

A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

SCENE ONE:

[It is dusk of an evening in early May.... Much action – TBD. Note: Much action – TBD means that something needs to happen here but that it is “To Be Determined” during rehearsal, so we’re not sure just what it is yet. This is a phrase that will be used throughout this particular script to delineate that action and/or sound, light cues will need to happen, and will be added in as we rehearse. The word – “Overall” – is used generically to sum up the basics of what needs to be where by the end of the stage direction or beginning of lines, etc.... Overall – Eunice and Woman end up onstage as Stanley enters]

Stanley:

Hey, there! Stella, Baby!

Stella:

Don’t holler at me like that. Hi, Mitch.

Stanley:

Catch!

Stella:

What?

Stanley:

Meat!

Stella:

Stanley! Where are you going?

Stanley:

Bowling!

Stella:

Can I come watch?

Stanley:

Come on.

Stella:

Be over soon. Hello, Eunice. How are you?

Eunice:

I’m allright. Tell Steve to get him a poor boy’s sandwich ‘cause nothing’s left here.

Woman:

What was that package he th’ew at ‘er?

Eunice:
You hush, now!

Woman:
Catch *what!*

(Blanche enters)

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

Blanche:
They told me to take a street-car named Desire, and then transfer to one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks and get off at – Elysian Fields!

Eunice:
That's where you are now.

Blanche:
At Elysian Fields?

Eunice:
This here is Elysian Fields.

Blanche:
They mustn't have – understood – what number I wanted...

Eunice:
What number you lookin' for?

Blanche:
Six thirty-two.

Eunice:
You don't have to look no further.

Blanche:
I'm looking for my sister, Stella DuBois. I mean – Mrs. Stanley Kowalski.

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

Blanche:
This – can this be – her home?

Eunice:
She's got the downstairs here and I got the up.

Blanche:
Oh. She's – out?

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

Blanche:
No.

Woman:
I'll go tell her you come.

Blanche:
Thanks.

Woman:
You welcome.

Eunice:
She wasn't expecting you?

Blanche:
No. No, not tonight.

Eunice:
Well, why don't you just go in and make yourself at home till they get back.

Blanche:

How could I – do that?

Eunice:
We own this place so I can let you in. (*goes into their apartment*) It's sort of messed up right now but when it's clean it's real sweet.

Blanche:
Is it?

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

Blanche:

Yes. Thanks for letting me in.

Eunice:

Por nada, as the Mexicans say, por nada! Stella spoke of you.

Blanche:

Yes?

Eunice:

I think she said you taught school.

Blanche:

Yes.

Eunice:

And you're from Mississippi, huh?

Blanche:

Yes.

Eunice:

She showed me a picture of your home-place, the plantation.

Blanche:

Bell Reve?

Eunice:

A great big place with white columns.

Blanche:

Yes...

Eunice: A place like that must be awful hard to keep up.

Blanche:

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

Eunice:

Sure, honey. Why don't you set down?

Blanche:

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

Eunice:

Aw. I'll make myself scarce, in that case.

Blanche:

I didn't mean to be rude, but –

Eunice:
I'll drop by the bowling alley an' hustle her up. (*exits*)

Blanche:
I've got to keep hold of myself!

(*Stella rushes on and into the apartment*)

Stella:
Blanche!

Blanche:
Stella, oh, Stella, Stella! Stella for Star! Now, then, let me look at you. But don't you look at me, Stella, no, no, no, not till later, not till I've bathed and rested! And turn that over-light off! Turn that off! I won't be looked at in this merciless glare! Come back here now! Oh, my baby! Stella! Stella for Star! 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 – Ha-a-ha! Precious lamb! You haven't said a word to me.

Stella:
You haven't given me a chance to, honey!

Blanche:
Well, no you talk. Open your pretty mouth and talk while I look around for some liquor! I know you must have some liquor on the place! Where could it be, I wonder? Oh, I spy, I spy!

Stella:
Blanche, you sit down and let me pour the drinks. I don't know what we've got to mix with. Maybe a coke's in the icebox. Look'n see, honey, while I'm –

Blanche:
No coke, honey, not with my nerves tonight! Where – where – where is - ?

Stella:
Stanley? Bowling! He loves it. They're having a – found some soda! --- tournament...

Blanche:
Just water, baby, to chase it! 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! You sit down, now, and explain this place to me! What are you doing in a place like this?

Stella:
Now, Blanche—

Blanche"
Oh, I'm not going to be hypocritical, I'm going to be honestly critical about it! Never, never, never in my worst dreams could I picture – Only Poe! Only Mr. Edgar Allan Poe! – could do it justice! Out there I suppose is the ghoulish-woodland of Weir!

Stella:

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

Blanche:

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

Stella:

Tell you what, Blanche?

Blanche:

Why, that you had to live in these conditions?

Stella:

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

Blanche:

This has got nothing to do with New Orleans. You might as well say – forgive me, blessed baby! The subject is closed!

Stella:

Thanks.

Blanche:

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

Stella:

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

Blanche:

No? – I'd forgotten how quiet you were.

Stella:

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

Blanche:

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

Stella:

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

Blanche:

You thought I'd been fired?

Stella:

No, I – thought you might have – resigned...

Blanche:

I was so exhausted by all I'd been through my – nerves 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:

Won't you have another?

Blanche:

No, one's my limit.

Stella:

Sure?

Blanche:

You haven't said a word about my appearance.

Stella:

You look just fine.

Blanche:

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! And it's so becoming to you!

Stella:

Now, Blanche –

Blanche:

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

Stella:

Not now.

Blanche:

You hear me? I said stand up! You messy child, you, you've spilt something on that pretty white lace collar! About your hair – you ought to have it cut in a feather bob with your dainty features. Stella, you have a maid, don't you?

Stella:

No. With only two rooms it's –

Blanche:

What? Two rooms, did you say?

Stella:

This one and –

Blanche:

The other one? ... I am going to take just one little tiny nip more, sort of to put the stopper on, so to speak Then put the bottle away so I won't be tempted. I want you to look at my figure. You know I haven't put on one ounce in ten years, Stella? I weigh what I weighed the summer you left Belle Reve. The summer Dad died and you left us...

Stella:

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

Blanche:

But, Stella, there's only two rooms, I don't see where you're going to put me!

Stella:

We're going to put you in here.

Blanche:

What kind of bed's this – one of those collapsible things?

Stella:

Does it feel all right?

Blanche:

Wonderful, honey. I don't like a bed that gives much. But there's no door between the two rooms, and Stanley – will it be decent?

Stella:

Stanley is Polish, you know.

Blanche:

Oh, yes, They're something like Irish, aren't they?

Stella:

Well –

Blanche:

Only not so – highbrow? 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:

Polacks?

Stella:
They're a mixed lot, Blanche.

Blanche:
Heterogeneous – types?

Stella:
Oh, yes. Yes, types is right!

Blanche:
Well – anyhow – I brought 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, got to be with somebody, I can't be alone! Because – as you must have noticed – I'm – not ver well...

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, Stella? I couldn't stand that.

Stella:
You'll get along fine together, if you'll just try not to -- well – compare him with men that 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! Here's a picture of him!

Blanche:
An officer?

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

Blanche:
He had those on when you met him?

Stella:
I assure you I wasn't just blinded by all the brass.

Blanche:
That's not what I –

Stella:
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 said I was coming?

Stella:
Oh, Stanley doesn't know yet.

Blanche:
You – haven't told him?

Stella:
He's on the road a good deal.

Blanche:
Oh. Travels?

Stella:
Yes.

Blanche:
Good. I mean – isn't it?

Stella:
I can hardly stand it when he is away for a night...

Blanche:
Why, Stella!

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

Blanche:
Gracious!

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

Blanche:
I guess that is what is meant by being in love... Stella –

Stella:
What?

Blanche:

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

Stella:
What, Blanche?

Blanche:
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! You came to New Orleans and looked out for 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:
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:
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:
About – what?—please!

Blanche:
The loss – the loss...

Stella:
Belle Reve? Lost, is it? No!

Blanche:
Yes, Stella.

Stella:
But how did it go? What happened?

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

Stella:
Blanche!

Blanche:
You're a fine one to sit there accusing me of it!

Stella:
Blanche!

Blanche:

I, I, I took the blows in 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, it couldn't be put in a coffin! But had to be burned like rubbish! You just came home in time for the funerals, Stella. And funerals are pretty compared to deaths. Funerals are quiet, but deaths – not always. Sometimes their breathing is hoarse, and sometimes it rattles, and sometimes they even 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! But 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 do you think all that sickness and dying was paid for? Death is expensive, Miss Stella! And old Cousin Jessies' right after Margaret's, hers! Why, the Grim Reaper had put up his tent on our doorstep!... Stella. Belle Reve was his headquarters! Honey – that's how it slipped through my fingers! Which of them left us a fortune? Which of them left 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! Sit there and stare at me, 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!

Blanche:
Where are you going?

Stella:
I'm going into 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 –

(Stanley, Steve & Mitch enter...)

Stanley:
Is that how he got it?

Steve:
Sure that's how he got it. He hit the old weather-bird for 300 bucks on a six-number-ticket.

Mitch:
Don't tell him those things: he'll believe it.

Stanley:
Hey, Mitch – come back here.

Steve:
Hey, are we playin' poker tomorrow?

Stanley:
Sure – at Mitch's.

Mitch:
No – not at my place. My mother's still sick!

Stanley:
Okay, at my place... But you bring the beer!

Mitch/Steve: *[ad libbing]* Good night! Good night all.... *[singing, etc]*

Eunice:
Break it up down there! I made the spaghetti dish and ate it myself.

Steve:
I told you and phoned you we was playing. Jax beer!

Eunice:
You never phoned me once.

Steve:
I told you at breakfast – and phoned you at lunch...

Eunice:
Well, never mind about that. You just get yourself home here once in a while.

Steve:
You want it in the papers?

[more ad-libbing, shouts of parting etc.... Stanley enters apartment]

Blanche:
You must be Stanley. I'm Blanche.

Stanley:
Stella's sister?

Blanche:
Yes.

Stanley:
H'lo. Where's the little woman?

Blanche:
In the bathroom.

Stanley:
Oh. Didn't know you were coming in town.

Blanche:
I – uh ---

Stanley:
Where you from, Blanche?

Blanche:
Why, I – live in Laurel.

Stanley:
In Laurel, huh? Oh, yeah. Yeah, in Laurel, that's right. Not in my territory. Liquor goes fast in hot weather. Have a shot?

Blanche:
No, I – rarely touch it.

Stanley:
Some people rarely touch it, but it touches them often.

Blanche:
Ha-ha.

Stanley:
My clothes're stickin' to me. Do you mind if I make myself comfortable?

Blanche:
Please, please do.

Stanley:
Be comfortable is my motto.

