnitude than she appears on the surface. Music is heard as house lights dim. Fades off at rise.)

AT RISE: Blanche is seated at table in living room, and has just completed writing a letter. Her purse is open on the table beside her. She bursts into a peal of laughter. Stella is seated on bed in bedroom, sewing on socks. She has sewing-box and three slips. Bed is turned down.)

Stella

What are you laughing at, honey?

Blanche

Myself, myself for being such a liar! I'm writing a letter to Shep.

(Picks up letter.)

"Darling Shep. I am spending the summer on the wing, making flying visits here and there. And who knows, perhaps I shall take a sudden notion to swoop down on Dallas! How would you feel about that?

(Laughs nervously and brightly, touching her throat as if actually talking to Shep.)

Forewarned is forearmed, as they say!"--How does that sound?

Stella

Uh-huh . . .

Blanche

(Continuing nervously.)

"Most of my sister's friends go north in the summer, but some have homes on the Gulf and there has been a continued round of entertainments, teas, cocktails, luncheons--"

(A disturbance breaks out in apartment above.)

Eunice

(Offstage.)

I know about you and that blonde!

Steve

That's a God-damned lie!

Eunice

You ain't pullin' the wool over my eyes! I wouldn't mind if you'd stay down at the Four Deuces it'd be all right! but you go up.

(During fray above--on the line "I wouldn't mind," Stella says:)

Stella

Eunice seems to be having some trouble with Steve.

Eunice

(Above.)

I seen you! You were chasing her around the balcony! I'm going to call the vice squad.

Steve

(Above.)

Don't you throw that at me, you----!

Eunice.

(Above.)

That's for you!

Steve

(Above.)

Now look at what you've done

(Eunice, above, screams as though she had been kicked.)

Blanche

Did he kill her?

(Door slam above. Eunice starts downstairs.)

Stella

No. You couldn't kill her.

Steve

You come back here.

Eunice

I'm going to call the police. I'm going to call the police.

(Coming downstairs, rubbing her backside, Stanley enters from down right. He carries package of laundry, wears his good suit. Enters apartment, throws laundry in living room on bed.)

Stanley

What's the matter with Eun-uss?

(He has jacket off, puts it on couch, opens laundry parcel. Steve starts down from above on the run.)

Stella

She and Steve had a row. Has she got the police?

Stanley

Naw, she's gettin' a drink.

Stella

That's much more practical.

Steve

(Bursting into living room, shirt-tail flying.)
She here?

Stanley

(Getting into a clean shirt.)
At the Four Deuces.

Steve

That ruttin' hunk!
(Dashes out down left, slamming door after him.)

Blanche

(Tucking Shep's letter into her purse, taking out small notebook.)
I must jot that down in my notebook. I'm compiling a notebook of quaint little words and phrases I've picked up here.

Stanley

(Crosses to bedroom. Standing above her, taking off jacket, putting it on bed, undoing fresh shirt.)
You won't pick up nothing here you ain't heard before.

Blanche

Can I count on that?

Stanley

You can count on that up to five hundred.

Blanche

That's a mighty high number.

(Stanley takes clean shirts to cabinet, opens lower drawer, tosses them in, kicks drawer shut, wads up paper laundry was wrapped in, tosses it in corner. Blanche, who has winced slightly at the noise.)

What sign were you born under?

Stanley

(Putting on shirt.)

What sign?

Blanche

(Crosses to bedroom door.)

Astrological sign. I bet you were born under Aries. Aries people are forceful and dynamic. They dote on noise! They love to bang things around. You must have had quite a lot of banging around in the army and now that you're out, you make up for it by treating inanimate objects with such a fury!

(Stanley has chosen a tie from among three hanging on a hook at left of cabinet.)

Stella

Stanley was born just five minutes after Christmas.

Blanche

(Pointing knowingly at Stanley. Dabbing handkerchief with cologne.)

Capricorn--the Goat!

Stanley

(Buttoning shirt. Crosses down back of table.)

What sign were you born under?

Blanche

Oh, my birthday's next month, the fifteenth of September, that's under Virgo?

Stanley

What's Virgo?

Blanche

Virgo is the Virgin.

(Stella rises.)

Stanley

(Contemptuously, with a look at Stella.
Tucks in shirt.)

Hah!

(Stella crosses to bureau with slips and
sewing-box. Puts box on bureau. Moves
close to Blanche, leans over her as he
ties his tie.)

Say, do you happen to know somebody named Shaw? Huh?

Blanche

(Her face shows faint shock.)

Why, everybody knows somebody named Shaw.

(Crosses to upstage table.)

Stanley

(Leaning over table. Buttoning shirt.
Crosses to kitchen for beer. Sits number
four.)

Well, this somebody named Shaw is under the impression
he met you in Laurel, but I figure he must have got you
mixed up with some other party, because this other party
is someone he met at a hotel called the Flamingo.

Blanche

(Laughing breathlessly as she touches cologne-
dampened handkerchief to her temples.)

I'm afraid he does have me mixed up with this "other
party."

(Rises, moves below table, and leans against
it, facing center. Carries purse on her arm.)

The Hotel Flamingo is not the sort of place I would dare
to be seen in!

Stanley

You know it?

Blanche

Yes, I've seen it and smelled it.

(Stella re-appears, crosses to table number
two.)

Stanley

(Tying necktie.)

You must've got pretty close if you could smell it.

Blanche

The odor of cheap perfume is penetrating.

Stanley

(Sits number four. Taking her handkerchief.)

That stuff you use is expensive?

(Smells handkerchief. Tosses it back to her.)

Blanche

(Dropping handkerchief behind her onto table.)

Twelve dollars an ounce!--I'm nearly out. That's just a hint in case you want to remember my birthday!

(Speaks lightly, but her voice has a note of fear. Stella crosses to bed, adjusts counterpane.)

Stanley

I figured he must have got you mixed up--but he goes in and out of Laurel all the time so he can check on it and clear up any mistake.

(Stella crosses to dressing table. Stanley crosses to doorway. Blanche closes her eyes as if to faint. Stanley crosses to daybed for jacket, calls into bedroom to Stella.)

I'll see you at the Four Deuces!

Stella

(As Stanley starts out.)

Hey! Don't I rate a kiss?

(Stanley turns. Steve and Eunice start in from down left.)

Stanley

Not in front of your sister.

(Goes out. Stella crosses to bed for socks. Blanche, carrying her handkerchief, crosses upstage. On porch, Stanley meets Steve and Eunice returning. Steve's arm is around Eunice, she is sobbing luxuriously, and he is cooing love words.)

Steve

(Softly.)

You know I don't love those girls.

Eunice

(Sobbing. Also sotto voce.)

I don't give a damn about those girls.

(They start upstairs. Stanley gestures helplessly, amused, after them. Stanley exits down right. Stella takes socks to cabinet-- puts them in top drawer after Steve and Eunice have gone up.)

You just forget you said it.

(Stella goes back to bureau in bedroom.)

Steve

I love you. You know I love you. I only do that with other girls because I love you.

(As they start up stairs, a great clap of thunder is heard. Blanche starts visibly.)

Blanche

(Running to Stella, holding purse in right hand.)

Stella!

Stella

Are you still frightened of thunder?

Blanche

(Crosses to vanity. Faint, her expression almost one of panic.)

What have you heard about me?

Stella

(At left of Blanche.)

Huh?

Blanche

What have people been telling you about me?

Stella

Telling?

Blanche

You haven't heard any--unkind--gossip about me?

Stella

(Crossing to below cabinet in living room
with socks.)

Why, no, Blanche, of course not!

Blanche

Honey, there was quite a lot of talk in Laurel--

Stella

(At cabinet.)

People talk. Who cares?

(Thunder.)

Blanche

(Rises, follows Stella.)

I haven't been so good the last two years or so, after Belle Reve had started to slip through my fingers. I was never hard or self-sufficient enough.

(Crosses down left.)

Soft people, soft people have got to shimmer and glow. They've got to put on soft colors, the colors of butterfly wings and put a paper lantern over the light. But it isn't enough to be soft--you've got to be soft and attractive--and I'm fading now. I don't know how much longer I can turn the trick. Have you been listening to me?

(Looks back at Stella)

Stella

(Dropping her eyes to avoid Blanche's gaze, crosses to kitchen, goes to ice-box, gets coke, opener and glass.)

I never listen to you when you're being morbid.

(Brings coke, glass, opener to table.
Thunder.)

Blanche

(Crosses downstage of Stella to number four.
With abrupt change to gaiety.)

Is that coke for me?

Stella

(Opening coke.)

Not for anyone else!

Blanche

Why, you precious thing, you! Is it just coke?

Stella
You mean you want a shot in it?

Blanche
Well, honey, a shot never did a coke any harm.
(Stella puts down coke, starts for kitchen cabinet to get liquor, then crosses down back of table.)

Let me!
(Crosses to Stella, leaving purse on left seat.)
You mustn't wait on me!

Stella
(At cabinet, getting bottle of whiskey and glass.)
I like to wait on you, Blanche. It makes it seem more like home.
(Pours shot in glass.)

Blanche
(Touching her face with handkerchief, she crosses to bedroom bed and sits.)
Well, I must admit I love to be waited on.

Stella
(Looks for Blanche, crosses to bedroom bed.)
Blanche . . . honey--what is it?

Blanche
You're--you're--so good to me! And I--

Stella
Blanche.

Blanche
I know, I won't! You hate me to talk sentimental! But honey, believe me, I feel things more than I tell you! I won't stay long! I won't, I promise I--

Stella
Blanche!

Blanche
(Hysterically.)
I won't, I promise, I'll go! Go soon! I will, really!-- I won't hang around until he--throws me out! . . .
(Laughs piercingly, grabs glass, but her hand shakes so it almost slips from her grasp.)

Stella

(Commencing to pour coke into glass.)

Now will you stop talking foolish?

Blanche

Yes. Now watch how you pour--

(Takes bottle from Stella to do her own pouring.)

That fizzy stuff foams over!

(She pours. It foams over, spills. Utters a piercing cry, sinks to her knees in front of bed.)

Stella

(Shocked by Blanche's cry, takes bottle from Blanche. Blanche jumps up, crosses to vanity.)

Heavens!

Blanche

(Putting glass on phone table. Stella keeps coke bottle on floor above her.)

Right on my pretty white skirt!

(Kneels, surveys damage.)

Stella

Use your hanky. Blot gently.

Blanche

(Slowly recovering.)

I know.--Gently--gently.

(Blots damp spot with handkerchief.)

Stella

Did it stain?

Blanche

Not a bit! Ha-ha! Isn't that lucky?

Stella

Why did you scream like that?

(Stella crosses to Blanche.)

Blanche

I don't know why I screamed!

(Continuing nervously, crosses down left.)

Mitch--Mitch is coming at seven. I guess I am just feeling nervous about our relations.

(She speaks rapidly, breathlessly.)

He hasn't gotten a thing but a good-night kiss, that's all I have given him, Stella. I want his respect. And men don't want anything they get too easily. But on the other hand, men lose interest quickly. Especially when the girl is over--thirty--They think a girl over thirty ought to--the vulgar expression is--"put out." . . . And I--I'm not "putting out." Of course, he--he doesn't know--I mean I haven't informed him--of my real age!

Stella

(Crosses to Blanche

Why are you sensitive about your age?

Blanche

Because of the hard knocks my vanity's been given. What I mean is--he thinks I'm sort of--prim and proper, you know!

(Laughs sharply.)

I want to deceive him just enough to make him--want me . . .

Stella

Blanche, do you want him?

Blanche

I want to rest! I want to breathe quietly again! Yes--I want Mitch. I want him very badly! Just think! If it happens!

(Crosses to bedroom chair and sits.)

I can leave here and not be anyone's problem . . .

(Stanley enters from down left with a drink under his belt.)

Stanley

(Bawling out.)

Hey, Steve!

Steve

(Above.)

Hey!

Stanley

Hey, Eunice!

Eunice

(From above.)

Hiyah, honey!

Stanley
 (Calling into his apartment.)
 Hey, Stella!

Stella
 It will happen!

Blanche
 (Doubtfully.)
 It will?

Stella
 It will! It will, honey, it will!!
 (Crosses to Blanche. Kisses her head.)
 But don't take another drink . . .
 (Starts for door. Eunice races down stairs, bellowing, "Come on, lover boy. Come on," and shouting with laughter, Steve in hot pursuit. Stanley clears for their descent. He clutches at Eunice, who eludes him with shrieks, runs out down left. Grabs Steve, holds him. Steve shrieks: "Hey! Let go!", and they struggle playfully. Stanley is thrown to steps. Steve runs out down left after Eunice, calling, "Hey, come back here, you little sweet patootie!" Stella comes onto porch. Stanley grabs at her.)

