a streetcar named desire

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

"The Broken Tower" by Hart Crane
Kazan had little patience with symbolism or abstraction, confessed his discomfort with the thought of directing Shakespeare or other classics, and would indeed fail a decade later with an ungainly production of *The Changeling*, its back broken, so to speak, by attempting to bend its lyricism to a tone of street realism. In *Streetcar*, however, the real and the lyrical were smoothly blended and emerged a unified voice.

In justice it ought to be said that the play has fared less than well half a century later. Two highly-touted productions which I saw shared a failure to embrace the language, striving for an off-the-shoulder kind of naturalism suited to television but not the stage and not this play with its foundation in joyfully enunciated speech. In one production the famous movie star playing Blanche DuBois could barely be heard at all, and in another Stanley was plainly a self-conscious variant of Brando. Caricature can be the fate of plays as successful as *Streetcar*, ironically because they have been so well-mined in drama schools and acting classes. Their characters have turned to stone, their eyes to marble. *Streetcar* is a cry of pain; forgetting that is to forget the play.

Arthur Miller  
January 2004

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**production credits**

*A Streetcar Named Desire* was presented at the Barrymore Theatre in New York on December 3, 1947, by Irene Selznick. It was directed by Elia Kazan, with the following cast:

- Negro Woman: Gee Gee James
- Eunice Hubbell: Peg Hillias
- Stanley Kowalski: Marlon Brando
- Stella Kowalski: Kim Hunter
- Steve Hubbell: Rudy Bond
- Harold Mitchell (Mitch): Karl Malden
- Mexican Woman: Edna Thomas
- Blanche DuBois: Jessica Tandy
- Pablo Gonzales: Nick Dennis
- A Young Collector: Vito Cristi
- Nurse: Ann Dere
- Doctor: Richard Garrick

Scenery and lighting by Jo Meilziner, costumes by Lucinda Ballard. The action of the play takes place in the spring, summer, and early fall in New Orleans. It was performed with intermissions after Scene Four and Scene Six.

Assistant to the producer: Irving Schneider  
Musical Advisor: Lehman Engel
SCENE ONE

The exterior of a two-story corner building on a street in New Orleans which is named Elysian Fields and runs between the L & N tracks and the river. The section is poor but, unlike corresponding sections in other American cities, it has a raffish charm. The houses are mostly white frame, weathered grey, with rickety outside stairs and galleries and quaintly ornamented gables. This building contains two flats, upstairs and down. Faded white stairs ascend to the entrances of both.

It is first dark of an evening early in May. The sky that shows around the dim white building is a peculiarly tender blue, almost a turquoise, which invests the scene with a kind of lyricism and gracefully attenuates the atmosphere of decay. You can almost feel the warm breath of the brown river beyond the river warehouses with their faint redolences of bananas and coffee. A corresponding air is evoked by the music of Negro entertainers at a bar room around the corner. In this part of New Orleans you are practically always just around the corner, or a few doors down the street, from a siny piano being played with the infatuated fluency of brown fingers. This "blue piano" expresses the spirit of the life which goes on here.

Two women, one white and one colored, are taking the air on the steps of the building. The white woman is Eunice, who occupies the upstairs flat; the colored woman a neighbor, for New Orleans is a cosmopolitan city where there is a relatively warm and easy intermingling of races in the old part of town.

Above the music of the "blue piano" the voices of people on the street can be heard overlapping.
SCENE ONE

[Two men come around the corner, Stanley Kowalski and Mitch. They are about twenty-eight or thirty years old, roughly dressed in blue denim work clothes. Stanley carries his bowling jacket and a red-stained package from a butcher's. They stop at the foot of the steps.]

STANLEY [bellowing]:
Hey, there! Stella, Baby!

[Stella comes out on the first floor landing, a gentle young woman, about twenty-five, and of a background obviously quite different from her husband's.]

STELLA [mildly]:
Don't holler at me like that. Hi, Mitch.

STANLEY:
Catch 'em!

STELLA:
What?

STANLEY:
Meat!