Blanche:
It's mine, too. It's hard to stay looking fresh. I haven't washed or even powdered my face and – here you are!

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

Blanche:

Yes.

Stanley:
What do you teach, Blanche?

Blanche:
English.

Stanley:
I never was a very good English student. How long 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 for you all.

Stanley:
Good.

Blanche:
Traveling wears me out.

Stanley:
Well, take it easy. *[cat screeches]*

Blanche:
What's that?

Stanley:
Cats... Hey, Stella!

Stella:
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. You were married once, weren't you?

Blanche:
Yes. When I was quite young.

Stanley:
What happened?

Blanche:

The boy – the boy died. I'm afraid I'm – going to be sick!

SCENE TWO

[about six o'clock the following evening. Blanche is bathing while Stella is setting the table for "the poker night." She is dressed and ready to go out]

Stanley:
What's all this monkey doings?

Stella:
Oh Stan! 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:
I put you a cold plate on ice.

Stanley:
Well isn't that just dandy!

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

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?

Stella:
Stan, we've – lost Belle Reve!

Stanley:
The place in the country?

Stella:
Yes.

Stanley:
How?

Stella:
Oh, it had to be – sacrificed or something. When she comes in be sure to say something nice about her appearance. And, oh! Don't mention the baby. I haven't said anything yet, I'm waiting until she gets in a quieter condition.

Stanley:
So?

Stella:
And please try to understand her and be nice to her, Stan.

Blanche:
[singing in the bathroom] "From the land of the sky blue water, they brought a captive maid!...."

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

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

Stella:
Oh! – yes...

Stanley:
How about that? Let's have a few more details on that subject'.

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 annoyed with business details right now!

Stella:
You saw how she was last night.

Stanley:

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

Stella:

I haven't seen any.

Stanley:

She didn't show you no papers, no deed of ale or nothing like that, huh?

Stella:

It seems like it wasn't sold.

Stanley:

Well, what in hell was it then, give away? To charity?

Stella:

Shhh! She'll hear you.

Stanley:

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

Stella:

There weren't any papers, she didn't show any papers, I don't care about papers.

Stanley:

Have you ever heard of the Napoleonic code?

Stella:

No, Stanley, I haven't heard of the Napoleonic code and if I have, I don't see what it –

Stanley:

Let me enlighten you on a point or two, baby.

Stella;

Yes?

Stanley:

In the state of Louisiana we have the Napoleonic code according to which what belongs to the wife belongs to the husband and vice versa. For instance if I had a piece of property, or you had a piece of property –

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 is acquainted with the Napoleonic code. It looks to me like you have been swindled, baby, and when you're swindled under the Napoleonic code I'm swindled too. And I don't like to be swindled.

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 of our family could have perpetrated a swindle on anyone else.

Stanley:

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

Stella:

Not sold – lost, lost! [*Stanley goes to Blanche's trunk*] Stanley!

Stanley:

Open your eyes to this stuff! You think she got them out of a teacher's pay?

Stella:

Hush!

Stanley:

Look at the se feathers and furs that she come here to preen herself in! What's this here! A solid-gold dress, I believe! And this one! What is these here? Fox-pieces! 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 appraise it. I'm willing to bet you there's thousands of dollars invested in this stuff here!

Stella:

Don't be such an idiot, Stanley!

Stanley:

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

Stella:

Oh, Stanley!

Stanley:

Pearls! Ropes of them! What is this sister of yours, a deep-sea diver? Bracelets of solid gold, too! Where are your pearls and gold bracelets?

Stella:

Shhh! Be still, Stanley!

Stanley:

And diamonds! A crown for an empress!

Stella:

A rhinestone tiara she wore to a costume ball.

Stanley:

What's rhinestone?

Stella:

Next door to glass.

Stanley:

Are you kidding? I have an acquaintance that works in a jewelry store. I'll have him in here to make an appraisal of this. Here's your plantation, or what was left of it, here!

Stella:

You have no idea how stupid and horrid you're being! Now close that trunk before she comes out of the bathroom!

Stanley:

The Kowalskis and the DuBois have different notions.

Stella:

Indeed they have, thank heavens! – I'm going outside. You come out with me while Blanche is getting dressed.

Stanley:

Since when do you give me orders?

Stella:

Are you going to stay here and insult her?

Stanley:

You're damn tootin' I'm going to stay here. *[Stella goes out to porch, Blanche comes out of the bathroom in a red satin robe]*

Blanche:

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

Stanley:

That's good.

Blanche:

Excuse me while I slip on my pretty new dress!

Stanley:

Go right ahead, Blanche.

Blanche:

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

Stanley:

Yeah?

Blanche:

Where's Stella?

Stanley:

Out on the porch.

Blanche:

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

Stanley:

What could that be I wonder?

Blanche:

Some buttons in back! You may enter! How do I look?

Stanley:

You look all right.

Blanche:

Many thanks! Now the buttons!

Stanley:

I can't do nothing with them.

Blanche:

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

Stanley:

Have one for yourself.

Blanche:

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

Stanley:

Me an' Stella were helping you unpack.

Blanche:

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

Stanley:

It looks like you raided some stylish shops in Paris.

Blanche:

Ha-ha! Yes – clothes are my passion!

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

Blanche:
Why, those were a tribute from an admirer of mine!

Stanley:
He must have had a lot of – admiration!

Blanche:
Oh, in my youth I excited some admiration. But look at me now! Would you think it possible that I was once considered to be – attractive?

Stanley:
Your looks are okay.

Blanche:
I was fishing for a compliment, Stanley.

Stanley:
I don't go in for that stuff.

Blanche:
What – stuff?

Stanley:
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 doll who said to me, "I am the glamorous type, I am the glamorous type!" I said, "So, what?"

Blanche:
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:
It ended the conversation – that was all. Some men are taken in by this Hollywood glamour 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 little bit on the primitive side I should think. To interest you a woman would have to –

Stanley:
Lay... her cards on the table.

Blanche:
Well, I never cared for wishy-washy people. That was why, when you walked in her last night, I said to myself – “my sister has married a man!” – Of course that was all I could tell about you.

Stanley:
Now let's cut the re-bop!

Blanche:
Ouuuuu!

Stella:
[calling from outside] Stanley! You come out here and let Blanche finish dressing!

Blanche:
I'm through dressing, honey.

Stella:
Well, you come out then.

Stanley:
Your sister and I are having a little talk.

Blanche:
Honey, do me a favor. Run to the drugstore and get me a lemon-coke with plenty of chipped ice in it! – Will you do that for me, Sweetie?

Stella:
Yes.

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 double-talk. I'm ready to answer all questions. I've nothing to hide. What is it?

Stanley:

There is such a thing in this State of Louisiana as the Napoleonic code, according to which whatever belongs to my wife is also mine – and vice versa.

Blanche:

My, but you have an impressive judicial air!

Stanley:

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

Blanche:

Such as what!

Stanley:

Don't play so dumb. You know what!

Blanche:

All right. Cards on the table. That suits me. I know I fib a good deal. 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's the papers? In the trunk?

Blanche:

Everything that I own is in that trunk. [Stanley goes to the trunk and begins going through it] What in the name of heaven are you thinking of! What's in the back of that little boy's mind of yours? That I am absconding with something, attempting some kind of treachery on my sister? – Let me do that! It will be faster and simpler... I keep my papers mostly in this tin box.

Stanley:

What's them underneath?

Blanche:

These are love-letters, yellowing with antiquity, all from one boy. [he grabs them] Give those back to me!

Stanley:

I'll have a look at them first!

Blanche:

The touch of your hands insults them!

Stanley:

Don't pull that stuff!

Blanche:
Now that you've touched them I'll burn them!

Stanley:
What in hell are they?

Blanche:
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! Just give them back to me!

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

Blanche:
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.... Ambler & Ambler. Hmmm.... Crabtree.... More Ambler & Amber.

Stanley:
What is Ambler & Ambler?

Blanche:
A firm that made loans on the place.

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 them papers?

Blanche:
[picking up more papers] There are thousands of papers, stretching back over hundreds of years, affect Belle Reve as, piece by piece, our improvident grandfathers and father and uncles and brothers exchanged the land for their 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. Here all of them 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!.... I wonder if Stella's come back with my lemon-coke....

Stanley:
I have a lawyer acquaintance who will study these out.

Blanche:

Present them to him with a box of aspirin tablets.

Stanley:

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 going to have a baby? I didn't know she was going to have a baby! [Stella appears with a carton from the drugstore] 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. I called him a little boy and laughed and flirted. Yes, I was flirting with your husband! [*Steve, Pablo, men start appearing*] The guests are gathering for the poker party. Which way do we go now, Stella – this way?

Stella:

No, this way.

Blanche:

The blind are leading the blind!

Vendor's voice:

Red-hot!

SCENE THREE

[very late that night]

Steve:
Anything wild this deal?

Pablo:
One-eyed jacks are wild.

Steve:
Give me two cards.

Pablo:
You, Mitch?

Mitch:
I'm out.

Pablo:
One.

Mitch:
Anyone want a shot?

Stanley:
Yeah. Me.

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

Stanley:
When I'm losing you want to eat! Ante up! Openers? Openers! Get y'r ass off the table, Mitch. Nothing belongs on a poker table but cards, chips and whiskey.

Mitch:
Kind of on your high horse, ain't you?

Stanley:
How many?

Steve:
Give me three.

Stanley:
One.

Mitch:
I'm out again. I oughta go home pretty soon.

Stanley:
Shut up.

Mitch:
I gotta sick mother. She don't go to sleep until I come 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, go home, then!

Pablo:
What've you got?

Steve:
Spade flush.

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

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

Mitch:
Aw, go rut. *[exits to bathroom]*

Steve:
Seven card stud. This ole farmer is out in back of house sittin' down th'owing corn to the chickens when all oat 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 gaining on her fast.

Stanley:
Deal!

Steve:
But when the rooster catches sight of the farmer th'owing 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 hungry!"

[Stella and Blanche enter and start toward door]

Stella:
The game is still going on.

Blanche:
How do I look?

Stella:
Lovely, Blanche.

Blanche:
I feel so hot and frazzled. Wait till I powder before you open the door. Do I look done in?

Stella:
Why no. You are as fresh as a daisy.

Blanche:
One that's been picked a few days.

[they enter the kitchen]

Stella:
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. Gonzalez and Mr. Hubbell.

Blanche:
Please don't get up.

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

Stella:
How much longer is this game going to continue?

Stanley:
Till we get ready to quit.

Blanche:
Poker is so fascinating. Could I kibitz?

Stanley:
You could not. Why don't you women go up and sit with Eunice?

Stella:
Because it is nearly two-thirty. Couldn't you call it quits after one more hand? *[Stanley whacks her on the bottom]* That's not fun, Stanley. *[goes into bedroom with 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?

Stella:
I don't know.

[Blanche knocks, Mitch comes out]

Blanche:
Oh! –god evening.