Stanley
 Hiyah, fatty!
 (Stella shrugs free, says, "Ah--let me go," and coolly goes out down left. Stanley, bewildered, looks after her. Then turns and looks back toward apartment, thinking of Blanche and her effect on his life. Soberly, he goes out down left. Sound of chimes off-stage. Blanche stretches and fans herself idly with a palm-leaf fan she has found lying to right of armchair on floor.)

Blanche
 Ah, me . . . ah, me . . . ah, me . . .
 (Young collector enters from down left, starts upstage, checks number on Stanley's apartment, rings bell.)
 Come in.
 (The light has grown dim. Collector enters a step. Blanche rises, comes to door between rooms. Carries her drink.)

Collector

Good evening, ma'am.

(Chimes fade away.)

Blanche

Well, well! What can I do for you!

Collector

(Above table in living room.)

I'm collecting for the Evening Star.

Blanche

(Crosses to him.)

I didn't know that stars took up collections.

Collector

It's the paper, ma'am.

Blanche

I know, I was joking--feebly! Will you--have a drink?
(Crosses to kitchen cabinet.)

Collector

No, ma'am. No, thanks. I can't drink on the job.

Blanche

(Puts her drink down behind left seat, goes to left seat, tskes up purse, looks in it. Puts handkerchief in purse.)

Well, now, let me see. . . . No, I haven't got a dime! I'm not the lady of the house. I'm her sister from Mississippi. I'm one of those poor relations you've heard tell about.

(Crosses to chair for cigarette and holder.)

Collector

That's all right, ma'am. I'll drop by later.
(Starts to go.)

Blanche

(Restraining him, a step forward.)

Hey!

(He turns. She puts cigarette into holder.)

Could you give me a light?

Collector

Sure.

(Takes out lighter, crosses to Blanche.)
 This doesn't always work.
 (He tries lighter unsuccessfully.)

Blanche
 It's temperamental?
 (It flares, she gets her light, touching his hand.)
 Ah! Thank you.

Collector
 (Starts away.)
 Thank you!

Blanche
 (Pauses almost at door.)
 What time is it?

Collector
 (Consulting wrist watch. Crosses in above table to center.)
 Fifteen of seven, ma'am.

Blanche
 (Crosses to him, facing him.)
 So late? Don't you just love these long rainy afternoons in New Orleans when an hour isn't just an hour--but a little bit of eternity dropped in your hands--and who knows what to do with it?
 (Crosses to him. Touching his shoulders.)
 You--uh--didn't get wet in the rain?

Collector
 No, ma'am. I stepped inside.

Blanche
 In a drug-store? And had a soda?

Collector
 Uh-huh.

Blanche
 Chocolate?

Collector
 No, ma'am. Cherry.

Blanche

(Laughs.)

Cherry!

Collector

A cherry soda.

Blanche

You make my mouth water.

(Crosses in front of him pivoting. Touches his cheek lightly and smiles.)

Collector

(Starts to door.)

Well, I'd better be going--

Blanche

(Stopping him.)

Young man!

(He turns. Motions toward him.)

Young, young, young, young--man! Has anyone ever told you that you look like a young prince out of the Arabian Nights?

Collector

No, ma'am.

(Looks away.)

Blanche

Well, you do, honey lamb. Come here! Come on over here like I told you!

(Gripping his arms, looking into his face, her expression one of almost ineffable sweetness.)

I want to kiss you--just once--softly and sweetly on your mouth . . .

(She does.)

Run along now! It would be nice to keep you, but I've got to be good and keep my hands off children.

(He goes, rather dazed, to door. Faintly, waving after him. She crosses a step after him.)

Adios!

Collector

(On porch, looking back.)

Huh?

(She waves again. He waves back and goes out down left like a child who has had a happy dream. Blanche stands in doorway. Mitch appears from up right, carrying an absurd

little bunch of flowers.)

Blanche

(Crosses to doorway. Gaily.)

Look who's coming! My Rosenkavalier!

(Stiffly, he meets her on porch and offers flowers.)

No. Bow to me first!

(Mitch is embarrassed, shakes head. She is adamant. He looks around to see if anyone is watching, then ducks a quick little bow, flowers extended to Blanche.)

Now present them!

(He does. She curtseys low.)

Ahhh! Merciiii!

(Fade out and curtain. Jazz band plays through change.)

ACT II

Scene 2

(Later. About 2 A. M. Music fades away at rise. Blanche and Mitch enter. Blanche carries hat, purse and flowers. Mitch holds a ridiculous doll he has won somewhere. The utter exhaustion which only a neurasthenic personality can know is evident in Blanche's voice and manner. Mitch is stolid but depressed. They come around on porch, Blanche to a position below closed door.)

Blanche

Well . . .

Mitch

Well . . . I guess it must be pretty late--and you're tired.

Blanche

How will you get home?

Mitch

(Moves off step to left of Blanche.)

I'll walk over to Bourbon and catch an owl-car.

Blanche

(Laughing grimly.)

Is that street-car named Desire still grinding along the tracks at this hour?

Mitch

(Heavily.)

I'm afraid you haven't had much fun out of this evening, Blanche.

Blanche

I spoiled it for you.

Mitch

No, you didn't, but I felt all the time that I wasn't giving you much--entertainment.

Blanche

I simply couldn't rise to the occasion. That was all.

(Turns down left on porch.)
 I don't think I've ever tried so hard to be gay and
 made such a dismal mess of it.

Mitch
 Why did you try if you didn't feel like it, Blanche?

Blanche
 (Looks in purse.)
 I was just obeying the law of nature.

Mitch
 Which law is that?

Blanche
 (Crosses down.)
 The one that says the lady must entertain the gentleman--
 or no dice! See if you can locate my door-key in this
 purse.
 (Hands him her purse.)
 When I'm so tired my fingers are all thumbs.

Mitch
 (Rooting in purse, comes up with a key.)
 This it?

Blanche
 (Sits on step.)
 No, honey--that's the key to my trunk which I must soon
 be packing.

Mitch
 You mean you are leaving pretty soon now?

Blanche
 (Looks at stars.)
 I've overstayed my welcome.

Mitch
 (Who has found another key.)
 This it?

Blanche
 Eureka!~ Honey, you open the door while I take a last
 look at the sky.
 (Blanche stares up at the stars. Mitch
 unlocks door, puts key back into Blanche's
 purse, stands awkwardly, a bit behind her.)

I'm looking for the Pleiades, the Seven Sisters, but these girls are not out tonight.

(Spies them.)

Oh, yes, they are, there they are! Cod bless them! All in a bunch going home from their little bridge party . . .

(Turns to Mitch.)

Y'get the door open? Good boy.

(Moves up to his left just below door. Takes purse.)

Well, I guess you--want to go now . . .

Mitch

(At her right.)

Can I--uh--kiss you--goodnight?

Blanche

(Crossly.)

Why do you always ask me if you may?

Mitch

I don't know whether you want me to or not.

Blanche

Why should you be so doubtful?

Mitch

That night when we parked by the lake and I kissed you, you--

Blanche

(Crosses down left.)

Honey, it wasn't the kiss I objected to. I liked the kiss very much. It was the other little--familiarity--that I--felt obliged to--discourage. I didn't resent it! Not a bit in the world! In fact I was somewhat flattered that you--desired me! But, honey, you know as well as I do that a single girl, a girl alone in the world, has got to keep a firm hold on her emotions, or she'll be lost!

Mitch

(Crosses down to Blanche. Solemnly.)

Lost?

Blanche

(Turning away a step down left.)

I guess you are used to girls that like to be lost. The kind that get lost immediately on the first date.

Mitch

(A step after her.)

I like you to be exactly the way that you are, because in all my--experience--I have never known anyone like you.

(Blanche looks at him gravely, then bursts into laughter, buries her head against his upstage shoulder.)

--Are you laughing at me?

Blanche

(Patting his cheek.)

No, no, no, honey. No--I'm not laughing at you--

(She goes into apartment, he follows to behind number two.)

The lord and lady of the house have not yet returned, so come in.

(Drops hat, purse, gloves and flowers on table.)

We'll have a night-cap. Let's leave the lights off, shall we?

(Mitch closes front door. Crosses to bedroom. Blanche crosses to kitchen.)

The other room's more comfortable . . . go on in.

(He does. Sits in bedroom chair.)

This crashing around in the dark is my search for some liquor.

Mitch

You want a drink?

Blanche

(Taking glasses to him, and shoving him even further into bedroom.)

I want you to have a drink! You have been so anxious and solemn all evening, and so have I, we have both been anxious and solemn and now for these few last remaining moments of our lives together--

(Crosses to kitchen for bottle and drinks.

She is at cabinet, lighting a match.)

I want to create--joie de vivre!

(Applies match to candle stuck in bottle, which she gets from cabinet. Brings candle to phone table. Draws vanity stool to Mitch and sits.)

I'm lighting a candle.

Mitch

That's good.

Blanche

We are going to be very bohemian. We are going to pretend that this is a little artists' cafe on the Left Bank in Paris! Je suis la Dame aux Camélias! Vous êtes--Armand! Do you understand French?

Mitch

Naw. Naw, I don't understand French.

Blanche

(Coming towards him.)

Voulez-vous coucher avec moi ce soir? Vous ne comprenez pas? Ah! Quel dommage! I mean, it's a damned good thing I've found some liquor, just enough for two shots without any dividends . . .

Mitch

That's--good!

Blanche

Sit down! Why don't you take off your coat and loosen your collar?

(Takes off his coat.)

Mitch

I'd better leave it on.

Blanche

No. I want you to be comfortable.

(Puts coat on bed.)

Mitch

(Sits in armchair.)

No--I am ashamed of the way I perspire. My shirt is sticking to me.

Blanche

Perspiration is healthy. If people didn't perspire they would die in five minutes. This is a nice coat. What kind of material is it?

Mitch

They call that stuff Alpaca.

(Crosses right.)

Blanche

Oh, Alpaca.

Mitch

It's very light-weight alpaca.

Blanche

Light-weight alpaca.

Mitch

I don't like to wear a wash coat even in summer because I sweat right through it.

Blanche

Oh.

(Crosses to Mitch center stage.)

Mitch

And it don't look neat on me. A man with a heavy build has got to be careful of what he puts on him so he don't look too clumsy.

Blanche

You're not too heavy

Mitch

You don't think I am?

Blanche

You are not the delicate type. You have a massive bone-structure and a very imposing physique.

Mitch

(Turns to Blanche.)

I thank you. Last Christmas I was given a membership in the New Orleans Athletic Club.

Blanche

Oh, good.

Mitch

It was the finest present I ever was given. I work out there with the weights. And I swim and I keep myself fit. When I started there I was soft in the belly, but now my belly is hard. It is so hard that a man can punch me in the belly and it don't hurt me. Punch me! Go on!

Blanche

(Punching him gently in belly, then laying her hand against him.)

Gracious!

Can you guess my weight? Come on--guess. Go ahead--
lift me!

(Mitch lifts her, whirls her around him
down stage. She is now facing right.)

Mitch

(Holding her up.)

You are light as a feather.

Blanche

(He lowers her, but keeps hands on her
waist. She affects demureness.)

You may release me now.

Mitch

Huh?

Blanche

(Gaily.)

I said, unhand me, sir.

(Mitch tries to kiss her, fumblingly em-
bracing her.)

Now, Mitch. Just because Stanley and Stella aren't at
home is no reason why you shouldn't behave like a gent-
leman.

Mitch

(Holding her close.)

Just give me a slap whenever I step out of bounds.

Blanche

(Trying to get free.)

That won't be necessary. You're a natural gentleman,
one of the very few that are left in the world. I
don't want you to think that I am severe and old-maid
school-teacherish or anything like that. It's just--
well--I guess it is just that I have--old fashioned ideals!

Mitch

(Piano is heard. Mitch releases her. She
crosses to chair and sits. His voice
breaking.)

Where's Stanley and Stella tonight?

Blanche

They have gone out. With Mr. and Mrs. Hubbell upstairs.

Mitch

Where did they go?

Blanche

I think they were planning to go to a midnight provue at Loew's State.

Mitch

(Crosses to behind stool.)

We should all go out together some night.

Blanche

No. No, that wouldn't be a good idea.

Mitch

Why not?

Blanche

You are an old friend of Stanley's?

Mitch

(With a trace of bitterness.)

We was together in the Two-forty-first.

Blanche

I guess he talks to you frankly?

Mitch

(Sits on stool.)

Sure.

Blanche

Has he talked to you about me?

Mitch

Not very much.

(Fade out piano.)

Blanche

The way you say that, I suspect that he has.

Mitch

No, he hasn't said much.

Blanche

But what he has said? What would you say his attitude toward me was?

Mitch

What makes you ask that?

Blanche

Well--

Mitch

Don't you get along with him?

Blanche

What do you think?