[He heaves the package at her. She cries out in protest but manages to catch it; then she laughs breathlessly. Her husband and his companion have already started back around the corner.]

STELLA [calling after him]:
Stanley! Where are you going?

STANLEY:
Bowling!

STELLA:
Can I come watch?
EUNICE [finally]:
What's the matter, honey? Are you lost?

BLANCHE [with faintly hysterical humor]:
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 wearily refers to the slip of paper.]

BLANCHE:
Six thirty-two.

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

BLANCHE [uncomprehendingly]:
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. [There is a pause] You want to leave your suitcase here an' go find her?

BLANCHE:
No.

NEGRO WOMAN:
I'll go tell her you come.

BLANCHE:
Thanks.

NEGRO WOMAN:
You welcome. [She goes out.]

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.
SCENE ONE

BLANCHE:
How could I—do that?

EUNICE:
We own this place so I can let you in.

[She gets up and opens the downstairs door. A light goes on behind the blind, turning it light blue. Blanche slowly follows her into the downstairs flat. The surrounding areas dim out as the interior is lighted.]

[Two rooms can be seen, not too clearly defined. The one first entered is primarily a kitchen but contains a folding bed to be used by Blanche. The room beyond this is a bedroom. Off this room is a narrow door to a bathroom.]

EUNICE [defensively, noticing Blanche's look]:
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. [Wanting to get rid of her] 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:
Belle 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 [offended]:
Aw, I'll make myself scarce, in that case.
SCENE ONE

BLANCHE:
I didn't mean to be rude, but—

EUNICE:
I'll drop by the bowling alley an' hustle her up. [She goes out the door.]

[Blanche sits in a chair very stiffly with her shoulders slightly hunched and her legs pressed close together and her hands tightly clutching her purse as if she were quite cold. After a while the blind look goes out of her eyes and she begins to look slowly around. A cat screeches. She catches her breath with a startled gesture. Suddenly she notices something in a half opened closet. She springs up and crosses to it, and removes a whiskey bottle. She pours a half tumbler of whiskey and tosses it down. She carefully replaces the bottle and washes out the tumbler at the sink. Then she resumes her seat in front of the table.]

BLANCHE [faintly to herself]:
I've got to keep hold of myself!

[Stella comes quickly around the corner of the building and runs to the door of the downstairs flat.]

STELLA [calling out joyfully]:
Blanche!

[For a moment they stare at each other. Then Blanche springs up and runs to her with a wild cry.]

BLANCHE:
Stella, oh, Stella, Stella! Stella for Star!

[She begins to speak with feverish vivacity as if she feared for either of them to stop and think. They catch each other in a spasmodic embrace.]
SCENE ONE

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 it justify! Out there I suppose is the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir! [She laughs.]

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 [carefully, pouring herself a drink]:
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! [She suddenly stops short] The subject is closed!

STELLA [a little drily]:
Thanks.

[During the pause, Blanche stares at her. She smiles at Blanche.]

BLANCHE [looking down at her glass, which shakes in her hand]:
You're all I've got in the world, and you're not glad to see me!

STELLA [sincerely]:
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 [vaguely]:
A good habit to get into . . . [then, abruptly] 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?
SCENE ONE

STELLA:
No, I—thought you might have—resigned...

BLANCHE:
I was so exhausted by all I'd been through my—nerves broke. [Nervously tamping cigarette] 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... [She drinks quickly] 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! [Stella complies reluctantly] 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—[She is embarrassed.]

BLANCHE:
The other one? [She laughs sharply. There is an embarrassed silence.] 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. [Sherises] I want you to look at my figure! [She turns around] 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 [a little wearily]:
It's just incredible, Blanche, how well you're looking.
SCENE ONE

BLANCHE:
[They both laugh uncomfortably] 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? [She sits on it.]

STELLA:
Does it feel all right?

BLANCHE [dubiously]:
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? [They both laugh again in the same way] 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 very well... [Her voice drops and her look is frightened.]

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?
SCENE ONE

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! [She hands a photograph to Blanche.]