Mitch:
Hello.

Stella:
Blanche, this is Harold Mitchell. My sister, Blanche Dubois.

Mitch:
How do you do, Miss Dubois.

Stella:
How is your mother now, Mitch?

Mitch:
About the same, thanks. She appreciated your sending over that custard. – Excuse me, please.
[he exits back into kitchen]

Blanche:
That one seems – superior to the others.

Stella:
Yes, he is.

Blanche:
I thought he had a sort of sensitive look.

Stella:
His mother is sick.

Blanche:
Is he married?

Stella:

No.

Blanche:
Is he a wolf?

Stella:
Why Blanche! I don't think he would be.

Blanche:
What does – what does he do?

Stella:
He's on the precision bench at the spare parts department. At the plant 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?

Stella:
Look at him.

Blanche:
I've looked at him.

Stella:
Then you should know.

Blanche:
I'm sorry, but I haven't noticed the stamp of genius even 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 that he has. You're standing in the light, Blanche!

Blanche:
Oh, am I!

Stella:
You ought to see their wives.

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

Stella:
You know the one upstairs? One time the plaster – cracked –

Stanley:
You hens cut out that conversation in there!

Stella:
You can't hear us.

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

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

Blanche:
Stella, don't start a row.

Stella:
He's half drunk! – I'll be out in a minute. [she goes into bathroom.... Blanche turns radio on]

Stanley:
Awright, Mitch, you in?

Mitch:
What? Oh! – No, I'm out!

[Blanche in the bedroom with the radio – what happens?]

Stanley:
Who turned that on in there?

Blanche:
I did. Do you mind?

Stanley:
Turn it off!

Steve:
Aw, let the girls have their music.

Pablo:
Sure, that's good, leave it on!

Steve:

Sounds like Xavier Cugat!

[Stanley up – cross to radio – turns it off – back to table... Men adlibbing into argument...]

Steve:
I didn't hear you name it.

Pablo:
Didn't I name it, Mitch?

Mitch:
I wasn't listenin'.

Pablo:
What were you doing, then?

Stanley:
He was looking through them drapes. *[he jerks curtains closed]* Now deal the hand over again and let's play cards or quit. Some people get ants when they win. *[Mitch rises]* Sit down!

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

Pablo:
Sure he's got ants now. Seven five-dollar bills in his pants pocket folded up tight as spitballs.

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

Stanley:
And when he goes home he'll deposit them one by one in a piggy bank his mother give him for Christmas. *[dealing]* This game is Spit in the Ocean.

[Mitch continues on through curtains into bedroom]

Blanche:
Hello! The Little Boys' Room is busy right now.

Mitch:
We've – been drinking beer.

Blanche:
I hate beer.

Mitch:
It's – a hot weather drink.

Blanche:
Oh, I don't think so; it always makes me warmer. Have you got any cigs?

Mitch:
Sure.

Blanche:
What kind are they?

Mitch:
Luckies.

Blanche:
Oh, good. What a pretty case. Silver?

Mitch:
Yes. Yes; read the inscription.

Blanche:
Oh, is there an inscription? I can't make it out. Oh! "And if God choose, I shall but love thee better – after – death!" Why, that's from my favorite sonnet by Mrs. Browning!

Mitch:
You know it?

Blanche:
Certainly I do!

Mitch:
There's a story connected with that inscription.

Blanche:
It sounds like a romance.

Mitch:
A pretty sad one.

Blanche:
Oh?

Mitch:
The girl's dead now.

Blanche:
Oh!

Mitch:
She knew she was dying when she give me this. A very starange girl, very sweet – very!

Blanche:
She must have been 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 epeople who have experienced some sorrow.

Mitch:
I believe you are right about that.

Blanche:
I'm positive that I am. Show me a person who hasn't known any sorry and I'll show you a shuperficial – Listen to me! My tongue is a little – thick! You boys are responsible for it. The show let out at elevena dn 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 the limit – and three! Tonight I had three.

Stanley:
Mitch!

Mitch:
Deal me out. I'm talking to Miss –

Blanche:
DuBois.

Mitch:
Miss DuBois?

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.

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. Just slightly. Less than a year. Will you do something for me?

Mitch:
Sure. What?

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

Mitch:
Be glad to.

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

Mitch:
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 schoolteacher!

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

Blanche:
Thank you, sir! I appreciate your gallantry!

Mitch:
So you are in the teaching profession?

Blanche:
Yes. Ah, yes...

Mitch:
Grade school or high school or –

Stanley:
Mitch!!!

Mitch:
Coming!!!

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

Mitch:
What do you teach? What subject?

Blanche:
Guess!

Mitch:
I bet you teach art or music? Of course I could be wrong. You might teach arithmetic.

Blanche:
Never arithmetic, sir; never arithmetic. 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 reverence for Hawthorne and Whitman and Poe!

Mitch:
I guess that some of them are more interested in other things.

Blanche:
How very right you are! Their literary heritage is not what most of them 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! *[Stella comes out of the bathroom]* Oh! Have you finished! Wait – I'll turn on the radio.

[Much action TBD – overall - Mitch and Blanche go into dancing thing, Stanley stomps in and trashes radio, etc]

Stella:
Drunk – drunk – animal thing you!! *[much action – TBD – overall Stella empties poker table et al]* All of you – please go home! If any of you have one spark of decency in you –

Blanche:
Stella, watch out, he's –

[much action TBD – overall Stanley charges after Stella, men ad-libbing, “Take it easy, Stanley.... Easy.... Fellow.... Let's all.... Etc etc etc....”]

Stella:
You lay your hands on me and I'll –

[much action TBD – overall - offstage fight happens with Stanley hitting Stella, crying, crashing, swearing, Stella screams, sounds of a blow, etc.]

Blanche:
My sister is going to have a baby!

Mitch:
This is terrible.

Blanche:
Lunacy, absolute lunacy!

Mitch:
Get him in here, men!

[much action TBD – overall - Stanley is forced, dragged by men into the bedroom]

Stella:
I want to go away, I want to go away!

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

Blanche:
I want my sister's clothes! We'll go to that woman's upstairs!

Mitch:
Where is the clothes?

Blanche:
[getting them from closet] I've got them! Stella, Stella, precious! Dear, dear little sister, don't be afraid! *[Blanche guides Stella outside and upstairs]*

Stanley:
What's the matter; what's happened?

Mitch:
You just blew your top, Stan.

Pablo:
He's okay, now.

Steve:
Sure, my boy's okay!

Mitch:
Put him on the bed and get him a wet towel.

Pablo:

I think coffee would do him a world of good, now.

Stanley:

I want water.

Mitch:

Put him under the shower!

[much action TBD – overall - men lead him to the bathroom, sounds of water, etc.]

Stanley:

Let the rut go of me, you sons of bitches!

[much action TBD – overall - chaos in the bathroom]

Steve:

Let's get quick out of here!

Mitch:

Poker should not be played in a house with women.

[much action TBD – overall – men get the hell out – sweeping up winnings off of table as they leave.... Place gets quiet.... Stanley comes out dripping...]

Stanley:

Stella? My baby doll's left me! *[goes to phone]* Eunice? I want my baby! *[listens, hangs up, dials again]* Eunice? I'll keep on ringin' until I talk with my baby! *[nothing. Throws phone down... finally, stumbles outside to foot of stairs...]*

Stell-laaahhhhh!

Eunice:

Quit that howling out there an' go back to bed!

Stanley:

I want my baby down here. Stella, Stella!

Eunice:

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

Stanley:

Stella!

Eunice:

You can't beat on a woman an' then call 'er back! She won't come! And her goin' t'have a baby!... You stinker! You whelp of a Polack you! I hope they do haul you in and turn the fire hose on you, same as the last time!

Stanley:

Eunice, I want my girl to come down with me!

Eunice:
Hah! *[slams door]*

Stanley:
STELL-LLAHHHHH!!!

[much action TBD – overall -- Stella..... comes down to him.... They go inside. Blanche comes out from upstairs and down the steps to the door.....]

Blanche:
Where is my little sister? Stella? Stella?

[Mitch appears]

Mitch:
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:
Ho-ho! There's nothing to be scared of They're crazy about each other.

Blanche:
Im not used to such –

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

Blanche:
Violence! Is so –

Mitch:
Set down on the steps and have a cigarette with me.

Blanche:

I'm not properly dressed.

Mitch:

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

SCENE FOUR

[the next morning...]

Blanche:
Stella?

Stella:
Hmmh?

Blanche:
Baby, my baby sister!

Stella:
Blanche, what is the matter with you?

Blanche:
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 were you thinking of? Answer me! What? What?

Stella:
Please, Blanche! Sit down and stop yelling.

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

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

Blanche:

Am I?

Stella:

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:

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

Blanche:

And you – you let him? Didn't run, didn't scream?

Stella:

I was – sort of thrilled – by it. Eunice and you had breakfast?

Blanche:

Do you suppose I wanted any breakfast?

Stella: There's some coffee left on the stove.

Blanche:

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

Stella:

What other can I be? He's taken the radio to get it fixed It didn't land on the pavement so only one tube was smashed.

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 being sensible about it. I'm going to do something. Get hold of myself and make myself a new life!

Stella:
Yes?

Blanche:
But you've given in. And that isn't right, you're not old! You can get out.

Stella:
I'm not in anything I want to get out of.

Blanche:
What – Stella?

Stella:
I said I am not in anything that I have a desire to get out of. Look at the mess in this room! And those empty bottles! They went through two cases last night! He promised this morning that 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. I don't understand your indifference. Is this a Chinese philosophy you've – cultivated?

Stella:
Is what – what?

Blanche:
This – shuffling about and mumbling – 'One tube smashed – beer-bottles – mess in the kitchen!; - as if nothing out of the ordinary has happened! Are you deliberately shakeing that thing in my face?

Stella:
No.

Blanche:
Stop it. Let go of that broom. I won't have you cleaning up for him!

Stella:
Then who's going to do it? Are you?

Blanche:
I? I?

Stella:
No, I didn't think so.

Blanche:
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:
Listen to me. I have an idea of some kind. Do you remember Shep Huntleigh? 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:
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:
I should think it would have been – inconvenient in traffic!

Blanche:
You've heard of oil wells?

Stella:
Yes – remotely.

Blanche:

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

Stella:

My, my.

Blanche:

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:

Why – set us up in a – shop!

Stella:

What kind of a shop?

Blanche:

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

Stella:

He's married?

Blanche:

Honey, would I be here if the man weren't married? How do I get Western Union? – Operator! Western Union!

Stella:

That's a dial phone, honey.

Blanche:

I can't dial, I'm too –

Stella:

Just dial O.

Blanche:

O?

Stella:

Yes, "O" for Operator!

Blanche:

Give me a pencil. Where is a slip of paper? I've got to write it down first – the message, I mean... Let me see now... 'Darling Shep. Sister and I in desperate situatioin.'