Mitch

I think he don't understand you.

Blanche

(Rises, crosses behind on right.)

That is putting it mildly. If it weren't for Stella about to have a baby, I wouldn't be able to endure things here.

Mitch

He isn't--nice to you?

Blanche

He's insufferably rude. Goes out of his way to offend me.

Mitch

In what way, Blanche?

Blanche

Why, in every conceivable way.

Mitch

I'm surprised to hear that.
(Turns away from her.)

Blanche

Are you?

Mitch

(Facing her.)

Well, I--don't see how anybody could be rude to you.

Blanche

It's really a pretty frightful situation. You see, there's no privacy here. There's just this drape between the two rooms. He stalks through the rooms in his under-

wear at night. And I have to ask him to close the bathroom door. That sort of commonness isn't necessary. You probably wonder why I don't move out? Well, I'll tell you frankly. A school teacher's salary is barely sufficient for her living expenses. I didn't save a penny last year, and so I had to come here for the summer. That's why I have to put up with my sister's husband. And he has to put up with me, apparently so much against his wishes . . . Surely he must have told you how much he hates me!

Mitch

I don't think he hates you.

Blanche

(Crosses left.)

He hates me, or why does he insult me? The first time I laid eyes on him, I thought to myself, that man is my executioner! That man will destroy me!--unless--

Mitch

Blanche . . . Blanche--

Blanche

Yes, honey?

Mitch

Can I ask you a question?

Blanche

Yes. What?

Mitch

How old are you?

Blanche

(Makes nervous gesture. Crosses right to vanity.)

Why do you want to know?

Mitch

(He follows.)

I talked to my mother about you, and she said, How old is Blanche?

(Pause.)

Blanche

You talked to your mother about me?

Yes.

Mitch

Why?

Blanche

Mitch

Because I told her how nice you were, and I liked you.

Blanche

Were you sincere about that?

Mitch

You know I was.

Blanche

Why did your mother want to know my age?

Mitch

Mother is sick.

Blanche

I'm sorry to hear it. Badly?

Mitch

(Crosses upstage to chair and sits.)

She won't live long. Maybe just a few months, and she worries because I'm not settled. She wants me to be settled down before she--

(His voice is hoarse with emotion. Looks away from Blanche.)

Blanche

You love her very much, don't you?

(Crosses upstage to Mitch at chair. Mitch nods miserably.)

I think you have a great capacity for devotion. You'll be lonely when she passes on.

(Mitch looks at her, nods.)

I understand what that is.

Mitch

To be lonely?

Blanche

I loved someone, too, and the person I loved I lost.

(Crosses right center.)

Mitch

Lead? A man?

Blanche

He was a boy, just a boy, when I was a very young girl. When I was sixteen, I made the discovery--love. All at once and much, much too completely. It was like you suddenly turned a blinding light on something that had always been half in shadow, that's how it struck the world for me. But I was unlucky. Deluded. There was something different about the boy, a nervousness, a softness, tenderness which wasn't like a man's although he wasn't the least bit effeminate looking--still--that thing was there. . . .

(Crosses to vanity.)

He came to me for help. I didn't know that. I didn't find out anything till after our marriage when we'd run away and come back and all I knew was I'd failed him in some mysterious way and wasn't able to give him the help he needed but couldn't speak of! He was in the quick-sands clutching at me--but I wasn't holding him out, I was slipping in with him! I didn't know that. I didn't know anything except I loved him unendurably but without being able to help him or help myself. Then I found out. In the worst of all possible ways. By suddenly coming into a room that I thought was empty--which wasn't empty, but had two people in it . . . the boy I married and an older man who had been his friend for years.

(Breaks away, rises, goes upstage. Turns three-fourths right at upper onstage side of table.)

Afterwards we pretended that nothing had been discovered. Yes, we all drove out to Moon Lake Casino, very drunk and laughing all the way. We danced the Varsouviana!

("Varsouviana" is heard, fades.)

Suddenly, in the middle of the dance, the boy I had married broke away from me and ran out of the Casino. A few moments later--a shot! I ran out, all did!--all ran and gathered around this terrible thing at the edge of the lake! I couldn't get near for the crowding. Then somebody caught my arm.--"Don't go any closer! Come back! You don't want to see!" See? See what? Then I heard voices say, "Allan! Allan! The Gray boy!" He'd stuck a revolver into his mouth and fired!--so that the back of his head had been--blown away!

(Sways, covers her face. "Varsouviana" heard again.)

It was because, on the dance floor--unable to stop myself--I'd suddenly said--"I know! I saw! You disgust me!" And then the searchlight which had been turned on the world was turned off again and never for one moment since has there been any light stronger than this kitchen candle . . .

(Crosses to stool and sits. Mitch rises, goes to her, stands behind her.)

Mitch

You need somebody. And I need somebody, too. Could it be you and me, Blanche?

(She turns to him. Looks at him. They embrace, kiss. Cut "Varsouviana" sharply.)

Blanche

Sometimes--there's God--so quickly!

(Fadeout and house curtain.)

ACT III

Scene 1

(Lights come up slowly. Some weeks later. The rooms have been made pathetically dainty with some of Blanche's bits of finery, pillows, fan slipcovers, etc.)

Stanley starts across up left to down right, the porch area. As he crosses, lights come up in apartment. Stella is hovering over table in living room, which is set for four, decorated with party favors, colored napkins. Her approaching maternity is more evident than earlier in the play. At rise she brings birthday cake from cabinet, puts it at center of table, then goes to cabinet, gets knives, forks and spoons, starts placing them around table, beginning with upstage place and working to right side, below, then to left place, during opening dialogue of scene. Blanche is in bathroom, where she is singing scraps of a sad blues song. Blanche's trunk is closed and covered with a net drapery. Stanley enters apartment, puts lunch-pail on top of ice-box, surveys party set-up.)

Stanley

(Above table.)

What's all this stuff for?

Stella

(Gets silver.)

Honey, it's Blanche's birthday.

Stanley

She's here?

Stella

(Laying silver.)

In the bathroom.

Stanley

(Mimicking.)

"Washing out some things"?

(Blanche sings in bathroom.)

Stella

I reckon so.

Stanley

How long she been in there?

Stella

(Below table.)

All afternoon.

Stanley

(Mimicking.)

"Soaking in a hot tub"?

Stella

(Unperturbed.)

Yes.

(Blanche stops singing.)

Stanley

Temperature 100 on the nose, and she soaks in a hot tub!

Stella

She says it cools her off for the evening.

Stanley

And you run out an' get her cokes, I suppose? And serve 'em to Her Majesty in the tub?

(Stella shrugs, occupied with table.

Stanley behind number three.)

Set down here.

(Indicates chair left of table.)

Stella

(Left side of table.)

Stanley, I've got things to do.

Stanley

(Above table.)

Set down!

(Stella crosses to behind left chair.)

I've got th' dope on your big sister, Stella.

Stella

(Coming to his left.)

Stanley, stop picking on Blanche.

Stanley

(Foot on chair.)

That girl calls me common!

Stella

(Moving to left of Stanley above table.)

Lately you been doing all you can think of to rub her the wrong way, Stanley. Blanche is sensitive. You've got to realize that Blanche and I grew up under very different circumstances than you did.

Stanley

So I been told. And told and told and told! You know she's been feeding us a pack of lies here?

Stella

No, I don't--and I don't want to hear--

Stanley

(Overlapping Stella's speech.)

Well, she has, however. But now the cat's out of the bag! I found out some things!

Stella

What--things?

Stanley

Things I already suspected.

(Blanche sings in bathroom.)

But now I got proof from the most reliable sources--which I have checked on!

(Bathroom door opens, Blanche pops out in her bathrobe. Goes to dressing table, picks up a drink with ice-cubes, waves to Stanley in other room.)

Blanche

Hello, Stanley!

(Gaily, she hums, clinks ice in her glass, goes into bathroom, shuts door. Stella backs upstage--looks at Blanche.)

Stanley

(Sitting above table.)

--Some canary bird, huh?

Stella

(Coming back to table, sits left chair.)

Now please tell me quietly what you think you've found out about my sister.

Stanley

Lie number one: All this squeamishness she puts on!-- you should just know the line she's been feeding to Mitch. He thought she had never been more than kissed by a fellow! You know Sister Blanche is no lily!

Stella

What have you heard, and who from?

Stanley

Our supply-man down at the plant has been going through Laurel for years and he knows all about her, and everybody else in the town of Laurel knows all about her; she is as famous in Laurel as if she was the President--of the United States--

(Blanche sings blues song in bathroom.)

--only she is not respected by any party! This supply-man stops at a hotel called the Flamingo.

Stella

What about the--Flamingo?

Stanley

She stayed there, too.

Stella

My sister stayed at Belle Reve.

Stanley

This is after the home place had slipped through her lily-white fingers! She moved to the Flamingo! A second-class hotel which has the advantage of not interfering with the private social life of the personalities there! The Flamingo's used to all kinds of goings-on. But even the management of the Flamingo was impressed by Dame Blanche! In fact they was so impressed that they requested her to turn in her room-key--for permanently! This happened a couple of weeks before she showed here.

(Stanley rises, moves through center to right of Stella.)

Sure, I can see how you would be upset by this. She pulled the wool over your eyes as much as Mitch's.

(Tries to put an arm around her, she shrugs)

him off.)

Stella

(Turning to him.)

It's pure invention! There's not a word of truth in it!

(Blanche sings in bathroom. Stanley takes her by the arms, faces her. Blanche is singing.)

Stanley

Honey, I told you I checked on every single story. The trouble with Dame Blanche was that she couldn't put on her act any more in Laurel!

(Blanche stops singing.)

They got wised up after two or three dates with her and they quit, and she goes on to another, the same old line, same old act, same old hooey!

(Turns back.)

But the town was too small for this to go on forever! And as time went by she became the town character. Regarded as not just different but downright loco--nuts.

(Blanche sings. Stella moves to down right chair below table, she faces down right.

Stanley moves up to position behind Stella, then downstage to table right.)

And for the last year or two she has been washed up like poison. That's why she's here this summer, visiting royalty, putting on all this act--she was practically told by the Mayor to get out of town! Yes, did you know there was an army-camp near Laurel and your sister's was one of the places called "Out-of-Bounds"?

(Crosses to Stella. Blanche stops.)

Well, so much for her being such a refined and particular type of girl. Which brings us to Lie number two.

Stella

(A step toward him. Closing left in.)

I don't want to hear any more!

Stanley

(Crosses to number three, foot on chair.)

She didn't resign temporarily because of her nerves! No, siree, bob! She didn't. She was kicked out before the Spring term ended--and I hate to tell you the reason that step was taken--A seventeen-year-old boy--she's gotten mixed up with! And when . . .

(Blanche is heard still singing in bathroom.)

Stella

(Crosses to chair number two, head in hands.)
This is making me--sick!

Stanley

(Moving above table to cabinet and back to
above table.)

. . . the boy's dad learned about it and got in touch with
the high school superintendent. Oh, I'd like to have been
in that office when Dame Blanche was called on the carpet!

(Crosses down left.)

I'd like to have seen her trying to squirm out of that
one! But they had her hooked good and proper that time
and she knew that the jig was all up! They told her she
better move on to some fresh territory, it was prac-
tically a town ordinance passed against her!

(Blanche stops. Bathroom door opens, Blanche
thrusts her head out, holding a bath towel
about her hair.)

Blanche

(In doorway.)

Stella!

Stella

(Rises. Faintly.)

Yes, Blanche?

Blanche

Get me another bath towel to dry my hair with. I've
just washed it!

Stella

Yes, Blanche.

(Crosses to bedroom, gets towel from bureau,
up left, takes it in a dazed way to Blanche.)

Blanche

What's the matter, honey?

Stella

(Turning away.)

Matter? Why?

Blanche

You have such a strange expression on your face.

Stella

Oh!

(Tries to laugh.)

I guess I'm a little tired.

Blanche

Why don't you take a hot bath as soon as I get out?

(Stella goes to below head of bed--hand to her back.)

Stanley

(Crosses down right.)

How soon is that going to be, Blanche?

Blanche

(Waving clean towel at him, blithely.)

Not so terribly long! Possess your soul in patience!

(Starts into bathroom--stops as he speaks.)

Stanley

It's not my soul, it's my kidneys I'm worried about!

(Crosses upstage, table to trunk. Blanche slams door shut. Stella comes back into living room, crosses up to number three. Stanley leans against trunk.)

Well, what do you think of it?

Stella

(Turns to Stanley. Stanley crosses number two.)

I don't believe all of those stories, and I think your supply-man was mean and rotten to tell them. Oh, it's possible that some of the things he said are partly true. My sister was always--flighty!

Stanley

(Sits number two.)

Yeah--flighty!

Stella

But when she was young, very young--

(Dabs at plates and decorations, not seeing them. Behind table.)