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! [Stella laughs uncertainly] How did he take it when you said I was coming?

STELLA:
Oh, Stanley doesn't know yet.
was going to ask. And so I'll expect you to be understanding about what I have to tell you.

STELLA:
What, Blanche? [Her face turns anxious.]

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 begins to shake again with intensity.]

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 [slowly]:
The loss—the loss...
Scene One

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 Jessy's 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 Jessy—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 [springing]:
Blanche! You be still! That's enough! [She starts out.]

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—

[The sound of men's voices is heard. Stella goes into the bathroom, closing the door behind her. When the men appear, and Blanche realizes it must be Stanley returning, she moves uncertainly from the bathroom door to the dressing table, looking apprehensively towards the front door. Stanley enters, followed by Steve and Mitch. Stanley pauses near his door, Steve by the foot of the spiral stair, and Mitch is slightly above and to the right of them, about to go out. As the men enter, we hear some of the following dialogue.]

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.

[Mitch starts out.]

Stanley [restraining Mitch]:
Hey, Mitch—come back here.

[Blanche, at the sound of voices, retires in the bedroom. She picks up Stanley's photo from dressing table, looks at it, puts it down. When Stanley enters the apartment, she darts and hides behind the screen at the head of bed.]

Steve [to Stanley and Mitch]:
Hey, are we playin' poker tomorrow?
STANLEY:
Sure—at Mitch's.

MITCH: [hearing this, returns quickly to the stair rail]:
No—not at my place. My mother's still sick!

STANLEY:
Okay, at my place . . . [Mitch starts out again] But you bring the beer!

[Mitch pretends not to hear,—calls out "Goodnight all," and goes out, singing.]

EUNICE: [heard from above]:
Break it up down there! I made the spaghetti dish and ate it myself.

STEVE: [going upstairs]:
I told you and phoned you we was playing. [To the men]
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 laughter and shouts of parting come from the men. Stanley throws the screen door of the kitchen open and comes in. He is of medium height, about five feet eight or nine, and strongly, compactly built. Animal joy in his being is implicit in all his movements and attitudes. Since earliest manhood the center of his

life has been pleasure with women, the giving and taking of it, not with weak indulgence, dependently, but with the power and pride of a richly feathered male bird among hens. Branching out from this complete and satisfying center are all the auxiliary channels of his life, such as his heartiness with men, his appreciation of rough humor, his love of good drink and food and games, his car, his radio, everything that is his, that bears his emblem of the gaudy seed-bearer. He sizes women up at a glance, with sexual classifications, crude images flashing into his mind and determining the way he smiles at them.]

BLANCHE: [drawing involuntarily back from his stare]:
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.
SCENE ONE

[He has crossed to the closet and removed the whiskey bottle.]

STANLEY:

[He holds the bottle to the light to observe its depletion.]

Have a shot?

BLANCHE:
No, I—rarely touch it.

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

BLANCHE [faintly]:
Ha-ha.

STANLEY:
My clothes're stickin' to me. Do you mind if I make myself comfortable? [He starts to remove his shirt.]

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.

[At a screeches near the window. Blanche springs up.]

BLANCHE:
What's that?

STANLEY:
Cats . . . Hey, Stella!
SCENE ONE

STELLA [jaintly, from the bathroom]:
Yes, Stanley.

STANLEY:
Haven’t fallen in, have you? [He grins at Blanche. She tries unsuccessfully to smile back. There is a silence] 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?

[The music of the polka rises up; faint in the distance.]

BLANCHE:
Yes. When I was quite young.

STANLEY:
What happened?

BLANCHE:
The boy—the boy died. [She sinks back down] I’m afraid I’m—going to be sick!

[Her head falls on her arms.]
SCENE TWO

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 [vaguely]:
Oh, it had to be—sacrificed or something. [There is a pause while Stanley considers. Stella is changing into her dress.] 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 [ominously]:
So?

STELLA:
And 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 subjeck.