Stella:

I beg your pardon!

Blanche:

'Sister and I in desperate situation. Will explain details later. Would you be interested in - ?' ...
You never get anywhere with direct appeals!

Stella:

Don't be so ridiculous, darling!

Blanche:

But I'll think of something, I've got to think of – something! Don't, don't laugh at me Stella!
Please, please don't – I – I want you to look at the contents of my purse! Here's what's in it!
Sixty-five measly cents in coin of the realm!

Stella:

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.

Blanche:

Oh, no. No, Stella.

Stella:

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

Blanche:

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

Stella:

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

Blanche:

Money just goes – it goes places. Sometime today I've got to get hold of a bromo!

Stella:

I'll fix you one now.

Blanche:

Not yet – I've got to keep thinking!

Stella:

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. But how could I stay here with him,
after last night, with just those curtains between us?

Stella:

Blanche, you saw him at his worst last night.

Blanche:

On the contrary, I saw him at his best! What such a man has to offer is animal force and he gave a wonderful exhibition 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:

I have to plan for us both, to get us both – out!

Stella:

You take it for granted that I am in something that 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.

Stella:

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:

I'm not sure it would have made any difference where I saw him.

Blanche:

Now don't say it was one of those mysterious electric things between people! If you do I'll laugh in your face.

Stella:

I am not going to say anything more at all about it!

All right, then, don't!

Stella:

But there are things that happen between a man and a woman in the dark – that sort of make everything else seem – unimportant.

Blanche:

What you are talking about is brutal desire – just – Desire! – the name of that rattle-trap streetcar that bangs through the Quarter, up one old narrow street and down another...

Stella:
Haven't you ever ridden on that streetcar?

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:
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:
Then I tremble for you! I just – tremble for you...

Stella:
I can't help your trembling if you insist on trembling!

Blanche:
May I – speak – plainly?

Stella:
Yes, do. Go ahead. As plainly as you want to.

[Stanley enters, stands unseen through following]

Blanche:
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! Just plain – but good and wholesome, but – no. There's something downright – bestial – about him! You're hating me saying this, aren't you?

Stella:
Go on and say it all, Blanche.

Blanche:

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 human 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! 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! Night falls and the other apes gather! There in the front of the cave, all grunting like him, and swilling and gnawing 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 got 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 enters]

Stanley:

Hey! Hey, Stella!

Stella:

Stanley!

Blanche:

Stell, I –

Stanley:

Hiyuh , Stella. Blanche back?

Stella:

Yes, she's back.

Stanley:

Hiyuh, Blanche.

Stella:

You must've got under the car.

Stanley:

Them darn mechanics at Fritz's don'e know their ass fr'm – Hey!

[Stella has embraced him, fiercely]

SCENE FIVE

[some time later – how much – days? Needs to be determined....]

Stella:

What are you laughing at, honey?

Blanche:

Myself, myself, for being such a liar! I'm writing a letter to Shep. "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? Ha-ha! Forewarned is forearmed, as they say!" – How does that sound?

Stella:

Uh-huh...

Blanche:

"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, and luncheons –"

[a disturbance is heard upstairs at the Hubbell's apartment]

Stella:

Eunice seems to be having some trouble with Steve.

Eunice:

I heard about you and that blonde!

Steve:

That's a damn lie!

Eunice:

You ain't pulling the wool over my eyes! I wouldn't mind if you'd stay down at the For Deuces, bu you always going up.

Steve:

Who ever seen me up?

Eunice:

I seen you chasing her 'round the balcony – I'm gonna call the vice squad!

Steve:

Don't you throw that at me!

Eunice:

You hit me! I'm gonna call the police!

[much action – TBD – overall - crashings, etc.]

Blanche:
Did he kill her?

[much action – TBD – overall - Eunice appears on the steps and starts down...]

Stella:
No! She's coming downstairs.

Eunice:
Call the police, I'm going to call the police!

[she exits, Stanley enters]

Stanley:
What's a matter with Eun-uss?

Stella:
She and Steve had a row. Has she got the police?

Stanley:
Naw. She's getting a drink.

Stella:
That's much more practical!

[Steve comes down stairs and looks in the door]

Steve:
She here?

Stanley:
Naw. Naw. At the Four Deuces.

Steve:
That rutting hunk! *[exits after her]*

Blanche:
I must jot that down in my notebook. Ha-ha! I'm compiling a notebook of quaint words and phrases I've picked up here.

Stanley:
You won't pick up nothing here you ain't heard before.

Blanche:
Can I count on that?

Stanley:
You can count on it up to five hundred.

Blanche:

That's a mighty high number. [*Stanley goes business, making noise as he goes*] What sign were you born under?

Stanley:

Sign?

Blanche:

Astrological sign. I bet your were born under Aries. Aries people are forceful and dynamic. They dote on noise! They love to bang things around! You must have had lots 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.

Stella:

Stanley was born just five minutes after Christmas.

Blanche:

Capricorn – the Goat!

Stanley:

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.

Stanley:

Hah! Say, do you happen to know somebody named Shaw?

Blanche:

Why, everybody knows somebody named Shaw!

Stanley:

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:

I'm afraid he does have me mixed up with this "other party." The Hotel Flamingo is not the sort of establishment I would dare to be seen in!

Stanley:

You know of it?

Blanche:

Yes, I've seen it and smelled it.

Stanley:

You must've got pretty close if you could smell it.

Blanche:

The odor of cheap perfume is penetrating.

Stanley:

That stuff you use is expensive?

Blanche:

Twenty-five dollars and ounce! I'm nearly out. That's just a hint if you want to remember my birthday!

Stanley:

Shaw must've got you mixed up. He goes in and out of Laurel all the time so he can check on it and clear up any mistake.

[much action TBD – overall - Steve and Eunice come back around corner clutched together, go back upstairs]

Stanley:

I'll wait for you at the Four Deuces!

Stella:

Hey! Don't I rate one kiss?

Stanley:

Not in front of your sister.

[he goes out]

Blanche:

Stella! What have you heard about me?

Stella:

Huh?

Blanche:

What have people been telling you about me?

Stella:

Telling?

Blanche:

You haven't heard any – unkind – gossip about me?

Stella:
Why, no, Blanche, of course not!

Blanche:
Honey, there was – a good deal of talk in Laurel.

Stella:
About you, Blanche?

Blanche:
I wasn't so good the last two years or so, after Belle Reve had started to slip through my fingers.

Stella:
All of us do things we –

Blanche:
I never was hard or self-sufficient enough. When people are soft – 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.... It isn't enough to be soft. You've got to be soft and attractive. And I – I'm fading now! I don't know how much longer I can turn the trick..... *[Stella goes toward Blanche, holding a bottled soft drink]* Have you been listening to me?

Stella:
I don't listen to you when you are being morbid!

Blanche:
Is that coke for me?

Stella:
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 does a coke any harm! Let me! You mustn't wait on me!

Stella:
I like to wait on you, Blanche. It makes it seem more like home. *[she goes and gets glass, pours whiskey into it]*

Blanche:
I have to admit I love to be waited on..... *[Stella goes to her with the glass, Blanche suddenly clutches her in some way, emotionally]* 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 I feel things more than I tell you! I won't stay long! I won't, I promise I –

Stella:
Blanche!

Blanche:
I won't, I promise, I'll go! Go soon! I will really! I won't hang around until he – throws me out...

Stella:
Now will you stop talking foolish?

Blanche:
Yes, honey. Watch how you pour – that fizzy stuff foams over!

[Blanche clutches glass as Stella pours, and the coke foams over and spills. Much action – TBD. Blanche gives a piercing cry]

Stella:
Heavens!

Blanche:
Right on my pretty white skirt!

Stella:
Oh... Use my hanky. Blot gently.

Blanche:
I know – gently – gently ...

Stella:
Did it stain?

Blanche:
Not a bit. Ha-ha! Isn't that lucky?

Stella:
Why did you scream like that?

Blanche:
I don't know why I screamed! Mitch – Mitch is coming at seven. I guess I am just feeling nervous about our relations. He hasn't gotten a thing but a goodnight kiss, that's all I have given him, Stella. I want his respect. And men don't want anything they get too easy. 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 term 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:
Why are you sensitive about your age?

Because of hard knocks my vanity’s been given. What I mean is – he thinks I’m sort of – prim and proper, you know. I want to deceive him 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... very badly! Just think! If it happens! I can leave here and not be anyone’s problem...

[Stanley comes around the corner; he’s had a drink...]

Stanley:
Hey, Steve! Hey, Eunice! Hey, Stella!

[there are calls from above]

Stella:
It will happen!

Blanche:
It will?

Stella:
It will! It will, honey, it will.... But don’t take another drink!

[she goes to meet Stanley as Eunice and Steve run down the steps, the four of them go off together, leaving Blanche alone]

Blanche:
Ah, me, ah me, ah, me...

[A Young Man comes to the door, knocks]

Blanche:
Come in.... Well, well! What can I do for you?

Young Man:
I’m collecting for The Evening Star.

Blanche:
I didn’t know that stars took up collections.

Young Man:
It's the paper.

Blanche:
I know, I was joking – feebly! Will you – have a drink?

Young Man:
No, ma'am. No, thank you. I can't drink on the job.

Blanche:
Oh, well, now, let's see.... No, I don't have 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 about.

Young Man:
That's all right. I'll drop by later. *[he starts to go]*

Blanche:
Hey! Could you give me a light?

Young Man:
Sure. *[with lighter]* This doesn't always work.

Blanche:
It's temperamental? Ah! – thank you. *[he starts to go again]* Hey! Uh – what time is it?

Young Man:
Fifteen of seven ma'am.

Blanche:
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 piece of eternity dropped into your hands – and who knows what to do with it? *[she touches him]* You – uh – didn't get wet in the rain?

Young Man:
No, ma'am. I stepped inside.

Blanche:
In a drug store? And had a soda?

Young Man:
Uh-huh.

Blanche:
Chocolate?

Young Man:
No, ma'am. Cherry.

Blanche:

Cherry!

Young Man:
A cherry soda.

Blanche:
You make my mouth water.

Young Man:
Well, I'd better be going –

Blanche:
Young man! Young man! Young, young, young man! Has anyone ever told you that you look like a young Prince out of the Arabian Nights? Well, you do, honey lamb! Come here. I want to kiss you, just once, softly and sweetly on your mouth! *[she crosses to him and presses her lips to his]* Now run along, now, quickly! It would be nice to keep you, but I've got to be good – and keep my hands off children.

[she opens door for him and ushers him out..... as he leaves Mitch appears with flowers]

Look who's coming! My Rosenkavalier! Bow to me first..... Now present them! Ahhh –
Merciiii!

[Mitch beams at her self-consciously as she presses the flowers to her lips]

SCENE SIX

[Blanche & Mitch return, about 2 AM, same evening]

Blanche:
Well – well....