She married a boy who wrote poetry. . . . He was extremely

good-looking. I think Blanche didn't just love him but worshipped the ground he walked on! Adored him and thought him almost too fine to be human!

(Crosses to kitchen, gets small box of pink birthday cake candles.)

But then she found out--

Stanley

What?

Stella

(Bringing candles to table.)

This beautiful and talented young man was a degenerate. Didn't your supply man give you that information?

(Opens box of candles.)

Stanley

All we discussed was recent history. That must have been a pretty long time ago.

Stella

Yes, it was--a pretty long time ago . . .

(Starts sticking candles on birthday cake.
Pause.)

Stanley

How many candles you stickin' in that cake?

Stella

I'll stop at twenty-five.

Stanley

Is company expected?

Stella

We asked Mitch to come over for cake and ice-cream.

Stanley

(Uncomfortably, after a pause.)

Don't expect Mitch over tonight.

Stella

(Looks slowly around at Stanley.)

Why?

Stanley

(Turning quickly to Stella.)

-Stella, Mitch is a buddy of mine. We were in the same outfit together--Two-forty-first Engineers. We work in the same plant and now on the same bowling team--

Stella

(Cutting in. Crosses to right of Stanley.)
Stanley Kowalski, did you--? Did you repeat what that--?

Stanley

You're damned right I told him! I'd have that on my conscience the rest of my life if I knew all that stuff and let my best friend get caught!

(Crosses down left.)

Stella

Is Mitch through with her?

Stanley

Well--wouldn't you be if--?

Stella

I said, Is Mitch through with her?

(Blanche sings in bathroom.)

Stanley

(Facing Stella.)

No, not exactly through with her--just wised up!

Stella

(Sits number two.)

Stanley, she thought Mitch was going to--going to marry her. I was hoping so, too.

Stanley

Well, he's not going to marry her now. Maybe he was, but he's not going to jump in a tank with a school of sharks!

(Crosses to bathroom and calls at door.)

Blanche! Oh, Blanche! Can I please get in my bathroom?

Blanche

(Answering through door.)

Yes, indeed, sir, can you wait one second while I dry?

Stella
(Crosses to bedroom. Distressed.)

Stanley!

Stanley
Having waited one hour I guess one second ought to pass in a hurry.

Stella
She hasn't got her job. What will she do?

Stanley
(Turning to Stella.)
She's not stayin' here after Tuesday. You know that, don't you? Just to make sure, I bought her ticket myself. A bus ticket!
(Fumbles in his breast pocket to show Stella ticket.)

Stella
(Crosses to bedroom chair and sits.)
In the first place, Blanche wouldn't go on a bus.

Stanley
She'll go on a bus and like it.

Stella
No, she won't, no, she won't, Stanley!

Stanley
She'll go! Period. P.S.--She'll go on Tuesday!

Stella
(Slowly.)
What'll---she--do? What on earth will she--do?

Stanley
Her future is mapped out for her.

Stella
What do you mean?
(Grabs Stanley's arms. Blanche sings in bathroom.)

Stanley
(Frees himself from her grip. Going to bath-

room door, pounding on it.)
 Hey canary bird! Toots! Get OUT of the BATHROOM!

(Stella crosses upstage to table. Door opens.
 Blanche emerges with a gay peal of laughter.
 Steam rises from bathroom.)

Blanche
 (Stepping into bedroom. Carries hairbrush.
 Crosses to vanity.)
 Oh, I feel so good after my long, hot bath, I feel so
 good and cool and--rested!
 (Crosses to left center. Stanley goes into
 bathroom, slamming door shut, which arrests
 Blanche's crossing.)

Stella
 (Sadly and doubtfully.)
 Do you, Blanche?

Blanche
 (Brushing hair vigorously.)
 Yes, I do, so refreshed! A hot bath and a long, cold
 drink always gives me a brand new outlook on life!
 (Looks at bathroom door, then at Stella.)
 Something has happened. What is it?

Stella
 (Turning away quickly.)
 Why, nothing has happened, Blanche.

Blanche
 You're lying! Something has!

(Fadeout and curtain. Orchestra is heard
 playing through change.)

ACT III

Scene 2

(Three-quarters of an hour later. Stanley, Stella and Blanche are completing a dismal birthday dinner. They are seated about table--Blanche, number two; Stanley, number three; Stella, number four. Stanley is gnawing at a chop and licks his fingers. Stella is embarrassed and sad. Blanche has a tight, artificial smile on her drawn face. There is a fourth chair at table, on down-stage side, which is vacant. Music continues behind dialogue.)

Blanche

(Who is nursing a drink, speaks suddenly.)

Stanley, tell us a joke tell us a funny story to make us all laugh. I don't know what's the matter, we're all so solemn. Is it because I've been stood up by my beau?

(Stella laughs feebly.)

It's the first time in my entire experience with men, and I've had a good deal of all sorts, that I've actually been stood up by anybody! I don't know how to take it . . . Tell us a funny little story, Stanley! Something to help us out.

Stanley

(Licking his fingers.)

I didn't think you liked my stories, Blanche.

Blanche

I like them when they're amusing, but not indecent.

Stanley

I don't know any refined enough for your taste.

Blanche

Well--then let me tell one.

Stella

Yes, you tell one, Blanche. You used to know lots of good stories.

Blanche

Let me see now

(Fade off music.)

I must run through my repertoire! Oh, yes, I love parrot stories! Do you all like parrot stories? Well, this one's about the old maid and the parrot. This old maid, she had a parrot that cursed a blue streak and knew more vulgar expressions than Mr. Kowalski.

(Pauses, smiling at Stanley, but there is no reaction from him.)

And the only way to hush the parrot up was to put the cover back on its cage so it would think that it was night and go back to sleep. Well, one morning the old maid had just uncovered the parrot for the day, when who should she see just coming up the front walk but the preacher! Well, she rushed back to the parrot and slipped the cover back on the cage, and then she let in the preacher.

(Phone rings off up right, distantly.)

Blanche leaps from her chair, listens.)

Oh, that must be in back.

(Resumes her place, and her story.)

Well, the parrot was perfectly still then--just as quiet as a mouse. But just as she was asking the preacher how much sugar he wanted in his coffee--the parrot broke the silence with: "God damn but that was a short day!"

(Blanche throws back her head and laughs.)

Stella makes an ineffectual effort to seem amused. Stanley, who has been eating another chop, has paid no attention to story, but continues to lick his fingers.)

Apparently Mr. Kowalski was not amused.

Stella

Mr. Kowalski is too busy making a pig of himself to think of anything else!

(To Stanley--viciously.)

Your face and your fingers are disgustingly greasy. Go and wash up and then help me clear the table.

(A pause. Stanley looks at Stella. Rises and knocks chair over. Suddenly, with a quick slap of his hand on chop-plate, breaks it--then with a sweep of his arm, pushes his broken plate, silver, and rest of his food off upstage side of table to floor. Blanche gives a frightened little gasp, turns her face away to left. Stella stares at Stanley, who rises and faces her across table--then she

ducks her head, ashamed.)

Stanley

That's how I'll clear the table. Don't ever talk that way to me. "Pig--Polack--disgusting--vulgar--greasy!" Them kind of words have been on your tongue and your sister's too much around here! What do you think you two are? A pair of queens? Remember what Huey Long said.--"Every man is a King!"--And I am the king around here, so don't you forget it! My place is cleared! You want me to clear your places?

(Reaches for other dishes. Stella protects them. He looks at the women, stalks out onto porch, where he moves to left end of it and faces upstage.)

Blanche

What happened while I was bathing? What did he tell you, Stella?

Blanche

I think he told you something about Mitch and me! I think you know why Mitch didn't come this evening, but you won't tell me!

(Stella shakes her head helplessly. Blanche rises suddenly, crosses to bedroom.)

I'm going to call him.

Stella

(Rises and crosses to bedroom doorway, trying to restrain Blanche.)

I wouldn't call him, Blanche.

Blanche

I am, I'm going to call him on the phone.

Stella

(Miserably.)

I wish you wouldn't.

Blanche

(Crossing above Stella, takes up phone, dials. Stella goes out onto porch. Stanley does not turn to face her.)

I intend to be given some explanation from someone.

(Orchestra plays.)

Stella

(Reproachfully, to Stanley.)

I hope you're pleased with your doings. I never had so much trouble swallowing food in my life, looking at that girl's face and the empty chair.

Blanche

(At phone.)

Hello, Mr. Mitchell, please. Oh--I would like to leave a number if I may.

(Stella looks in at Blanche.)

Magnolia 9047.

(At this point, we hear laughter, at first quiet, and intimate--and soon boisterous and downright dirty, between Eunice and Steve in apartment above.)

And say it's important to call. Yes, very important. Thank you.

(Blanche hangs up. Stands helplessly by phone, looking about.)

Stanley

(Going to Stella, sits on steps. Turning her toward him and taking her clumsily in his arms.)

Stella, it's going to be all right after she goes and after you've had the baby. It's gonna be all right again between you and me the way it was. You remember that way that it was? Them nights we had together? God, honey, it's gonna be sweet when we can make noise in the night the way that we used to and get the colored lights going with nobody's sister behind the curtains to hear us!

(Stanley chuckles, looks up.)

Steve and Eunice . . .

(Stella takes Stanley's arm and leads him back toward living room. She goes to cabinet, gets matches to light candles.)

Stella

(As she enters room, speaks to Stanley.)

Stanley, come on back in.

(Then, as she approaches candles with match.)

Blanche?

Blanche

(Rises. Crosses table number four.)

Yes. Oh, those pretty, pretty little candles.
 (Stella lights match. Blanche rushes forward and blows it out. Stands at left of Stella.)

Oh, don't burn them, Stella! You ought to save them for baby's birthdays. Oh, I hope candles are going to glow in his life, and I hope that his eyes are going to be like candles, like two blue candles lighted in a white cake!

Stanley

(Crosses above to bathroom, speaks near bathroom door.)

What poetry!

(Goes into bathroom.)

Blanche

(Sits in number four chair, referring to her phone call.)

I shouldn't have called him.

Stella

(Moving to above Blanche.)

There's lots of things could have happened.

Blanche

There's no excuse for it, Stella. I don't have to put up with insults. I won't be taken for granted.

(Fade off music.)

Stanley

(Coming out of bathroom, moving to center.)

Hey, Blanche, you know it's hot in here with the steam from the bathroom.

Blanche

(Blanche rises, pounding on table and screaming at top of her voice.)

I've said I was sorry, three times!

(Turns to Stanley. He crosses to doorway.)

I take hot baths for my nerves. Hydro-therapy they call it! You healthy Polack, without a nerve in your body, of course you don't know what anxiety feels like!

Stanley

(Crosses down to kitchen.)

I am not a Polack. People from Poland are Poles, not Polacks. But what I am is one-hundred-per-cent American, born and raised in the greatest country on earth and proud as hell of it, so don't ever call me a Polack.

(Phone rings. Blanche leaps up expectantly. Stanley crosses to bedroom phone.)

Blanche

Oh, that's for me, I'm sure!

Stanley

(Moving to phone, brushes her aside.)

I'm not sure. You just keep your seat.

(Answers phone.)

H'lo. Aw, yeh, hello, Mac.

(Blanche has followed Stanley a step or two to phone. Now she turns, almost staggers, a step right. Stella moves forward, touches Blanche's shoulder.)

Blanche

Oh, keep your hands off me, Stella! What's the matter with you? Why do you look at me with that pitying look?

(Stella leans against ice-box.)

Stanley

(Bawling at Blanche.)

Will you SHUT UP IN THERE!

(Into phone.)

We've got a noisy woman on the place. Go on, Mac. At Riley's? No, I don't wanta bowl at Riley's. I had a little trouble with Riley last week. I'm the team captain, ain't I? All right, then, we're not gonna bowl at Riley's, we're gonna bowl at the West Side or the Gala! All right, Mac, see you!

(Stanley hangs up. Goes to Blanche at table. Stella is standing below ice-box.)

Stanley, reaching in his breast pocket, speaks with false amiability.)

Sister Blanche, I've got a little birthday remembrance for you.

(Takes out envelope containing bus ticket

and partly opens envelope.)

Blanche
Oh, have you, Stanley? I wasn't expecting any.

Stanley
(Handing her envelope.)
I hope you like it.

Blanche
(Opening envelope and taking out ticket.)
Why, why--why, it's a---

Stanley
Ticket! Back to Laurel! On the Greyhound! Tuesday!

("Varsouviana" is heard through balance of scene. Blanche tries to smile. Then tries to laugh. Gives up both, turns accusingly to Stella at right. Suddenly, she runs above Stanley into bedroom, commencing to sob sharply. Pauses in center of bedroom, not knowing which way to run, finally, with shaking sobs, darts into bathroom, slamming door shut. Stanley has moved to center of living room. Stella comes to right of him.)