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

STANLEY:
So that's the deal, huh? Sister Blanche cannot be 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.
SCENE TWO

STANLEY:
She didn’t show you no papers, no deed of sale 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:

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!

[He stalks into bedroom, and she follows him.]

Stanley!

[He pulls open the wardrobe trunk standing in middle of room and jerks out an armful of dresses.]

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

STELLA:
Hush!
SCENE TWO

STANLEY:
Look at these 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! *[He blows on them]* 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!

*[He hurst the furs to the daybed. Then he jerks open small drawer in the trunk and pulls up a fist-full of costume jewelry.]*

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!

*[He kicks the trunk partly closed and sits on the kitchen table.]*

STANLEY:
The Kowalskis and the DuBois have different notions.

STELLA [angrily]:
Indeed they have, thank heavens!—I'm going outside. *[She snatches up her white hat and gloves and crosses to the outside door]* You come out with me while Blanche is getting dressed.

STANLEY:
Since when do you give me orders?
SCENE TWO

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 the porch. Blanche comes out of the bathroom in a red satin robe.]

BLANCHE [airily]:
Hello, Stanley! Here I am, all freshly bathed and scented, and feeling like a brand new human being!

[He lights a cigarette.]

STANLEY:
That's good.

BLANCHE [drawing the curtains at the windows]:
Excuse me while I slip on my pretty new dress!

STANLEY:
Go right ahead, Blanche.

[She closes the drapes between the rooms.]

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

STANLEY [ominously]:
Yeah?

[Blanche throws off her robe and slips into a flowered print dress.]

BLANCHE:
Where's Stella?

STANLEY:
Out on the porch.

SCENE TWO

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!

[He crosses through drapes with a smoldering look.]

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.
SCENE TWO

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! [She smiles at him radiantly] 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 took in by this Hollywood glamor stuff and some men are not.

BLANCHE:
I'm sure you belong in the second category.

STANLEY:
That's right.

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

STANLEY:
That's—right.

BLANCHE:
You're simple, straightforward and honest, a little bit on the primitive side I should think. To interest you a woman would have to—[She pauses with an indefinite gesture.]

STANLEY [slowly]:
Lay... her cards on the table.

BLANCHE [smiling]:
Well, I never cared for wishy-washy people. That was
why, when you walked in here last night, I said to myself—"My sister has married a man!"—Of course that was all that I could tell you.

STANLEY [booming]:
Now let's cut the re-bop!

BLANCHE [pressing hands to her ears]:
Ouuuuu!

STELLA [calling from the steps]:
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 [lightly]:
Honey, do me a favor. Run to the drug-store and get me a lemon-coke with plenty of chipped ice in it!—Will you do that for me, Sweetie?

STELLA [uncertainly]:
Yea. [She goes around the corner of the building.]

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!

[She sprays herself with her atomizer; then playfully sprays him with it. He seizes the atomizer and slams it down on the dresser. She throws back her head and laughs.]

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 [she puts the atomizer on the table]:
All right. Cards on the table. That suits me. [She turns to Stanley.] 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 crosses to the trunk, shows it roughly open and begins to open compartments.]

BLANCHE:
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
abscording with something, attempting some kind of
treachery on my sister?—Let me do that! It will be faster
and simpler...[She crosses to the trunk and takes out a
box] I keep my papers mostly in this tin box. [She opens
it.]

STANLEY:
What's them underneath? [He indicates another sheaf
of paper.]

BLANCHE:
These are love-letters, yellowing with antiquity, all from
one boy. [He snatches them up. She speaks fiercely]
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!

[He rips off the ribbon and starts to examine them.
Blanche snatches them from him, and they cascade to
the floor.]

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

STANLEY [staring, baffled]:
What in hell are they?

BLANCHE [on the floor gathering them up]:
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. Every-
one has something he won't let others touch because of
their—intimate nature...

[She now seems faint with exhaustion and she sits
down with the strong box and puts on a pair of glasses
and goes methodically through a large stack of
papers.]

Ambler & Ambler. Hmmmm... Crabtree.... More
Ambler & Ambler.

STANLEY:
What is Ambler & Ambler?