Mitch:
I guess it must be pretty late – and you're tired.

Blanche:
Even the hot tamale man has deserted the street, and he hangs on till the end. How will you get home?

Mitch:
I'll walk over to Bourbon and catch and the owl-car.

Blanche:
Is that streetcar named Desire still grinding along the tracks at this hour?

Mitch:
I'm afraid you haven't gotten 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. I don't think I've ever tried so hard to be gay and made such a dismal mess of it. I get ten points for trying! – I did try.

Mitch:
Why did you try if you didn't feel like it, Blanche?

Blanche:
I was just obeying the law of nature.

Mitch:
Which law is that?

Blanche:
The one that says the lady must entertain the gentleman – or no dice! See if you can locate my door-key in this purse. When I'm so tired my fingers are all thumbs!

Mitch:
[taking her purse and rooting through it] This it?

Blanche:

No, honey, that's the key to my trunk which I must soon be packing.

Mitch:

You mean you are leaving here soon?

Blanche:

I've overstayed my welcome.

Mitch:

This it?

Blanche:

Eureka! Honey, you open the door while I take a last look at the sky. I'm looking for the Pleiades, the Seven Sisters, but these girls are not out tonight. Oh, yes they are, there they are! God bless them! All in a bunch going home from their little bridge party.... Y'get the door open? Good boy! I guess you – want to go now....

Mitch:

Can I – uh – kiss you – goodnight?

Blanche:

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:

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:

Lost?

Blanche:

I guess you are used to girls that like to be lost. The kind that get lost immediately, on the first date!

Mitch:

I like you to be exactly the way that you are, because in all my – experience – I have never known anyone like you..... Are you laughing at me?

Blanche:

No, honey. The lord and lady of the house have not yet returned, so come in. We'll have a night-cap. Let's leave the lights off. Shall we?

Mitch:

You just – do what you want to.

[Blanche goes in, starts looking around for liquor without turning any lights on....]

Blanche:

The other room's more comfortable – go on in. This crashing around in the dark is my search for some liquor.

Mitch:

You want a drink?

Blanche:

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 – I want to create – joi de vivre! I'm lighting a candle.

Mitch:

That's good.

Blanche:

We are going to be very Bohemian. We are going to pretend that we are sitting in a little artists' café on the Left Bank in Paris! *[she lights a candle stub and puts it in a bottle]* Je suis la Dame aux Camellias! Vous etes – Armand! Understand French?

Mitch:

Naw. Naw, I –

Blanche:

Voulez-vous couchez avec moic ce soir? Vous ne comprenez pas? Ah, quelle dommage! – I mean it's a damned good thing..... I've found some liquor! Just enough for two shots without any dividends, honey...

Mitch:

That's – good.

[she enters the bedroom with the drinks and the candle]

Blanche:

Sit down! Why don't you take off your coat and loosen your collar?

Mitch:

I better leave it on.

Blanche:

No. I want you to be comfortable.

Mitch:

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. [*she takes his coat from him*] This is a nice coat. What kind of material is it?

Mitch:

They call that stuff alpaca.

Blanche:

Oh Alpaca.

Mitch:

It's very light weight alpaca.

Blanche:

Oh. Light weight alpaca.

Mitch:

I don't like to wear a wash-coat even in summer because I sweat through it.

Blanche:

Oh.

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 are 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:

Thank you. Last Christmas I was given a membership to 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 getting soft in the belly but now my belly is hard. It is so hard now that a man can punch me in the belly and it don't hurt me. Punch me! Go on! See? *[she pokes lightly at him]*

Blanche:

Gracious.

Mitch:

Guess how much I weigh, Blanche?

Blanche:

Oh, I'd say in the vicinity of – one hundred and eighty?

Mitch:

Guess again.

Blanche:

Not that much?

Mitch:

No. More.

Blanche:

Well, you're a tall man and you can carry a good deal of weight without looking awkward.

Mitch:

I weigh two hundred and seven pounds and I'm six feet one and one half inches tall in my bare feet – without shoes on. And that is what I weigh stripped.

Blanche:

Oh, my goodness, me! It's awe-inspiring.

Mitch:

My weight is not a very interesting subject to talk about.... What's yours?

Blanche:

My weight?

Mitch:

Yes.

Blanche:

Guess!

Mitch:

Let me lift you.

Blanche:

Samson! Go on, lift me. [*he comes behind her and and puts his hands on her waist and raises her lightly off the ground*] Well?

Mitch:

You are light as a feather.

Blanche:

Ha-ha! [*he lowers her but keeps his hands on her waist*] You may release me now.

Mitch:

Huh?

Blanche:

I said unhand me, sir. [*he embraces her.*] Now, Mitch. Just because Stanley and Stella aren't at home is no reason why you shouldn't behave like a gentleman.

Mitch:

Just give me a slap whenever I step out of bounds.

Blanche:

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 sever and old maid school-teacher-ish or anything like that. It's just that – well –

Mitch:

Huh?

Blanche:

I guess it is just that I have – old-fashioned ideals!

Mitch:

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 prevue at Loew's State.

Mitch:

We should all go out together some night.

Blanche:

No. That wouldn't be a good plan.

Mitch:
Why not?

Blanche:
You are an old friend of Stanley's?

Mitch:
We was together in the Two-forty-first.

Blanche:
I guess he talks to you frankly?

Mitch:
Sure.

Blanche:
Has he talked to you about me?

Mitch:
Oh – not very much.

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:
Why do you want to ask that?

Blanche:
Well –

Mitch:
Don't' you get along with him?

Blanche:
What do you think?

Mitch:
I don't think he understand you.

Blanche:

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 is 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.

Blanche:
Are you?

Mitch:
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 these portieres between the two rooms at night. He stalks through the rooms in his underwear 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 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:
He hates me. Or why would 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:
Yes, honey?

Mitch:

Can I ask you a question?

Blanche:
Yes. What?

Mitch:
How old are you?

Blanche:
Why do you want to know?

Mitch:
I talked to my mother about you and she said, "How old is Blanche?" And I wasn't able to tell her.

Blanche:
You talked to your mother about me?

Mitch:
Yes.

Blanche:
Why?

Mitch:
I told my mother 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:
She won't live long. Maybe just a few months.

Blanche:
Oh.

Mitch:

She worries because I'm not settled.

Blanche:
Oh.

Mitch:
She wants me to be settled down before she –

Blanche:
You love her very much, don't you?

Mitch:
Yes.

Blanche:
I think you have a great capacity for devotion. You will be lonely when she passes on, won't you? I understand what that is.

Mitch:
To be lonely?

Blanche:
I loved someone, too, and the person I loved I lost.

Mitch:
Dead?.... 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 and tenderness which wasn't like a man's, although he wasn't the least bit effeminate looking – still – that thing was there.... 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 the help he needed but couldn't speak of! He was in the quicksand's and 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 coming suddenly into a room that I thought was empty – which wasn't empty, but had two people in it... the boy I had married and an older man who had been his friend for years.... Afterwards we pretended that nothing had been discovered. Yes, the three of us drove out to Moon Lake Casino, very drunk and laughing all the way.... We danced the Varsouviana! 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 about the 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 Grey boy! He'd stuck the revolver into his mouth, and fired – so that the back of his head had been – blown away!... It

was because – on the dance-floor – unable to stop myself – I'd suddenly said – “I saw! I know! 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 that's stronger than this – kitchen – candle...

[Mitch goes to her.... Draws her slowly into his arms]

Mitch:

You need somebody. And I need somebody, too. Could it be – you and me, Blanche?

[she looks at him, they stare at each other for a moment - then he kisses her forehead and finally her lips....]

Blanche:

Sometimes – there's God – so quickly!

SCENE SEVEN

[it is late afternoon toward the end of September? --- at least five months have passed since Blanche arrived, for Stella is quite pregnant by now. She is setting the table for a birthday celebration, cake and decorations, etc., when Stanley comes in]

Stanley:

What's all this stuff for?

Stella:

Honey, it's Blanche's birthday.

Stanley:

She here?

Stella:

In the bathroom.

Stanley:

"Washing out some things"?

Stella:

I recon so.

Stanley:

How long she been in there?

Stella:

All afternoon.

Stanley:

"Soaking in a hot tub?"

Stella:

Yes.

Stanley:

Temperature 100 on the nose, and she soaks herself 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? Set down here a minute.

Stella:

Stanley, I've got things to do.

Stanley:
Set down! I've got th'dope on your big sister, Stella.

Stella:
Stanley, stop picking on Blanche.

Stanley:
That girl calls me common!

Stella:
Lately you been doing all you can think of to rub her the wrong way, Stanley, and Blanche is sensitive and 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 –

Stanley:
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. But now I got proof from the most reliable sources – which I have checked on!

[Blanche is singing in the bathroom]

Stella:
Lower your voice!

Stanley:
Some canary-bird, huh!

Stella:
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! But Sister Blanche is no lily! Ha-ha! Some lily she is!

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, only she is not respected by any party! This supply-man stops at a hotel called the Flamingo.

Blanche:

[singing offstage] “Say, it’s only a paper moon, Sailing over a cardboard sea – But it wouldn’t be make-believe If you believed in me!”

Stella:

What about the – Flamingo?

Stanley:

She stayed there, too.

Stella:

My sister lived 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 in the private social life of the personalities there! The Flamingo is 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 by Dame Blanche that they requested her to turn in her room-key – for permanently! This happened a couple of weeks before she showed here.

Blanche:

[singing offstage] “It’s a Barnum and Bailey world, Just as phony as it can be – But it wouldn’t be make-believe If you believed in me!”

Stella:

What – contemptible – lies!

Stanley:

Sure, I can see how you would be upset by this. She pulled the wool over your eyes as much as Mitch’s!

Stella:

It’s pure invention! There’s not a word of truth in it and if I were a man and this creature had dared to invent such things in my presence –

Blanche:

[singing offstage] “Without your love, It’s a honky-tonk parade! Without your love, It’s a melody played in a penny arcade...”

Stanley:

Honey, I told you I thoroughly checked on these stories! Now wait till I finished. The trouble with Dame Blanche was that she couldn’t put on her act any more in Laurel! They got wised

up after two or three dates with her and then they quit, and she goes on to another, the same old line, same old act, some old hooey! But the town was too small for this to go on forever! And as time went by she became a town character. Regarded as not just different but downright loco – nuts! 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 – because she's 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"?

Blanche:

[singing offstage] "It's only a paper moon, Just as phony as it can be – but it wouldn't be make-believe If you believed in me!"

Stanley:

Well, so much for her being such a refined and particular type of girl. Which brings us to Lie Number Two.

Stella:

I don't want to hear any more!