Stella
You didn't need to do that.

Stanley
(At right of left seat.)
Don't forget all that I took off her.

Stella
(Following--at his right.)
You needn't have been so cruel to someone alone as she is.

Stanley
Delicate piece she is.

Stella
She is. She was. You didn't know Blanche as a girl. Nobody, nobody was tender and trusting as she was. But

people like you abused her, and forced her to change.
 (Stanley goes up to trunk, which during opening two scenes of this act has been closed, and has a fancy net covering thrown over it. Starts to pick up his green bowling-jacket at trunk. Stella follows to below him.)
 Do you think you're going bowling now?

Stanley

Sure.

(Starts to get into his jacket.)

Stella

You're not going bowling.
 (Stanley crosses in front of Stella. She grabs his downstage left arm.)
 Why did you do this to her?

Stanley

(Her violent hold on his arm tears his shirt.)
 Let go of my shirt. You've torn it!

Stella

(Wildly.)
 I want to know why! Tell me why!

Stanley

(Pushes Stella into bedroom chair, handling her very roughly.)
 When we first met, me and you, you thought I was common. How right you was, baby! I was common as dirt! You showed me the snapshot of the place with the columns. I pulled you down off them columns and how you loved it, having them colored lights going! And wasn't we happy together, wasn't it all okay until she showed here? And wasn't we happy together? Wasn't it all okay till she showed here! Hoity-toity, describing me like an ape.
 (A pause. He starts to put on his jacket, then turns, studies Stella. Sees she is in pain. Crosses quickly to her. Gently.)
 Hey, what is it, Stel? Did I hurt you? Whatsa matter, baby?

Stella

(Weakly.)
 Take me to the hospital . . .
 (He quickly supports her with his arm and leads her out.)

(Fade out and curtain. "Varsouviana" up full through change.)

ACT III

Scene 3

(A while later that evening. Rooms are dimly lighted. Blanche is seated in a tense position in armchair in bedroom, holding a drink. She still hears the sound of the Varsouviana. She wears her dressing-gown. She has been drinking to escape the sense of disaster closing in on her. Fan in bedroom is spinning almost soundlessly. Mitch enters. He is in his work clothes. Hurries to front door of apartment and pounds on it. No answer --he repeats pounding. Fade off "Varsouviana.")

Blanche

Who is it, please?

Mitch

(Hoarsely.)

Me . . . Mitch.

Blanche

(Rises.)

Mitch!--Just a minute!

(Blanche darts about frantically, carrying drink, goes to table in living room to hide bottle of liquor. She runs into living room, looks about, sticks bottle and glass under left seat. Then rushes to dressing table, by now quite beside herself, shaking and muttering. She dabs at her face--combs her hair. Mitch pounds on door, then bursts through it, stands inside dimly lighted room. Blanche hurries to just inside living room. Mitch starts around below table in living room, which is still set from birthday dinner, with cake and decorations.)

Mitch! Y'know, I really shouldn't let you in after the treatment I have received from you this evening! So utterly-uncavalier! But, hello, beautiful!

(Mitch brushes past her below table and into bedroom. Moves towards bathroom, then

back upstage, toward bed. He is annoyed
by draught from fan. Blanche follows.)
My, my, what a cold shoulder! And such uncouth apparel!
(Crosses to him.)

Why, you haven't even shaved! But I forgive you. I
forgive you because it's such a relief to see you. You've
stopped that polka tune that I had caught in my head.
Have you ever had anything caught in your head?
(She has moved close to him, at his right,
below bed.)

No, of course you haven't, you dumb angel-puss, you'd never
get anything awful caught in your head!

Mitch

(Rubs his hand across back of his neck, where
he is struck by cold air from fan.)

Do we have to have that fan on?

Blanche

(Crossing below him to fan, which is on
dressing table.)

No!

Mitch

I don't like fans.

Blanche

Then let's turn it off, honey. I'm not partial to them.
(Turns off fan. Touching invisible button on
bottom of bracket left.)

I don't know what there is to drink. I--haven't in-
vestigated.

Mitch

I don't want Stan's liquor.

Blanche

It isn't Stan's. Some things on the premises are act-
ually mine! How is your mother? Isn't your mother well?

("Varsouviana" is heard.)

Mitch

Why?

("Varsouviana" is heard again, faintly.)

Blanche

Something's the matter tonight, but never mind.

(Hearing music, she turns away from him and crosses behind bedroom chair.)

I won't cross-examine the witness. I'll just--

(Touches her forehead vaguely.)

--pretend I don't notice anything different about you!-- that--music again . . .

Mitch

(Moves a step to her right.)

What music?

Blanche

The polka tune they were playing when Allan--

(Relieved. Sound of a distant shot. "Var-souviana" music stops abruptly.)

There, now, the shot! It always stops after that.

(Listening.)

Yes, now it's stopped.

(Moves right a step.)

Mitch

(Behind her.)

Are you boxed out of your mind?

Blanche

I'll go see what I can find in the way of--

(Turns back to him.)

Oh, by the way, excuse me for not being dressed. But I'd practically given you up! Had you forgotten your invitation to supper?

(Crosses to kitchen cabinet, clatters among bottles, takes out clean glass.)

Mitch

(At right of center door.)

I wasn't going to see you any more.

Blanche

Wait a minute! I can't hear what you're saying, and you talk so little that when you do say something, I don't want to miss a single syllable of it!

(He turns to bedroom, crosses to below bed.)

She moves to back of table. He puts his right foot on bed, near head, facing up-stage.)

What am I looking around here for?

(She wavers uncertainly above table. Holds glass she has taken from cabinet.)

Oh, yes, liquor! We've had so much excitement around here this evening that I am boxed out of my mind!

(She remembers bottle under left seat, goes to it, holds it up.)

Here's some Southern Comfort!

(Standing in center door, facing Mitch.)

What is that, I wonder?

(She crosses to right of him, carrying bottle and glass.)

Mitch

If you don't know, it must belong to Stan.

Blanche

(Crosses to bedroom.)

Take your foot off the bed. It has a clean cover on it.

(Moving to left of armchair, pouring herself a drink.)

Of course, you boys don't notice things like that. I've done so much with this place since I've been here.

Mitch

I bet you have.

Blanche

You saw it before I came. Well, look at it now. This room is almost--dainty! I want to keep it that way.

Mitch

(Turns to her.)

Aren't you leaving pretty soon now?

(Crosses down to her.)

Blanche

(Tastes drink.)

I wonder if this stuff ought to be mixed with something?

Umm. It's sweet, so sweet! It's terribly sweet! Why, it's a liqueur, I believe! Yes, that's what it is, a liqueur!

(At bedroom chair. Mitch grunts, Blanche

offers him glass.)

I'm afraid you won't like it, but try it, and maybe you will.

Mitch

I told you already I don't want none of his liquor. And I mean it! You ought to lay off his liquor. He says you been lapping it up all summer like a wild-cat!

Blanche

(Mitch crosses down left. Blanche turns to him.)

What a fantastic statement! Fantastic of him to say it, and fantastic of you to repeat it! I won't descend to the level of such cheap accusations to answer them, even! What's in your mind? I see something in your eyes!

(Blanche crosses down right.)

Mitch

It's dark in here!

(Crosses to left of Blanche, center bedroom.)

Blanche

I like it dark.

(Apprehensively, moves away from him to center.)

The dark is comforting to me.

(Down right.)

Mitch

I don't think I ever seen you in the light. That's a fact!

Blanche

Is it?

Mitch

I've never seen you in the afternoon.

Blanche

(Crosses right to vanity and sits.)

Whose fault is that?

Mitch

(Following.)

You never want to go out in the afternoon.

(Over left.)

Blanche

Why, Mitch, you're at the plant in the afternoon!

Mitch

(Behind her.)

Not Sunday afternoon. You never want to go out till after six, and then it's always some place that's not lighted much.

Blanche

There is some obscure meaning in this, but I fail to catch it.

Mitch

(Overlapping her speech. Turns her to him.)

What it means is, I've never had a real good look at you, Blanche.

(Her chin in hand. Leaves her, moves towards bracket which holds paper lantern above dressing table.)

Let's turn on the light here!

Blanche

Light? Which light? What for?

Mitch

This one, with the paper thing on it!

(Rips paper lantern off bulb, tosses lantern to floor in front of Blanche, down left. She drops to her knees with a little cry, trying to rescue lantern.)

Blanche

What did you do that for?

Mitch

(Crosses down left center.)

So I can take a look at you, good and plain!

Blanche

Of course you don't really mean to be insulting!

Mitch

No, just realistic.

Blanche

I don't want realism. I want--magic!

Mitch

Magic!

Blanche

(Still on her knees.)

Yes, yes, magic! I try to give that to people. I do misrepresent things to them. I don't tell the truth, I tell what ought to be truth. And if that's a sin, then let me be damned for it! Don't turn on the light!

Mitch

(Goes to light, pulls chain, comes back, pulls Blanche to her feet, shoves her back against dressing table, pushing her face into harsh glare of the naked bulb. Slowly and bitterly.)

I don't mind you being older than what I thought. But all the rest of it--

(Pause--then shouts.)

CHRIST!

(Drops her arms and steps back a bit away from her.)

That pitch about your ideals being so old-fashioned, and all the malarchkey that you've been dishing out all summer. Oh, I knew you weren't sixteen any more. But I was a fool enough to believe you were straight.

Blanche

(Leaning against dressing table, facing him.)

Who told you I wasn't--"straight"? My loving brother-in-law. And you believed him.

Mitch

(A step toward her.)

No! I called him a liar at first. And then I checked on the story. First I asked our supply man who travels through Laurel. And then I talked directly over long distance to this merchant.

Blanche

(Rises.)

Who is this merchant?

Mitch

Kiefaber.

Blanche

The merchant Kiefaber of Laurel! I know the man. He whistled at me. I put him in his place. So now for re-

venge, he makes up stories about me.

Mitch

Three people, Kiefaber, Stanley and Shaw, swore to them!

Blanche

Rub-a-dub-dub, three men in a tub!--a such a filthy tub!

Mitch

(Overlapping on "tub"--the first time.)

Didn't you stay at a hotel called the Flamingo?

Blanche

(Crosses behind Mitch.)

Flamingo? No! Tarantula was the name of it! I stayed at a hotel called the Tarantula Arms!

Mitch

(Stupidly.)

Tarantula Arms?

Blanche

Yes, a big spider! That's where I brought my victims.

(Pause.)

Yes, I had many intimacies with strangers. After the death of Allan--intimacies with strangers was all I seemed able to fill my empty heart with.

(Pause.)

I think it was panic--just panic that drove me from one to another, searching for some protection--in the most unlikely places! Even, at last, in a seventeen-year-old boy--

(Crosses down stage. To Mitch.)

But somebody wrote the superintendent, "This woman is morally unfit for her position!" True? Yes, I suppose--unfit somehow--anyway. . . . So I came here. There was nowhere else I could go. I was played out. You know what played out means? My youth was suddenly gone up the water-spout and I--met you. You said you needed somebody. Well, I needed somebody, too. I thanked God for you, because you seemed to be gentle--a cleft in the rock of the world that I could hide in!

(Blanche crosses to him, touches him. Mitch turns head, draws back to below bed.)

But I suppose I was asking, hoping too much!

(Outside, down left, Mexican vendor woman is heard approaching, and sound of her call, "Flores Para Los Muertos," is heard indis-

tingly at first, then more clearly.)
Kiefaber, Stanley and Shaw tied an old tin can to the
tail of the kite.

(Crosses to vanity.)

Mitch

You lied to me, Blanche.
(Crosses in to her.)

Blanche

(Turns on him.)

Don't say I lied to you.

Mitch

Lies, lies, inside and out, all lies.

Blanche

Never inside. I didn't lie in my heart. I was true as
God in my heart to all of you--always--always!

(Mexican woman has appeared by this time,
carrying her tin flowers, coming onto
porch. As Blanche says the first "always"
in the speech immediately preceding, the
Mexican woman mutters "Flores!" on porch.
Blanche, hearing "Flores!" on porch.)

What?

Mexican woman

Flores . . .

Blanche

Oh, somebody outside . . .
(Crosses to doorway. "Varsouviana" heard.)

Mexican woman

(Continuing as she stands immediately outside
front door. Mitch crosses center.)

Flores. Flores para los muertos?

Blanche

(Frightened.)

No, no! Not now! Not now!

Mexican woman

(Sits on steps up left throughout her speech.
Turning away.)

Flores para los muertos.

Blanche

I lived in a house where dying old women remembered their
dead men . . .

Mexican woman

Flores. Flores para los muertos . . .

Blanche

(As if to herself.)

Crumble and fade--regrets--recriminations . . .