BLANCHE:
A firm that made loans on the place.

STANLEY:
Then it was lost on a mortgage?

BLANCHE [touching her forehead]:
That must've been what happened.

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

[She hands him the entire box. He carries it to the
table and starts to examine the papers.]

BLANCHE [picking up a large envelope containing more
papers]:

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SCENE TWO

There are thousands of papers, stretching back over hundreds of years, affecting Belle Reve as, piece by piece, our improvident grandfathers and father and uncles and brothers exchanged the land for their epic fornuctions—to put it plainly! [She removes her glasses with an exhausted laugh] The four-letter word deprived us of our plantation, till finally all that was left—and Stella can verify this!—was the house itself and about twenty acres of ground, including a graveyard, to which now all but Stella and I have retreated. [She pours the contents of the envelope on the table] 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... [She leans back and closes her eyes.]

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

BLANCHE:
Present them to him with a box of aspirin tablets.

STANLEY [becoming somewhat sheepish]:
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 opens her eyes. The "blue piano" sounds louder.]

BLANCHE:
Stella? Stella going to have a baby? [dreamily] I didn't know she was going to have a baby!

[She gets up and crosses to the outside door. Stella appears around the corner with a carton from the drug-store.

[Stanley goes into the bedroom with the envelope and the box.

[The inner rooms fade to darkness and the outside wall of the house is visible. Blanche meets Stella at the foot of the steps to the sidewalk.]

BLANCHE:
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. [Steve and Pablo appear, carrying a case of beer.] I called him a little boy and laughed and flirted. Yes, I was flirting with your husband! [as the men approach] The guests are gathering for the poker party. [The two men pass between them, and enter the house.] Which way do we go now, Stella—this way?

STELLA:
No, this way. [She leads Blanche away.]

BLANCHE [laughing]:
The blind are leading the blind!

[A tamale Vendor is heard calling.]

VENDOR'S Voice:
Red-hot!
SCENE THREE

THE POKER NIGHT

There is a picture of Van Gogh's of a billiard-parlor at night. The kitchen now suggests that sort of lurid nocturnal brilliance, the raw colors of childhood's spectrum. Over the yellow linoleum of the kitchen table hangs an electric bulb with a vivid green glass shade. The poker players—Stanley, Steve, Mitch and Pablo—wear colored shirts, solid blues, a purple, a red-and-white check, a light green, and they are men at the peak of their physical manhood, as coarse and direct and powerful as the primary colors. There are vivid slices of watermelon on the table, whiskey bottles and glasses. The bedroom is relatively dim with only the light that spills between the portieres and through the wide window on the street.

For a moment, there is absorbed silence as a hand is dealt.

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.

[He lurches up and tosses some watermelon rinds to the floor.]

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.
SCENE THREE

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. [He crosses through the bedroom into the bathroom.]

STEVE [dealing a hand]:
Seven card stud. [Telling his joke as he deals] This ole farmer is out in back of his house sittin' down th'owing corn to the chickens when all at once he hears a loud cackle and this young hen comes lickety split around the side of the house with the rooster right behind her and gaining on her fast.

STANLEY [impatient with the story]:
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!"

[Steve and Pablo laugh. The sisters appear around the corner of the building.]

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.

[Stella opens the door and they enter.]

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. Gonzales and Mr. Hubbell.
SCENE THREE

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. [Blanche crosses into the bedroom and partially closes the portieres.] Couldn’t you call it quits after one more hand?

[A chair scrapes. Stanley gives a loud whack of his hand on her thigh.]

STELLA [sharply]:
That’s not fun, Stanley.

[The men laugh. Stella goes into the bedroom.]

STELLA:
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 opens the door and comes out, still wiping his hands on a towel.]

BLANCHE:
Oh!—good evening.

MITCH:
Hello. [He stares at her.]

STELLA:
Blanche, this is Harold Mitchell. My sister, Blanche DuBois.