She's not going back to teach school! In fact I am willing to bet you that she never had no idea of returning to Laurel! She didn't resign temporarily from the high school because of her nerves! No, siree, Bob! She didn't. They kicked her out of that high school before the spring term ended – and I hate to tell you the reason that step was taken! A seventeen-year-old boy – she'd gotten mixed up with!

Blanche:

[offstage still] "It's a Barnum and Bailey world, Just as phony as it can be –"

Stella:

This is making me – sick!

Stanley:

The boy's dad learned about it and got in touch with the high school superintendent. Boy, oh boy, I'd like to have been in that office when Dame Blanche was called on the carpet! I'd like to have seen her trying to squirm out of that one! But they had her on the hook 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. Yep it was practick'ly a town ordinance passed against her.

Blanche:

[sticking her head out from the bathroom door] Stella!

Stella:

Yes, Blanche?

Blanche:

Give me another bath-towel to dry my hair with. I've just washed it.

Stella:

Yes, Blanche. *[she gets towel, crosses to bathroom and gives it to Blanche]*

Blanche:
What's the matter, honey?

Stella:
Matter? Why?

Blanche:
You have such a strange expression on your face!

Stella:
Oh – I guess I'm a little tired!

Blanche:
Why don't you bathe, too, soon as I get out?

Stanley:
How soon is that going to be?

Blanche:
Not so terribly long! Possess your soul in patience!

Stanley:
It's not my soul, it's my kidneys I'm worried about! [*Blanche slams the door, Stella comes back to Stanley*] Well, what do you think of it?

Stella:
I don't believe all of those stories and I think your supply-man was mean and rotten to tell them. It's possible that some of the things he said are partly true. There are things about my sister I don't approve of – things that caused sorrow at home. She was always – flighty!

Stanley:
Flighty!

Stella:
But when she was young, very young, 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! But then she found out
–

Stanley:
What?

Stella:
This beautiful and talented young man was a degenerate. Didn't your supply-man give you that information?

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.... [goes back to prepping cake]

Stanley:

How many candles you putting 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:

I wouldn't be expecting Mitch over tonight.

Stella:

Why?

Stanley:

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. You think I could face him if –

Stella:

Stanley Kowalski, di you – did you repeat what that --?

Stanley:

You're goddam 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!

Stella:

Is Mitch through with her?

Stanley:

Wouldn't you be if -- ?

Stella:

I said, Is Mitch through with her?

Blanche:

[singing offstage] "But it wouldn't be make believe if you believed in me...."

Stanley:

No, I don't think he's necessarily through with her – just wised up!

Stella:

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. Maybe he was, but he's not going to jump in a tank with a school of sharks – now! Blanche! Oh, Blanche! Can I please get in my bathroom?

Blanche:

Yes, indeed sir! Can you wait one second while I dry?

Stanley:

Having waited an hour I guess one second ought to pass in a hurry.

Stella:

And she hasn't got her job? Well, what will she do!

Stanley:

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!

Stella:

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 Tuesday!

Stella:

What'll – she – do? What on earth will she – do!

Stanley:

Her future is mapped out for her.

Stella:

What do you mean?

[Blanche sings.]

Stanley:

Hey canary bird! Toots! Get OUT of the BATHROOM!

[Blanche comes out of bathroom, Stanley goes in]

Blanche:

Oh, I feel so good after my long, hot bath, I feel so good and cool and – rested!

Stella:
Do you, Blanche?

Blanche:
Yes, I do, so refreshed! A hot bath and a long, cold drink always give me a brand new outlook on life! [*seeing Stella's face*] Something has happened! – What is it?

Stella:
Why, nothing has happened, Blanche.

Blanche:
You're lying! Something has!

SCENE EIGHT:

[Later that same evening. Stella, Blanche and Stanley sit at the table, after the meal; Mitch's chair is empty]

Blanche:

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? 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! Ha-ha! I don't know how to take it.... Tell us a funny little story, Stanley! Something to help us out.

Stanley:

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:

Then let me tell one.

Stella:

Yes, you tell one, Blanche. You used to know lots of good stories.

Blanche:

Let me see, now.... 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!

Stanley:

Huh.

Blanche:

And the only way to hush the parrot up was to put the cover back on its cage so it would think 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 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. And the parrot was perfectly still, 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 a loud – *[she whistles]* – and said – “God damn, but that was a short day!” Apparently Mr. Kowalski was not amused.

Stella:

Mr. Kowalski is too busy making a pig of himself to think of anything else!

Stanley:

That's right, baby.

Stella:

Your face and your fingers are disgustingly greasy. Go and wash up and then help me clear the table.

[he hurls a plate to the floor.]

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 two think you 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 forget it! *[he hurls a cup and saucer to the floor]* My place is cleared! You want me to clear your places?

Blanche:

What happened while I was bathing? What did he tell you, Stella?

Stella:

Nothing, nothing, nothing!

Blanche:

I think he told you something about Mitch and me! You know why Mitch didn't come but you won't tell me! I'm going to call him!

Stella:

I wouldn't call him, Blanche:

Blanche:

I am, I'm going to call him on the phone.

Stella:

I wish you wouldn't.

Blanche:

I intend to be given some explanation from someone!

[she rushes to the phone in the bedroom, Stella turns or goes to Stanley – he's out on the porch perhaps?]

Stella:

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:

Hello. Mr. Mitchell, please.... Oh.... I would like to leave a number if I may. Magnolia 9047. And say it's important to call.... Yes, very important.... Thank you. *[she hangs up and sits at phone]*

Stanley:

Stell, it's gonna 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 we used to and get the colored lights going with nobody's sister behind the curtains to hear us!

[Much action TBD – overall – it's Steve and Eunice doing something upstairs]

Steve an' Eunice...

Stella:

Come on back in. *[she starts lighting the candles]* Blanche?

Blanche:

[coming in] Oh, those pretty, pretty little candles! Oh, don't burn them, Stella.

Stella:

I certainly will.

Blanche:

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:

What poetry!

Blanche:

I shouldn't have called him.

Stella:

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.

Stanley:

Goddamn, it's hot in here with the steam from the bathroom.

Blanche:

I've said I was sorry three times. 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:

I am not a Polack. People from Poland are Poles, not Polacks. But what I am is a one hundred percent American, born and raised in the greatest country on earth and proud as hell of it, so don't ever call me a Polack.

[the phone rings, Blanche starts to rise to get it]

Blanche:

Oh, that's for me, I'm sure.

Stanley:

I'm not sure. Keep your seat. *[he crosses to answer the phone]* H'lo. Aw, yeah, hello, Mac.

[Stella attempts to comfort Blanche in some way]

Blanche:

Oh, keep your hands off me, Stella. What is the matter with you? Why do you look at me with that pitying look?

Stanley:

QUIET IN THERE! – We've got a noisy woman on the place. – Go on, Mac. At Riley's? No, I don't want a 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! *[he hangs up and returns to wherever Blanche and Stella are]* Sister Blanche, I've got a little birthday remembrance for you.

Blanche:

Oh, have you, Stanley? I wasn't expecting any, I – I don't know why Stella wants to observe my birthday! I'd much rather forget it – when you – reach twenty-seven! Well—age is a subject that you'd prefer to – ignore!

Stanley:

Twenty-seven?

Blanche:

What is it? Is it for me?

[Stanley holds an envelope out to her]

Stanley:

Yes, I hope you like it!

Blanche:

[opens it] Why, why – Why, it's a –

Stanley:

Ticket! Back to Laurel! On the Greyhound! Tuesday!

[after a number of emotions, Blanche ends up running into the bathroom, coughing and gagging sounds are heard]

Stanley:

Well!

Stella:
You didn't need to do that.

Stanley:
Don't forget all that I took off her.

Stella:
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 crosses into bedroom, ripping off his and changing into his bowling shirt, she follows him]* Do you think you're going bowling now?

Stanley:
Sure.

Stella:
You're not going bowling. Why did you do this to her?

Stanley:
I done nothing to no one. Let go of my shirt. You've torn it.

Stella:
I want to know why. Tell me why.

Stanley:
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 till she showed here?

[something in Stella shifts]

And wasn't we happy together? Wasn't it all okay? Till she showed here. Hoity-toity, describing me as an ape. *[he suddenly notices the change in Stella]* Hey, what is it, Stell? *[he crosses to her]*

Stella:
Take me to the hospital.

SCENE NINE:

[a while later that evening, Blanche is seated drinking. Mitch comes around the corner, comes to the door, knocks. "The Varsouviana" is heard off and on throughout at beginning of scene]

Blanche:
Who is it, please?

Mitch:
Me. Mitch.

Blanche:
Mitch! – Just a minute. *[she rushes about, hides bottle, checks her face, etc. before she lets him in]* 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! *[she offers him her lips. He ignores it and pushes past her into the flat.]* My, my, what a cold shoulder! And such uncouth apparel! Why, you haven't even shaved! The unforgiveable insult to a lady! 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? No, of course you haven't, you dumb angel-puss, you'd never get anything awful caught in your head!

Mitch:
Do we have to have that fan on?

Blanche:
No!

Mitch:
I don't like fans.

Blanche:
Then let's turn it off, honey. I'm not partial to them! *[she presses the switch and the fan nods slowly off]* I don't know what there is to drink. I – haven't investigated.

Mitch:
I don't want Stan's liquor:

Blanche:
It isn't Stan's. Everything here isn't Stan's. Some things on the premises are actually mine! How is your mother? Isn't your mother well?

Mitch:
Why?

Blanche:
Something's the matter tonight, but never mind. I won't cross-examine the witness. I'll just – pretend I don't notice anything different about you! That – music again....

Mitch:
What music?

Blanche:
The “Varsouviana” The polka tune they were playing when Allan – Wait! [*the revolver shot is heard*] There now, the shot! It always stops after that.... Yes, now it’s stopped.

Mitch:
Are you boxed out of your mind?

Blanche:
I’ll go and see what I can find in the way of – [*she goes and pretends to search for bottle*] Oh, by the way, excuse me for not being dressed. But I’d practically given you up! Had you forgotten your invitation to supper.

Mitch:
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.... What am I looking around here for? Oh, yes – liquor! We’ve had so much excitement around here this evening that I am boxed out of my mind. [*she pretends to find the bottle suddenly*] Here’s something. Southern Comfort! What is that, I wonder?

Mitch:
If you don’t know, it must belong to Stan.

Blanche:
Take your foot off the bed. It has a light cover on it. 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. I wonder if this stuff ought to be mixed with something? Umm, it’s sweet, so sweet! It’s terribly, terribly sweet! Why, it’s a liqueur, I believe! Yes, that’s what it is, a liqueur! 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:
What a fantastic statement! Fantastic of him to say it, fantastic of you to repeat it! I won’t descend to the level of such cheap accusations to answer them, even!

Mitch:
Huh.

Blanche:
What's in your mind? I see something in your eyes!

Mitch:
It's dark in here.

Blanche:
I like it dark. The dark is comforting to me.