Mexican woman

Coronas.

Blanche

"If you'd done this it wouldn't have cost me that!"
Legacies!

Mexican woman

Coronas para los muertos. Coronas . . .

Blanche

And other things, such as blood-stained pillow-slips--
"Her linen needs changing"--"Yes, Mother. But couldn't
we get a colored girl to do it?" No, we couldn't of
course--Everything gone but--

Mexican woman

Flores . . .

Blanche

Death.

Mexican woman

Flores para los muertos.

Blanche

I used to sit here and she used to sit over there and
death was as close as you are.

Mexican woman

Coronas.

Blanche

We didn't dare even admit we had ever heard of it.

Mexican woman
 Coronas para los muertos . . .
 (Drifts out up right.)

Blanche
 Death.

Mexican woman
 Flores . . .

Blanche
 The opposite is Desire.

Mexican woman
 (Faintly.)
 Flores . . .

Blanche
 So do you wonder? How could you possibly wonder?

Mexican woman
 (Very faintly--almost off up right.)
 Coronas . . .

Blanche
 (Sits in chair left of table.)
 Not far from Belle Reve, before we had lost Belle Reve,
 was a camp where they trained young soldiers. On Satur-
 day nights they would go into town and get drunk. And
 on the way back they would stagger on to my lawn and
 call, "Blanche! Blanche!"--The deaf old lady remaining
 suspected nothing. But sometimes I slipped outside to
 answer their calls . . . Later the paddy-wagon would
 gather them up like daisies . . . the long way home . . .

(Sits in bedroom chair. Fade off "Varsou-
 viana." Mitch crosses quickly to behind
 Blanche, places his arms about her waist
 and stands her up. At first she takes him,
 passionately, then pushes him away. He
 seizes her roughly--grasping a few strands
 of her hair in his left hand.)

What do you want?

Mitch
 (Fumbling to embrace her.)
 What I been missing all summer.

Blanche

Then marry me, Mitch!

Mitch

(Sits her down roughly.)

No! You're not clean enough to bring in the house with my mother.

Blanche

(Loudly.)

Go away then.

(He stares at her, then starts backing up.)

Get out of here quick before I start screaming fire!

(He scrambles to get out door. She follows him, shouting.)

Get out of here quick before I start screaming fire!

(He hurries out door, and off up left. Blanche chases him out, then stands in doorway screaming.)

Fire! Fire! Fire!

(Fadeout and curtain. Orchestra plays through change. "Good night ladies" commences under other music and miked applause.)

ACT III

Scene 4

(A few hours later same night. Blanche has been drinking fairly steadily since preceding scene. She has opened her wardrobe trunk and thrown a goodly amount of her fancy clothing around the apartment. Beds, armchair, trunk are covered with finery. Jewel-box is in lid of trunk. A bottle stands nutely on dressing table. This is the break-away bottle used late in the scene.) Blanche is standing before dressing table, glass in hand. She is dressed in a somewhat soiled and crumpled white satin evening gown and a pair of scuffed slippers. She wears a rhinestone tiara in her disarranged hair. A mood of hysterical exhilaration has possessed her, and she fancies she hears applause and favorable comments of her old friends at a party at Belle Reve. Applause and chatter effect on mike from right, dying away as curtain rises.)

Blanche

How about taking a swim, a moonlight swim at the old rock quarry? If anyone's sober enough to drive a car! Best way in the world to stop your head buzzing! Only you've got to be careful to dive where the deep pool is, if you don't come up till tomorrow.

(Stanley enters from down right, comes into apartment. He is still wearing his torn shirt and has returned from hospital. Carries a large paper bag in which are a bottle of beer, a bottle of liquor, a bottle opener and some pretzel sticks. Door to apartment is open. He leaves it open, puts paper bag down on table, goes to ice-box. Gets a glass from cabinet. Then sees Blanche. Stanley grasps the situation.

"Good Night Ladies" is heard as Blanche murmurs to her group of spectral admirers.)

Oh, my goodness! They're playing "Good Night Ladies." May I rest my weary head on your shoulder? It's so

comforting . . .

(Stands up center in bedroom, laying her head against her hand. Music dies out.)

Stanley

(Pivots during speech, gets beer and sits number three.)

Hi'ya, Blanche!

Blanche

(Crosses to doorway, speaks to him.)

How is my sister?

(Crosses in center.)

Stanley

(At table, puts down glass.)

She is doing okay.

Blanche

And how is the baby?

Stanley

(Grinning amiably.)

The baby won't come before morning, so they told me to go home and get a little shut-eye.

(Takes bottles out of bag, puts them on table.)

Blanche

(A step into living room.)

Does that mean we are to be alone in here?

Stanley

(Looks at Blanche.)

Yep. Just me and you, Blanche. What've you got those fine feathers on for?

(Crosses to table. Places drink on it.)

Blanche

Oh, that's right. You left before my wire came.

Stanley

You got a wire?

Blanche

I received a telegram from an old admirer of mine.

Stanley

(Above table.)

Anything good?

Blanche

I think so. An invitation.

(Crosses to trunk and sits.)

Stanley

What to?

Blanche

A cruise on the Caribbean on a yacht!

Stanley

Well, well. What do you know!

Blanche

I have never been so surprised in my life.

Stanley

I guess not.

Blanche

It came like a bolt from the blue!

Stanley

(Above table.)

Who did you say it was from?

Blanche

(At center.)

An old beau of mine.

Stanley

The one that gave you the white fox-pieces?

Blanche

(Crosses to cabinet for pretzel.)

Mr. Shep Huntleigh. I wore his ATO pin my last year at college. I hadn't seen him again until last Christmas. I ran into him on Biscayne Boulevard. Then--just now--this wire--inviting me to a cruise of the Caribbean! The problem is clothes! I tore into my trunk to see

what I have that's suitable for the tropics!

Stanley

And come up with that--gorgeous--diamond--tiara?

Blanche

(Crosses to downstage table left.)

This old relic! It's only rhinestones.

Stanley

(Crosses to table number three and sits.)

Gosh. I thought it was Tiffany's diamonds.

Blanche

(In center.)

Well, anyhow, I shall be entertained in style.

Stanley

(Puts liquor bottle on table.)

It goes to show you, you never know what is coming.

Blanche

Just when I thought my luck had begun to fail me--

Stanley

(Rises and crosses to bedroom.)

Into the picture pops this Miami millionaire.

Blanche

This man is not from Miami. This man is from Dallas.

Stanley

(Taking off shirt.)

This man is from Dallas?

Blanche

(Crosses to number three chair.)

Yes, this man is from Dallas, where gold spouts out of the ground!

Stanley

(Tosses shirt on bureau.)

Well, just so he's from somewhere!

Blanche

(Starts to doorway, moving vaguely below trunk.)

Close the curtains before you undress any further.

Stanley

(Amiably.)

This is all I'm going to undress right now.

(Crosses below her to ice-box. She retires to bedroom, draping her torn veil about her, casting side-long glances at herself in mirror, left.)

Have you seen what I did with the bottle opener?

(He is peering into cabinet.)

I used to have a cousin could open a beer-bottle with his teeth.

(Comes to table, sits on it, gets out beer bottle, prepares to open it.)

That was his only accomplishment, all he could do-- he was just a human bottle-opener.

(Sits in chair number three.)

And then, one time, at a wedding party,

(Finds opener in bag.)

he broke his front teeth off! After that, he was so ashamed of himself he used t' sneak out of the house when company came . . .

(Stanley opens beer bottle. Foam gushes forth. Stanley laughs happily, holding up bottle, letting beer cascade over his arms and person.)

Rain from heaven!

(Drinks.)

What'ya say, Blanche?

(Rises, crosses to bedroom, sits on bed.)

Shall we bury the hatchet and make it a loving-cup?

Blanche

No, thank you.

Stanley

Aw, get with it, Blanche!

Blanche

(At right side of door center.)

What are you doing in here?

Stanley

(Gets pajamas from drawer of bureau.)

Here's something I always break out on special occasions like this. The silk pajamas I wore on my wedding night!

Blanche

Oh.

Stanley

And when the telephone rings, and they say "You've got a son!" I'll tear this off and wave it like a flag!

(Crosses down stage. Blanche mills up and downstage right of center. He waves pajama coat aloft, and rises.)

I guess we are both entitled to put on the dog!

(Wipes his face on pajama coat, throws it on dressing table. Comes into living room. She moves upstage to avoid him. He crosses to kitchen guzzling beer.)

You having an oil millionaire, and me having a baby!

Blanche

(Stands below pillar, holding curtain between them, faces left. Follows to doorway.)

When I think of how divine it is going to be to have such a thing as privacy once more--I could weep with joy!

Stanley

(Above table. Eating pretzel sticks from paper bag.)

This millionaire from Dallas is not going to interfere with your privacy any?

Blanche

(In doorway.)

It won't be the sort of thing you have in mind. This man is a gentleman, and he respects me.

(Crosses to bedroom chair. Improvising feverishly.)

What he wants is my companionship. Having great wealth sometimes makes people lonely! A cultivated woman, a woman of intelligence and breeding, can enrich a man's life immeasurably! I have those things to offer, and time doesn't take them away. Physical beauty is passing,

a transitory possession. But beauty of the mind and richness of the spirit and tenderness of the heart--and I have all those things!--aren't taken away, but grow! Increase with the years! How strange that I should be called a destitute woman! When I have all of these treasures locked in my heart. I think of myself as a very, very rich woman! But I have been foolish--casting my pearls before--

Stanley

Swine, huh?

Blanche

(In doorway.)

Yes, swine! Swine! And I'm thinking not only of you, but of your friend, Mr. Mitchell. He came to see me tonight. He dared to come here in his work-clothes! And to repeat slander to me,

(Crosses down right, turns on)

vicious stories that he had gotten from you!--I gave him his walking papers!

(Crosses center.)

Stanley

You did, huh?

Blanche

(Crosses to doorway.)

But then he come back. He returned with a box of roses to beg my forgiveness. He implored my forgiveness.

(Pose on turn.)

But some things are not forgivable. Deliberate cruelty is not forgivable. It is the one unforgivable thing in my opinion and it is the one thing of which I have never, never been guilty. And so I told him, I said to him, Thank you, but it was foolish of me to think that we could ever adapt ourselves to each other.

(Crosses to number chair two and sits.)

Our ways of life are too different.

(Stanley leans on back of left chair.)

Our attitudes and our backgrounds are incompatible. We have to be realistic about such things. So farewell, my friend! - And let there be no hard feeling . . .

(Crosses to below left seat. Stanley rises.)

Stanley

Was this before or after the telegram came from Texas?

Blanche

(Moving down left in living room, halts abruptly.)

What telegram?

(Half turns to Stanley, then moves on down left.)

No! No, after! As a matter of fact, the wire came just as--

Stanley

As a matter of fact, there wasn't no wire at all!

Blanche

(Sitting on left seat.)

Oh, oh!

Stanley

(Crosses to Blanche's right.)

There isn't no millionaire, and Mitch didn't come back here with no roses, because I know where he is!

Blanche

Oh!

Stanley

There isn't a damn thing but imagination, and lies, and conceit and tricks!

(Clutches train of her dress.)

And look at yourself!

(Throws train at her.)

Take a look at yourself in that worn-out Mardi Gras outfit, rented for fifty cents from some rag-picker!

(Snaps his fingers.)

And with that crazy crown on!

(Sweeps it off her head, tosses it upstage.)

What kind of a queen do you think you are?

Blanche

(Rising, flees to left of table.)

Oh, God . . .

Stanley

(Below table, following her, into bedroom.)

I've been on to you from the start. Not once did you pull any wool over this boy's eyes!

(Blanche retreats into bedroom to bench at vanity and sits.)

You come in here and sprinkle the place with powder and spray perfume, and cover the light-bulb with a paper lantern, and lo and behold the place has turned into Egypt and you are Queen of the Nile! Sitting on your throne, and swilling down my liquor! I say--Ha! Ha!

(Clutches her firmly, as she nearly faints in his grasp.)

Do you hear me? Ha--ha--ha!

(Pushes her aside--to stage left center. He picks up his pajama coat from dressing table, and goes into bathroom, slamming door. Scream is heard off, up left. Sound of excited murmuring in street, and from cafe, up right. Blanche runs to phone. Sits upper end of left seat beside it, terrified at sounds from outside. As she dials, then gets operator.)

Blanche

Operator, operator! Give me long distance, please.-- I want to get in touch with Mr. Shep Huntleigh of Dallas. He's so well-known he doesn't require any address. Just ask anybody who--Wait!! No, I couldn't find it right now--please understand--I--No! No!--Wait! I can't! I can't!

(Puts down phone, trembling. Crosses to kitchen, staggering. Goes once more to phone, kneels beside it, clutching her possessions.)

Operator! Operator! Never mind long distance. Get Western Union. There isn't time to be--Western--Western Union!

(Pause.)

Union? Yes! I want to--Take down this message: "In desperate, desperate circumstances! Help me! Caught in a trap! Caught in--"

(Hears a sound from bathroom door.)

Oh!

(Stanley emerges from bathroom. He has put out bathroom light. He is dressed in his red silk pajamas. He grins at Blanche, then advances to phone, which is clicking, receiver off hook. Puts receiver back on hook.)

Stanley

You left the phone off the hook.

Blanche
 (Starting after him.)
 Let me get out--let me get by you!

Stanley
 (Just inside door. Upstage.)
 Get by me? Sure. Go ahead.

Blanche
 (Indicating a place somewhere left.)
 You--you stand over there!

Stanley
 You got plenty of room to walk by me now.

Blanche
 (Works way down to vanity.)
 Not with you there! But I've got to get out somehow!

Stanley
 You think I'll interfere with you?
 (Softly. Starting to move toward Blanche.)
 Come to think of it--maybe you wouldn't be bad to--inter-
 fere with . . .

Blanche
 (Below dressing table.)
 Stay back! Don't you come toward me another step or I'll--

Stanley
 What?

Blanche
 Some awful thing will happen! It will!

Stanley
 (Closing in slowly.)
 What are you putting on now?

Blanche
 I warn you, don't! I'm in danger!
 (As she continues, she fumbles for scissors,
 then picks them up from dressing table.)

Stanley
 What do you want that for?

Blanche
So I can cut your face with it!

Stanley
I bet you would do that!

Blanche
I would! I will if--

Stanley
Oh, you want some rough-house! All right, let's have
some rough-house!

(Springs towards her. She cries out. He
seizes her hand holding scissors, twists it
behind her.)

Tiger--tiger! Drop the scissors! Drop it!

(He bends her to his will, picks her up
in his arms.)

We've had this date with each other from the beginning!
(Starts towards bed with her.)

(Quick fadeout and curtain. Orchestra
plays through change.)

ACT III

Scene 5

(Some days later. Music fades off at rise. Stella is back from the hospital, and has Blanche's suitcase open on dressing table chair, which faces upstage. She is packing Blanche's things, standing below bed, folding slips which she puts in suitcase which she then closes. Blanche's trunk is closed, locked. Some of Blanche's slips are on bed, one on back of armchair. The dress she will wear is draped over back of dressing table chair. Her jacket is on bed. In living room another poker game is in progress. Stanley is seated above table, Mitch at his right. Blanche's jewel-box is lying in armchair. Stella has been crying, as she arranges slips. Eunice comes down from above, carrying dish full of grapes and other fruit. When she enters living room, there is an outburst from poker game. Eunice closes front door behind her. Stella comes to above armchair, picks up slip from back of chair, starts to fold it.)

Stanley

Drew to an inside straight and made it, by God!

Pablo

Maldita sea tu suerte!

Stanley

Put it in English, grease-ball!

Pablo

I am cursing your rutting luck!

Stanley

(To Mitch, prodigiously elated.)

You know what luck is? Luck is believing you're lucky. Take at Salerno. I believed I was lucky. I figured that four out of five would not come through, but I would . . . and I did. I put that down as a rule. To hold a front position in this rat race you've got to believe you're

lucky.

Mitch

(Furiously.)

You . . . you . . . you . . . brag . . . brag . . . bull
. . . bull . . .

(Turns away from game, faces front and rests
his chin on arm on back of his chair.)

Stanley

(To others, astonished.)

What's the matter with him?

Eunice

(Crosses to table between number three
and number four chairs.)

I always did say that men were callous things with no
feelings, but this does beat anything. Making pigs of
yourselves.

(Goes through curtains into bedroom. Stella
is seated at vanity.)

Stanley

What's the matter with her? Come on, let's play.

(Game resumes in silence.)

Stella

How's my baby? Is he demanding his supper?

Eunice

(Putting bowl of grapes on backless chair.
Crosses to Stella.)

Sleepin' like a little angel. Brought you some grapes.

Stella

(Moving downstage at left of Eunice. Leaving
slip on back of armchair.)

Bless him. I just ache when I'm not in the same room
with him.

Eunice

You better leave him right there till you know what gets
settled. Where is she?

Stella

Bathing.

Eunice

How is she?

Stella

She wouldn't eat anything, but asked for a drink.

Eunice

What did you tell her?

Stella

I just told her we made arrangements for her to rest in the country. She's got it mixed up in her mind with Shep Huntleigh.

Blanche

(Opens bathroom door, calls out.)

Stella!

Stella

(Eunice crosses to bedroom chair and sits.)

Yes, Blanche?

Blanche

If anyone calls while I'm bathing, take the number and tell him I'll call right back.

Stella

Yes.

Blanche

(With difficulty in being coherent.)

And, Stella--that cool yellow silk--the boucle--see if it's crushed. If it's not too crushed I'll wear it and on the lapel that silver and turquoise pin in the shape of a sea-horse. You will find them in the heart-shaped box I keep my accessories in. And, oh, Stella--try to locate that bunch of artificial--

(Long difficult effort to remember name of flower.)

violets in that box, too, to pin with the sea-horse on the lapel of the jacket.

(Blanche closes door. Stella turns to Eunice.)

Stella

I just don't know if I did the right thing!

Eunice

What else could you do?

Stella

I couldn't believe her story and go on living with Stanley!

Eunice

Don't you ever believe it. You've got to keep on goin', honey. No matter what happens, we've all got to keep on going.

Blanche

(Opening door, peeking out of bathroom.)

Stella, is the coast clear?

Stella

Yes, Blanche.

(Speaks to Eunice, then crosses to left of Blanche.)

Tell her how well she's looking.

Blanche

(Stella on her left. Eunice crosses to right of Blanche. Blanche steps out of bathroom, carrying hairbrush.)

Please close the curtains before I come out.

(Closes bathroom door.)

Stella

They're closed.

Stanley

(Speaking low, at the game.)

Hey, Mitch.

(Dialogue in the bedroom does not wait on conversation over the poker game. Pablo makes a characteristic comment. Blanche is in her robe. She carries a hairbrush and brushes her hair as she stands down left. There is a tragic radiance about her.)

Blanche

(Speaking with a faintly hysterical vivacity.)

I have just washed my hair.

Stella

Did you?

Blanche

I'm not sure I got the soap out.

Eunice

Such fine hair!

Blanche

(Accepting the compliment.)

It's a problem. Didn't I get a call?

Stella

Who from, Blanche?

Blanche

(Crosses a little down stage.)

Shep Huntleigh . . .

Stella

Why, not yet, honey!

Blanche

How strange! I--

(Crosses to vanity. At sound of Blanche's voice, Mitch's arm has sagged and his gaze is dissolved into space. Stanley barks at him.)

Stanley

Hey, Mitch! Come to!

(Mitch returns to game. The sound of this new voice shocks Blanche. She makes a little gesture, forming Mitch's name with her lips, questioningly. Stella nods, and looks quickly away. She glances from Stella to Eunice. Stella glances away.)

Blanche

(With sudden hysteria.)

What's happened here? I want an explanation of what's going on here?

Stella

(Agonizingly.)

Hush! Hush!

Eunice
Hush! Hush! Honey!

Stella
Please, Blanche.

Blanche
(Facing upstage toward them.)
Why are you two looking at me like that? Is something wrong with me?

Eunice
You look wonderful, Blanche. Don't she look wonderful?

Stella
Yes.
(Blanche is removing her robe below dressing table.)

Eunice
I understand you're going on a trip.

Stella
Yes, Blanche is. She's going on a vacation.

Eunice
I'm green with envy.

Blanche
(Crosses to bed, drops robe on bed.
Exasperated.)
Help me, you two! Help me get dressed!

Stella
(Taking up Blanche's dress from back of dressing table chair and going to her with it.)
Is this what you want?

Blanche
(Taking dress, getting into it.)
Yes, it will do! I'm anxious to get out of here. This place is a trap!

Eunice
(Going to bed, picking up Blanche's violet-colored jacket.)

Such a pretty blue jacket.

(Stella at left of Blanche. Eunice at right of Blanche helping her dress.)

Stella

It's lilac-colored.

Eunice

I'm color-blind as a bat.

Blanche

(Spying grapes, crosses to bedroom chair.)

Are these grapes washed?

(Chimes.)

Eunice

(Starts down left. Puts jacket on bed.)

Huh?

Blanche

(Below armchair.)

Washed, I said, are they washed?

Eunice

Why, they're from the French Market.

Blanche

That doesn't mean they have been washed.

(Listens to chimes.)

Ah, those cathedral bells, they're the only clean thing in the Quarter. Well, I'm going now.

(Crosses up to below bed.)

I'm ready to go.

(Starts to put on jacket--does so.)

Eunice

(Whispering to Stella.)

She's going to walk out before they get here.

Stella

Wait, Blanche.

Blanche

(Looking towards living room.)

I don't want to pass in front of those men.

Eunice

Then wait till the game breaks up.

Stella

Yes--sit down and . . .

Blanche

(Crosses to vanity. Suddenly listening as she puts on hood, to a far-away sound, inhaling a far-off odor.)

I can smell the sea-air. My element is the earth--but it should have been the water--water--the blessedest thing that God created in those seven days. The rest of my days I'm going to spend on the sea.

(Fade off chimes.)

And when I die, I'm going to die on the sea. You know what I shall die of? I shall die of eating an unwashed grape.

(Crosses to phone table.)

One day out on the ocean I will die--with my hand in the hand of some nice-looking ship's doctor, a very young one with a small blond moustache and a big silver watch. "Poor lady,"

(As she puts on her hood. Chimes.)

they'll say, "The quinine did her no good. That unwashed grape has transported her soul to heaven."

(Moves downstage to below armchair.)

And I'll be buried at sea sewn up in a clean white sack and dropped overboard at noon--

(Crosses to vanity and sits.)

in the blaze of summer--and into an ocean as blue as--the blue of my first lover's eyes!

(Stella comes to Blanche, takes her in her arms. A strange man appears on porch, and rings doorbell. He is followed by a strange woman, severely dressed in a dark, tailored suit, and carrying a small black, professional looking bag. Chimes fade away as doorbell sounds.)

Eunice

(To Stella, when doorbell rings.)

That must be them.

(Stanley rises, goes to door to answer bell.
A low exchange between him and strange man.
Stanley says: "Doctor?" The strange man,
"Yes." Stanley nods, says: "Just a minute."
Turns back into living room.)

Blanche
(On hearing bell.)
What is it?

Eunice
(Covering. Crosses to doorway.)
Excuse me while I see who's at the door.

Stella
Yes.

(Eunice comes into living room, meets Stanley
above table. Stanley tells her the doctor
has arrived. Eunice takes a quick glance
onto porch.)

Blanche
(Tensely, going to dressing table.)
I wonder if it's for me?

(Stella goes to above armchair, faces upstage.
Eunice returns to bedroom, pats Stella's arm.
Speaks brightly to Blanche.)

Eunice
Someone is calling for Blanche.

Blanche
It is for me, then! Is it the gentleman I was expecting
from Dallas?

Eunice
(Looks at Stella.)
I think it is, Blanche.

Blanche
(Turning to dressing table.)
I'm not quite ready.

Stella
Ask him to wait outside.

Blanche

I . . .

(Eunice returns to living room, nods to Stanley. Stanley turns to doctor on porch and says, "She'll be here in a minute." Doctor nods, turns to strange woman, and tells her same thing.)

Stella

(Crossing to behind Blanche--taking slip from back of armchair to suitcase.)

Everything packed?

Blanche

My silver toilet articles are still out.

Stella

Ah!

(She hurries to below dressing table, opens suitcase, gathers up articles, packs them quickly--together with slip. Stanley crosses to doorway.)

Eunice

(Crosses to doorway.)

They're waiting in front of the house.

(Doctor crosses back to nurse down right corner of platform.)

Blanche

They? Who's "they"?

Eunice

There's a lady with him.

Blanche

I wonder who this "lady" could be!

(Looks at Stella, who averts her eyes.
Turns to Eunice.)

How is she dressed?

Eunice

Just--just--a sort of--plain-tailored outfit.

(Stella closes suitcase, stays above dressing room chair.)

Blanche

Possibly she's--

(Her voice dies out nervously. Stanley has moved right in living room, and is standing facing drawn curtains.)

Stella

Shall we go, Blanche?

(Takes up suitcase.)

Blanche

Yes.

(Crosses to doorway. Eunice opens curtains. Blanche stares at Stanley. Turns to Stella.)

Must we go through that room?

(Stanley steps downstage to right of left seat.)

Stella

I will go with you.

Blanche

(To Stella. Then turns to Eunice.)

How do I look?

Stella

Lovely.

Eunice

(Echoing.)