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:
Whose fault is that?

Mitch:
You never want to go out in the afternoon.

Blanche:
Why, Mitch, you're at the plant in the afternoon!

Mitch:
Not Sunday afternoon. I've asked you to go out with me sometimes on Sundays but you always make an excuse. 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:
What it means is I've never had a real good look at you, Blanche. Let's turn the light on here.

Blanche:
Light? Which light? What for?

Mitch:
This one with the paper thing on it. *[he tears the paper lantern off the light bulb]*

Blanche:
What did you do that for?

Mitch:
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. Yes, yes, magic! I try to give that to people. I misrepresent things to them. I don't tell truth, I tell what ought to be truth. And if that is sinful, then let me be damned for it! – Don't turn the light on!

[Mitch crosses to the switch and turns the light on]

Mitch:
I don't mind you being older than what I thought. But all the rest of it –Christ! That pitch about your ideals being so old-fashioned and all the malarkey that you've dished out all summer. Oh, I knew you weren't sixteen any more. But I was fool enough to believe you was straight.

Blanche:
Who told you I wasn't – 'straight'? My loving brother-in-law. And you believed him.

Mitch:
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:
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 revenge 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! And such a filthy tub!

Mitch:
Didn't you stay at a hotel called The Flamingo?

Blanche:

Flamingo? No! Tarantula was the name of it! I stayed at a hotel called the Tarantual Arms!

Mitch:

Tarantula?

Blanche:

Yes, a big spider. That's where I brought my victims. 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.... I think it was panic, just panic, that drove me from one to another, hunting for some protection – here and there, in the most – unlikely places – even, at last, in a seventeen-year-old boy but – somebody wrote the superintendent about it – “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 is? 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! But I guess I was asking, hoping – too much! Kiefaber, Stanley and Shaw have tied an old tin can to the tail of the kite.

Mitch:

You lied to me, Blanche.

Blanche:

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....

[the blind Mexican flower vendor comes around the corner, selling flowers for the Mexican “Day of the Dead”]

Mexican Flower Woman:

Flores. Flores. Flores para los muertos. Flores. Flores.

Blanche:

What? Oh! Somebody outside... *[she goes to the door – opens it to find the Mexican Flower Woman]*

Mexican Flower Woman:

Flores? Flores para los muertos?

Blanche:

No, no! Not now! Not now! *[she slams door]*

Mexican Flower Woman:

[turning away and moving off down the street, speaking/ad-libbing as she goes until she's off] Flores para los muertos. Flores. Flores... Deja que la vida recuerdan a sus muertos, por los muertos recuerdan a los vivos.... Regalar flores a sus muertos para que puedan estar tranquilos y dejar la vida en paz. Recuerde que su muerte, recuerda a sus muertos. Dar flores a los muertos para que cuando llegue el momento se le dará la bienvenida, ayudarle, guiarle.

[Let the living remember their dead, for the dead remember the living.... Give flowers to your dead that they may rest easy and leave the living in peace. Remember your dead, remember your dead. Give flowers to the dead so that when your time comes they will welcome you, help you, guide you]

Flores. Flores para lost muertos, Las flores de la vida. Flores para los muertos. Las flores de la vida a los muertos para que morirá pronto, así

[Flowers. Flowers for the dead. Flowers from the living to the dead for they will be dead soon as well..... or words et al to this effect, pieces of this speech may be used in her lines below as well]

Blanche:

Crumble and fade and – regrets – recriminations.... ‘If you’d done this, it wouldn’t’ve cost me that.

Mexican Flower Woman:

Coronas para los muertos. Coronas....

Blanche:

Legacies! Huh.... And other things such as bloodstained 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 the –

Mexican Flower Woman:

Muertes. Flores para los muertos.....

Blanche:

Death – I use to sit here and she used to sit over there and death was as close as you are.... We didn’t dare even admit we had ever heard of it!

Mexican Flower Woman:

Flores para los muertos, flores – flores....

Blanche:

The opposite is desire. So do you wonder? How could you possibly wonder! Not far from Belle Reve, before we had lost Belle Reve, was a camp where they trained young soldiers. On Saturday nights they would go in town to get drunk –

Mexican Flower woman:

Coronas....

Blanche:

-- and on the way back they would stagger onto my lawn and call – ‘Blanche! Blanche!’ – The deaf old lady remaining unsuspected nothing. But sometimes I slipped outside to answer their calls.... Later the paddy-wagon would gather them up like daisies... the long way home...

[the Mexican Flower Woman drifts out of sight, fading out her lines as she exits. Mitch gets up and goes to Blanche, grasps her somehow]

Blanche:
What do you want?

Mitch:
[fumbling to embrace her] What I been missing all summer.

Blanche:
Then marry me, Mitch!

Mitch:
I don't think I want to marry you any more.

Blanche:
No?

Mitch:
You're not clean enough to bring in the house with my mother.

Blanche:
Go away, then. Get out of here quick before I start screaming fire! Get out of here quick before I start screaming fire.

[she rushes to either window or door and cries wildly]

Fire! Fire! Fire!

[startled, Mitch runs out the door and exits]

SCENE TEN

[even later that night.... Blanche has been drinking steadily since Mitch left, has dressed herself in a crumpled whit satin evening gown and the tiara... She is talking to herself in the mirror – and people who aren't there....]

Blanche:

How about taking a swim, a moonlight swim at the old rock-quarry? If anyone's sober enough to drive a car! Ha-ha! Best way in the world to stop you head buzzing! Only you've got to be carefufl to dive where the deep pool is – if you hit a rock you don't come up till tomorrow....

[Stanley appears around corner of building, he's had a few beers and is carrying some quart bottles with him]

Blanche:

How is my sister?

Stanley:

She is doing okay.

Blanche:

And how is the baby?

Stanley:

The baby won't come before morning so they told me to go home and get a little shut-eye.

Blanche:

Does that mean we are to be alone in here?

Stanley:

Yep. Just me and you, Blanche. Unless you got somebody hid under the bed. What've you got on those fine feathers for?

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:

Anything good?

Blanche:

I think so. An invitation.

Stanley:

What to? A fireman's ball?

Blanche:

A cruise of the Carribbean 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:

Who did you say it was from?

Blanche:

An old beau of mine.

Stanley:

The one that give you the white fox-pieces?

Blanche:

Mr. Shep Huntleigh. I wore his ATO pin my last year at college. I hadn't seen him again until last Christmas. I ran in to him on Biscayne Boulevard. Then – just now – this wire – inviting me on 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:

This old relic? Ha-ha! It's only rhinestones.

Stanley:

Gosh. I thought it was Tiffany diamonds.

Blanche:

Well, anyhow, I shall be entertained in style.

Stanley:

Uh-huh. It goes to show, you never know what is coming.

Blanche:

Just when I thought my luck had begun to fail me –

Stanley:
Into the picture pops this Miami millionaire.

Blanche:
This man is not from Miami. This man is from Dallas.

Stanley:
This man is from Dallas?

Blanche:
Yes, This man is from Dallas where gold spouts out of the ground!

Stanley:
Well, just so he's from somewhere!*[he starts removing his bowling shirt]*

Blanche:
Close the curtains before you undress any further.

Stanley:
This is all I'm going to undress right now. *[rips a beer bottle out of the bag]* Seen a bottle-opener? I used to have a cousin who could open a beer bottle with his teeth. That was his only accomplishment, all he could do – he was just a human bottle-opener. And then one time, at a wedding party, 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... *[he gets the bottle open, either on the edge of a table, or ? – and a geyser of foam shoots up, dousing him over the head]* Ha-ha! Rain from heaven! *[he extends the bottle toward her]* Shall we bury the hatchet and make it a loving-cup? Huh?

Blanche:
No, thank you.

Stanley:
Well, it's a red letter night for us both. You having an oil-millionaire and me having a baby. *[he goes to the bureau in the bedroom and crouches to take something out of the bottom drawer]*

Blanche:
What are you doing in here?

Stanley:
Here's something I always break out on special occasions like this. *[stands and turns, waving something that is crimson red silk around]* The silk pyjamas I wore on my wedding night!

Blanche:
Oh.

Stanley:

When the telephone rings and they say, "You've got a son!" I'll tear this off and wave it like a flag! I guess we are both entitled to put on the dog.

Blanche:

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:

This millionaire from Dallas is not going to interfere with your privacy any?

Blanche:

It won't be the sort of thing you have in mind. This man is a gentleman and he respects me..... 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! A I have those things to offer, and this 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 of 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 swine!

Stanley:

Swine, huh?

Blanche:

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, vicious stories that he had gotten from you! I gave him his walking papers....

Stanley:

You did, huh?

Blanche:

But then he came back. He returned with a box of roses to beg my forgiveness! He implored my forgiveness. 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. Our ways of life are too different. 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 feelings....

Stanley:

Was this before or after the telegram came from the Texas oil millionaire?

Blanche:

What telegram? 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:
Oh, oh!

Stanley:
There isn't no millionaire! And Mitch didn't come back with roses 'cause I know where he is –

Blanche:
Oh!

Stanley:
There isn't a goddam thing but imagination!

Blanche:
Oh!

Stanley:
And lies and conceit and tricks!

Blanche:
Oh!

Stanley:
And look at yourself! Take a look at yourself in that worn-out Mardi Gras outfit, rented for fifty cents from some rag-picker! And with the crazy crown on! What queen do you think you are?

Blanche:
Oh – God...

Stanley:
I've been on to you from the start! Not once did you pull any wool over this boy's eyes! 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 the Queen of the Nile! Sitting on your throne and swilling down my liquor! I say – Ha! – Ha! Do you hear me? Ha – ha – ha!

Blanche:
Don't' come in here! *[Stanley goes into the bathroom and closes the door, Blanche rushes to the phone]* 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!... One moment! Someone is – Nothing! Hold on, please!

[MUCH action – TBD -- there are a number of actions in the script here involving the walls becoming transparent so Blanche can see a Prostitute rolling a drunk, the Negro Woman finding her sequined bag and stealing it, policeman's whistle et al – we will have to determine what happens in ours during this to set Blanche off...]

Blanche:

Operator! Operator! Never mind long-distance. Get Western Union. There isn't time to be – Western – Western Union! Western Union? Yes! I – want to – Take down this message! “In desperate, desperate circumstances! Help me! Caught in a trap. Caught in –“ Oh!

[the bathroom door is thrown open and Stanley comes out in the red silk pyjamas.... She backs away from him, leaving the phone off the hook.... The clicking and buzzing becomes audible, steady]

Stanley:

You left th' phone off th' hook.

[he crosses and sets it back on the hook.]

Blanche:

Let me – let me get by you!

Stanley:

Get by me? Sure. Go ahead. *[he moves back a pace]*

Blanche:

You – you stand over there! *[indicating someplace further away]*

Stanley:

You got plenty of room to walk by me now.