Lovely.

(Blanche starts into living room, Stella following. Stella hands suitcase to Eunice, who follows.)

Blanche

(Crossing above table to door.)

Please don't get up. I'm only passing through.

(Crosses to door. Stella follows closely behind Blanche, and Eunice comes to a position close behind Stella. Blanche steps onto porch, and stares at strange man, who turns to her with a kindly look. Blanche, retreating slowly. Looks at Stella. Back

to man.)

You are not the gentleman I was expecting.

(Stella turns quickly into Eunice's arms.

Stanley steps to behind Eunice.)

That man isn't Shep Huntleigh!

(Runs into bedroom, darts behind head of bed.

Doctor enter room of commotion--motions

nurse, who also enters.)

Stanley

(As Blanche passes him.)

Did you forget something?

(Stella starts for Blanche--Eunice holds her back.)

Blanche

(Shrilly.)

Yes, yes, I forgot something!

(Strange man has stepped into room. Stands by door. Strange woman crosses through living room. Stella starts after her. Stanley stops Stella gently, and Eunice draws Stella back into her arms. Stella is now at left of Eunice. Mitch rises.)

Strange woman

(Puts her bag on bed, stands facing Blanche, who covers behind screen at head of bed.

Woman speaks in a voice as bold and toneless as a fire-bell.)

Hello, Blanche!

Stanley

(Turning to bedroom, standing below trunk at left of center door.)

She says she forgot something.

Strange woman

That's all right.

Stanley

What did you forget, Blanche?

Blanche
(Crosses down center.)

I--I--

Strange woman
It don't matter. We can pick it up later.

Stanley
Sure. We can send it along with the trunk.
(Taps Blanche's closed trunk.)

Blanche
(Slowly retreating in panic to down center
and down left.)
I don't know you! I don't know you! I want to be--left
alone--please!
(Crosses down left.)

Strange woman
(Advancing.)
Now, Blanche!

(Blanche falls on floor. Woman crosses to
right of Blanche and picks her up by arm.)

Stanley
(Crosses to bedroom center.)
Now, Blanche--you left nothing here but spilt talcum and
old empty perfume bottles, unless it's the paper lantern
you want to take with you. You want the lantern?
(Tears lantern off light bulb, and throws it
down on dressing table. Blanche cries out.
Stanley turns away to center door. Blanche
darts up center with lantern. Strange woman
seizes Blanche's arm and forces her to the
floor, her head toward footlights, lying
between the dressing table and armchair.
Following occurs almost simultaneously. Doc-
tor crosses downstage right--then to center--
and up through arch to bedroom.)

Stanley
(Sotto voce.)
Hey! Hey! Doctor, you'd better go in.
(Doctor crosses to Blanche and kneels down.
Pablo crosses up center to right of Stanley.
Steve sees Mitch go for Stanley.)

Stella

(Rushing onto porch.)

Oh, my God, Eunice, help me! Don't let them hurt her!
Oh, God! Oh, please, God, don't hurt her! What are they
doing?

Eunice

(Following to right of Stella, puts down grip
between foot of stairs and down left pillar.)

No, honey, no, no, honey. Stay here. Don't go back in
there.

(Holds Stella.)

Stay with me and don't look.

Stella

(Eunice on second step. Stella on porch
floor.)

What have I done to my sister! Oh, God, what have I
done to my sister!

Eunice

(Still holding her.)

You done the right thing, the only thing you could do.
She couldn't stay here, there wasn't no other place for
her to go.

(During this, Mitch has started below table,
around it, to up center, where he rushes
Stanley.)

Mitch

You! You done this, all a your God-damn' rutting with
things you---

(The men grapple. Pablo and Steve pull Mitch
off Stanley, and push him down in chair at
right of table, where he collapses, head in
arms, sobbing. Strange man has passed below
them into bedroom, kneels beside prostrate
form of Blanche, at her right--the strange
woman kneeling at Blanche's left--holding
Blanche's hands firmly behind her back.)

Strange woman

(Pinioning Blanche's arms.)

These fingernails will have to be trimmed. Jacket, Doctor?

Strange man

Not unless necessary.

(Stanley is standing up center, Pablo to his right, and Steve above Mitch, comforting him. Strange man, leaning close to Blanche. Lifting her eyelids.)

Miss DuBois--

Blanche

Please.

(Turns to him, pleadingly.)

Strange man

(To woman.)

It won't be necessary.

Blanche

(Faintly.)

Ask her to let go of me.

Doctor

(To woman.)

Yes--let go.

(Woman releases Blanche. Strange woman rises. Steps downstage left a bit. Man helps Blanche to her feet. He takes off his hat. She looks at him, wavering--puts on her hood--at first, then smiling, as she would at a new beau. She looks triumphantly at woman, then back to man with a radiant smile. Stanley returns to his place at table, sits. Blanche crosses up center in arch, turns to man in doorway. He has followed her and is now at her left.)

Blanche

(Has arranged her hood about her face, and smiles.)

Whoever you are--I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.

(She takes man's downstage arm,--and they start through living room, woman following, picks up her bag from the bed. Pablo faces upstage. In living room, Stanley has resumed his place, and on above line, Steve sits down in his place, below table. Blanche and man go to front door. Stella turns as Blanche approaches.)

"Varsouviana" music rises.)

Stella

Blanche! Blanche! Blanche!

(Blanche ignores her sister. Man comes to her upstage side, and she takes his arm. Woman follows, and when they pass the spiral Eunice hands woman Blanche's bag, then steps a bit right, looking after the little procession. Stanley rises, comes to left of Stella, on steps, takes her in his arms. Pablo returns to table, sits.)

Stanley

Stella?

(Stella sobs with inhuman abandon. There is something luxurious in her complete surrender to crying now that her sister is gone. Stanley speaks to her voluptuously.)

Now, honey. Now, love. Now, now, love. Now, now, love.
Now, love . . .

(Music approaches a crescendo. The little procession passes across through street towards up left exit.)

Steve

(As curtain starts to fall.)

All right, boys--this game is seven-card stud.
(He deals cards.)

(The curtain comes down slowly.)

REHEARSAL DATA

Cast Members

| Name | Address | Phone Number |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| John Dillon | 817 Colorado | Pr 6-4318 |
| Lisa Valenti | 1807 Todd Road | Je 9-2373 |
| Ardis Horsch | 1807 Todd Road | Je 9-2373 |
| Frank Siegle | Route 3 | 6-7121 |
| Larry Hovey | 309 North 16th | 9-4494 |
| Leanna Lenhart | 1814 Hunting | 9-5423 |
| Tom Gillen | 618 Marlatt Hall | 9-5301 |
| Jeff Kless | 206 West Stadium | 9-4635 |
| Glenda Apt | 1814 Hunting | 9-5423 |
| Phil Moore | 321 Poliska Lane | Pr 6-8284 |
| Linda Rowland | 1114 Bluemont | 8-2186 |
| Yolondia Dozier | 1213 West 20th Junction City | Je 9-4641 |

Rehearsal Record

| Date | Place | Time |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| April 11, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 12, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 13, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 14, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 15, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 18, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 19, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 20, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 21, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 22, 1966 | Holton Hall | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 25, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 26, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 27, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 28, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| April 29, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 2, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 3, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 4, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 5, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 6, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 9, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 10, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-11:00 p.m. |
| May 11, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-12:00 p.m. |
| May 12, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-12:00 p.m. |
| May 13, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-12:00 p.m. |
| May 15, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 7:00-11:00 p.m. |
| May 16, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 6:30-12:00 p.m. |
| May 17, 1966 | Purple Masque Theatre | 6:30-12:00 p.m. |
| May 18, 1966 | | |
| (Performance) | Purple Masque Theatre | 6:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 19, 1966 | | |
| (Performance) | Purple Masque Theatre | 6:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 20, 1966 | | |
| (Performance) | Purple Masque Theatre | 6:00-10:00 p.m. |
| May 21, 1966 | | |
| (Performance) | Purple Masque Theatre | 6:00-10:00 p.m. |

PERFORMANCE DATA

A Streetcar Named Desire was given on May 18, 19, 20 and 21 in the second semester of the 1965-1966 school year. All four performances were given in the Purple Masque Experimental Theatre, Gate 2, East Stadium, Kansas State University.

| | Call | Performance |
|--|-----------|-------------|
| First Dress Rehearsal May 11, 1966 | 7:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Second Dress Rehearsal May 12, 1966 | 7:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Third Dress Rehearsal May 13, 1966 | 7:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Fourth Dress Rehearsal May 15, 1966 | 7:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Fifth Dress Rehearsal May 16, 1966 | 6:30 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Sixth Dress Rehearsal May 17, 1966 | 6:30 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| First Performance May 18, 1966 | 6:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Second Performance May 19, 1966 | 6:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Third Performance May 20, 1966 | 6:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |
| Fourth Performance May 21, 1966 | 6:00 p.m. | 8:00 p.m. |

Expenses of Production

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Royalty | \$100.00 |
| Set | .47.93 |
| Props | .21.96 |
| Make-up | 4.54 |
| Costumes. | .12.14 |
| Lighting and Sound. | .90 |
| Printing. | .20.33 |
| Advertisement | .42.15 |
| Sales Tax. | <u>8.93</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | .\$258.88 |

LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED

Books

- Bentley, Eric. The Dramatic Event. Boston, 1954.
- Bogard, Travis and William S. Oliver. Modern Drama Essays in Criticism. New York, 1965.
- Brown, John Mason. Dramatic Personae: A Retrospective Show. New York, 1963.
- Cole, Toby and Helen Krick Chinoy, ed. Directors on Directing. New York, 1963.
- Falk, Signi, Tennessee Williams. New Haven, Conn, 1961.
- Hurrall, John D., ed. Two Modern American Tragedies: Reviews and Criticism of Death of a Salesman and A Streetcar Named Desire. New York, 1961.
- Jackson, Esther Merle. The Broken World of Tennessee Williams. Madison and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1965.
- Maxwell, Gilbert. Tennessee Williams and Friends: An Informal Biography. New York, 1965.
- Nelson, Benjamin. Tennessee Williams: The Man and His Work. New York, 1961.
- Tischler, Nancy M. Tennessee Williams: Rebellious Puritan. New York, 1962.
- Weales, Gerald. American Drama Since World Warr II. New York, 1962.
- Williams, Edwina Dakin. Remember Me To Tom. New York, 1963.
- Williams, Tennessee. The Glass Menagerie. New York, 1945.
- _____ . One Arm and other stories. New York, 1954.
- _____ . Three Players of a Summer Game. London, 1960.

_____. 27 Wagons Full of Cotton and other One-Act Plays. Norfolk, Connecticut, 1953.

Periodicals

Atkinson, Brooks. " 'Streetcar' Tragedy." New York Times.
December 14, 1947.

Engle, Paul. "A Locomotive Named Reality." The New Republic.
January 24, 1955.

Gassner, John. "Tennessee Williams Dramatist of Frustration." College English. October 1948.

Jones, Robert. " Tennessee Williams Earyl Heroines." Modern Drama II. 1959.

Lewis, R.C. "A Playwright Named Tennessee Williams." The New York Times Magazine. December 7, 1947.

Moor, Paul. "A Mississippian Named Tennessee." Harpers Magazine.
July, 1948.

Tynan, Kenneth. " Valentine to Tennessee Williams." Mademoiselle.
February 1956.

A PRODUCTION BOOK FOR A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

by

Rodney M. Wilson

B. A., State College of Iowa, 1961

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Speech

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Manhattan, Kansas

1966

This thesis presents the information used in presenting the play, A Streetcar Named Desire as a thesis production on May 18, 19, 20 and 21 in the Purple Masque Theatre, Gate 2, East Stadium. The production was sponsored by the Department of Speech and the K-State Players. The purpose of this book is to provide information on the production of the play so that someone reading the book would be able to understand how the production was done. This was done by placing in the book a copy of the program and the critic's review. The section on the author gives a brief account of his life as a background for his writing. The section of thematic material attempts to show the development of the work of the author and in particular A Streetcar Named Desire. The section on the interpretation and character discusses the director's view of each character and an explanation of why the characters were costumed and presented as they were in relation to the basic thematic material.

The setting is described in full with explanations of the atmosphere and mood that was intended. Included in this section is a list of set props and a sketch of the floor plan. Pictures are included to show the costumes and the effect of costumed characters in relation to the setting.

The lighting for this show was fairly difficult, for in order to create the mood demanded by the play the director must also decide how visible his characters must be to the audience.

Cue sheets corresponding to the script are included for both lights and sound. The allotted budget for this show was \$150.00. A list of the expenditures is included.

The script is typed out in full including all the blocking moves that were used by the director as well as some line interpretations. The script was the one used by this cast. The final pages show technical information about cast listing and rehearsal schedules as well as performances.