Blanche:

Not with you there! But I've got to get out somehow!

Stanley:

You think I'll interfere with you? Ha-ha! *[much action – TBD]* Come to think of it – maybe you wouldn't be bad to – interfere with....

[Blanche moves – somewhere]

Blanche:

Stay back! Don't you come toward me another step or I'll –

Stanley:

What”

Blanche:

Some awful thing will happen! I will!

Stanley:

What are you putting on now?

[by this time they are both in the bedroom somehow]

Blanche:

I warn you, don't, I'm in danger!

[she smashes a beer bottle and faces him - clutching the broken bottle top like a weapon]

Stanley:

What did you do that for?

Blanche:

So I could twist the broken end in your face!

Stanley:

I bet you would do that!

Blanche:

I would! I will if you –

Stanley:

Oh! So you want some rough-house! All right, let's have some rough-house!

[much action - TBD. Overall - they fight.]

Tiger – tiger! Drop the bottle-top! Drop it! We've had this date with each other from the beginning!

[he forces her to let the bottle-top fall.... Much action TBD – overall - it ends on the bed.....]

SCENE ELEVEN

[some weeks later. Stella is in bedroom, packing Blanche's things. Stanley, Steve, Mitch and Pablo are all sitting around the table, playing poker. Eunice comes down the steps and enters the kitchen just as there is an outburst from the poker table]

Stanley:

Drew to an inside straight and made it, by God.

Pablo:

Maldita sea tu suerte!

Stanley:

Put it in English, greaseball.

Pablo:

I am cursing your rutting luck.

Stanley:

You know what luck is? Luck is believing you're lucky. Take at Salerno. I believed I was lucky. I figured that 4 out of 5 would not come through but I would... and I did. I put that down as a rule. To hold front position in this rat-race you've got to believe you are lucky.

Mitch:

You... you... you... Brag... brag... bull... bull.

Stanley:

What's the matter with him?

Eunice:

[walking past the men] I always did say that men are callous things with no feelings, but this does beat anything. Making pigs of yourselves. [she goes into bedroom to Stella]

Stanley:

What's the matter with her?

Stella:

How is my baby?

Eunice:

Sleeping like a little angel. Brought you some grapes.... Blanche?

Stella:

She wouldn't eat anything but asked for a drink.

Eunice:

What did you tell her?

Stella:

I – just told her that – we’d made arrangements for her to rest in the country. She’s got it mixed in her mind with Shep Huntleigh.

[Blanche opens the bathroom door slightly]

Blanche:
Stella.

Stella:
Yes, Blanche?

Blanche:
If anyone calls while I’m bathing take a number and tell them I’ll call right back.

Stella:
Yes.

Blanche:
That cool yellow silk – the bouclé. 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 seahorse. You will find them in the heart-shaped box I keep my accessories in. And Stella... Try and locate a bunch of artificial violets in that box, too, to pin with the seahorse on the lapel of the jacket.

[she closes the door. Stella turns to Eunice]

Stella:
I 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 ever believe it. Life has got to go on. No matter what happens, you’ve got to keep on going.

[the bathroom door opens a little]

Blanche:
Is the coast clear?

Stella:
Yes, Blanche. *[to Eunice]* Tell her how well she’s looking.

Blanche:
Please close the curtains before I come out.

Stella:
They're closed.

Stanley:
-- How many for you?

Pable:
-- Two.

Steve:
-- Three.

[Blanche appears in the room in her red satin robe]

Blanche:
I have just washed my hair.

Stella:
Did you?

Blanche:
I'm not sure I got the soap out.

Eunice:
Such fine hair!

Blanche:
It's a problem. Didn't I get a call?

Stella:
Who from, Blanche:

Blanche:
Shep Huntleigh...

Stella:
Why, not yet, honey!

Blanche:
How strange! I –

[at the sound of Blanche's voice something happens with Mitch]

Stanley:
Hey, Mitch, come to!

[the sound of Stanley's voice shocks Blanche....]

Blanche:

What's going on here?

[much action TBD- overall - with Mitch, Steve, Stanley]

Blanche:

What's happened here? I want an explanation of what's happened here.

Stella:

Hush! Hush!

Eunice:

Hush! Hush! Honey.

Stella;

Please, Blanche.

Blanche:

Why are you looking at me like that? Is something wrong with me?

Eunice:

You look wonderful, Blanche. Don't she look wonderful?

Stella:

Yes.

Eunice:

I understand you are going on a trip.

Stella:

Yes, Blanche is. She's going on a vacation.

Eunice:

I'm green with envy.

Blanche:

Help me, help me get dressed!

Stella:

[handing her dress] Is this what you –

Blanche:

Yes, it will do! I'm anxious to get out of here – this place is a trap!

Eunice:

What a pretty blue jacket.

Stella:

It's lilac colored.

Blanche:

You're both mistaken. It's della Robbia blue. The blue of the robe in the old Madonna pictures. Are these grapes washed?

[she fingers the grapes Eunice brought in]

Eunice:

Huh?

Blanche:

Washed, I said. Are they washed?

Eunice:

They're from the French Market.

Blanche:

That doesn't mean they've been washed. *[cathedral bells]* Those cathedral bells – they're the only clean thing in the Quarter. Well, I'm going now. I'm ready to go.

Eunice:

She's going to walk out before they get here.

Stella:

Wait, Blanche.

Blanche:

I don't want to pass in front of those men.

Eunice:

Then wait'll the game breaks up.

Stella:

Sit down and...

[Blanche lets them put her into a chair]

Blanche:

I can smell the sea air. The rest of my time I'm going to spend on the sea. 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 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 blonde mustache and a big silver watch. "Poor lady," they'll say, "the quinine did her no good. That unwashed grape has transported her soul to heaven." *[cathedral bells]* And I'll be buried at sea sewn up in a clean white sack and dropped overboard – at noon – in the blaze of summer – and into an ocean as blue as my first lover's eyes!

[The Doctor and The Matron appear and come to door, knock. The game is interrupted]

Eunice:

[to Stella] That must be them

Blanche:
What is it?

Eunice:
Excuse me while I see who's at the door.

Stella:
Yes.

[Eunice goes into the kitchen, meets The Doctor and The Matron, there is whispering]

Eunice:
Someone is calling for Blanche.

Blanche:
It is for me, then! Is it the gentleman I was expecting from Dallas?

Eunice:
I think it is, Blanche.

Blanche:
I'm not quite ready.

Stella:
Ask him to wait outside.

Blanche:
I...

[Eunice goes back to The Doctor and The Matron, whispering, they go back outside the front door]

Stella:
Everything packed?

Blanche:
My silver toilet articles are still out.

Stella:
Ah!

Eunice:
[returning] They're waiting in front of the house.

Blanche:
They! Who's "they"?

Eunice:
There's a lady with him.

Blanche:
I cannot imagine who this "lady" could be! How is she dressed?

Eunice:
Just – just sort of a – plain-tailored outfit.

Blanche:
Possibly she's.....

Stella:
Shall we go, Blanche?

Blanche:
Must we go through that room?

Stella:
I will go with you.

Blanche:
How do I look?

Stella:
Lovely.

Eunice:
Lovely.

[Blanche moves to the curtains, Eunice draws them open for her, Blanche goes into the kitchen]

Blanche:
[to the men] Please don't get up. I'm only passing through.

[She crosses to door and goes out as Stella and Eunice follow. The poker players stand at the table – except Mitch. When Blanche sees The Doctor and The Matron she stops short]

Doctor:
How do you do?

Blanche:
You are not the gentleman I was expecting. *[to Stella]* That man isn't Shep Huntleigh.

[much action TBD. Overall – Blanche backs through the door and back into the kitchen as Eunice tries to comfort Stella. Men at poker table. Blanche tries to run back to bedroom, Stanley blocks her]

Stanley:
Did you forget something?

Blanche:
Yes! Yes, I forgot something!

[much action TBD. Overall – Blanche rushes back into the bedroom, Stanley goes to The Doctor]

Stanley:
Doc, you better go in.

The Doctor:
[to The Matron] Nurse, bring her out.

[much action TBD. Overall – Stanley and The Matron go into the bedroom, try to corral Blanche]

The Matron:
Hello, Blanche.

Stanley:
She says that she forgot something.

The Matron:
That's all right.

Stanley:
What did you forget, Blanche?

Blanche:
I – I –

The Matron:
It don't matter. We can pick it up later.

Stanley:
Sure. We can send it along with the trunk.

Blanche:
[trying to get away from them both] I don't know you – I don't know you I want to be – left alone – please!

The Matron:
Now, Blanche!

Stanley:
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?

[much action TBD. Overall, Stanley tries to give her the paper lantern, Blanche tries to make a break for it, she and The Matron wrestle their way to the floor. Outside, Stella is with Eunice, who is trying to comfort her and keep her from going back inside]

Stella:

Oh, my God, Eunice help me! Don't let them do that to her, don't let them hurt her! Oh, God, oh, please God, don't hurt her! What are they doing to her? What are they doing? *[tries to break from Eunice's arms]*

Eunice:

No, honey, no, no, honey. Stay here. Don't go back in there. Stay with me and don't look.

Stella:

What have I done to my sister? Oh, God, what have I done to my sister?

Eunice:

You done the right thing, the only thing you could do. She couldn't say here; there wasn't no other place for her to go.

[much action TBD. Overall – men's voices ad-libbing while Stella and Eunice are speaking on the porch. Mitch starts toward bedroom, Stanley comes out and blocks him, they tussle, end with Mitch sobbing at table. During this the Matron and Blanche tussle as well, Blanche managing to scratch The Matron. Matron ends with pinning Blanche to the floor as Doctor enters from outside]

The Matron:

The fingernails have to be trimmed. Jacket, Doctor?

The Doctor:

Not unless necessary.

[he takes off his hat and crouches down to talk to Blanche, still being held down by The Matron]

The Doctor:

Miss Dubois. *[Blanche turns to him, he looks at her face]* It won't be necessary.

Blanche:

Ask her to let go of me.

The Doctor:

[to The Matron] Let go.

[The Matron releases her. The Doctor holds out his hands and Blanche responds; he draws her up.]

Blanche:

Whoever you are – I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.

[the men stand back as Blanche and The Doctor cross through kitchen and out the front door, with The Matron following. As they pass Eunice and Stella, Stella cries out]

Stella:

Blanche! Blanche, Blanche!

[Blanche walks out with The Doctor, without hearing, turning, The Matron follows. They all exit. Eunice motions woman to bring the baby down, Eunice places the baby in Stella's arms. Action TBD – overall – Stanley comes out to Stella and the baby]

Stanley:

Stella?

[Stella loses it, she and Stanley and baby come together]

Stanley:

Now, honey. Now, love. Now, now, love. Now, now, love. Now, love...

Steve:

The game is seven-card stud.

curtain