MITCH [with awkward courtesy]:
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 crosses slowly back into the kitchen, glancing back at Blanche and coughing a little shyly. He realizes he still has the towel in his hands and, with an embarrassed laugh, hands it to Stella. Blanche looks after him with a certain interest.]
SCENE THREE

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! [Blanche laughs.] I don’t think he would be.

BLANCHE:
What does—what does he do?

[She is unbuttoning her blouse.]

STELLA:
He’s on the precision bench in 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.

[She takes off the blouse and stands in her pink silk brassiere and white skirts in the light through the portieres. The game has continued in undertones.]

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!

[She moves out of the yellow streak of light. Stella has removed her dress and put on a light blue satin kimono.]

STELLA [with girlish laughter]:
You ought to see their wives.
SCENE THREE

BLANCHE [laughingly]:
I can imagine. Big, beefy things, I suppose.

STELLA:
You know that one upstairs? [More laughter] One time
[laughing] the plaster—[laughing] 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 the bathroom. Blanche rises and crosses
leisurely to a small white radio and turns it on.]

STANLEY:
Awright, Mitch, you in?

MITCH:
What? Oh!—No, I’m out!

[Blanche moves back into the streak of light. She raises
her arms and stretches, as she moves indolently back
to the chair.

[Rumba music comes over the radio. Mitch rises at
the table.]

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 jumps up and, crossing to the radio, turns it
off. He stops short at the sight of Blanche in the chair.
She returns his look without flinching. Then he sits
again at the poker table.]

[Two of the men have started arguing hotly.]

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?
SCENE THREE

STANLEY:
He was looking through them drapes. [He jumps up and jerks roughly at curtains to close them.] Now deal the hand over again and let's play cards or quit. Some people get ants when they win.

[Mitch rises as Stanley returns to his seat.]

STANLEY [yelling]:
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 laughs uncomfortably and continues through the portieres. He stops just inside.]

BLANCHE [softly]:
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? [She has slipped on the dark red satin wrapper.]

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. [He strikes a match and moves closer] Oh! [reading with feigned difficulty]:

"And if God choose,
I shall but love thee better—after—death!"

Why, that's from my favorite sonnet by Mrs. Browning!

MITCH:
You know it?

BLANCHE:
Certainly I do!

MITCH:
There's a story connected with that inscription.
SCENE THREE

BLANCHE:
It sounds like a romance.

MITCH:
A pretty sad one.

BLANCHE:
Oh?

MITCH:
The girl's dead now.

BLANCHE [in a tone of deep sympathy]:
Oh!

MITCH:
She knew she was dying when she gave me this. A very strange 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 thing belongs to people who have experienced some sorrow.

MITCH:
I believe you are right about that.

SCENE THREE

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

BLANCHE:
Yes, Stella is my precious little sister. I call her little in spite of the fact 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 [adjusting the lantern]:
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!
to install a bunch of bobby-soxers and drug-store Romances
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!

[The bathroom door opens and Stella comes out.
Blanche continues talking to Mitch.]

Oh! Have you finished? Wait—I'll turn on the radio.

[She turns the knobs on the radio and it begins to play
"Wien, Wien, nur du allein." Blanche waltzes to the
music with romantic gestures. Mitch is delighted and
moves in awkward imitation like a dancing bear.

[Stanley stalks fiercely through the portieres into the
bedroom. He crosses to the small white radio and
snatches it off the table. With a shouted oath, he tosses
the instrument out the window.]

STELLA:
Drunk — drunk — animal thing, you! [She rushes
through to the poker table] All of you—please go home!
If any of you have one spark of decency in you—

BLANCHE [wildly]:
Stella, watch out, he's—
SCENE THREE

[Blanche rushes into the bedroom]

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

MITCH:
Where is the clothes?

BLANCHE [opening the closet]:
I've got them! [She rushes through to Stella] Stella, Stella, precious! Dear, dear little sister, don't be afraid!

[With her arms around Stella, Blanche guides her to the outside door and upstairs.]

STANLEY [dully]:
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 a wet towel.

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

STANLEY [thickly]:
I want water.

MITCH.
Put him under the shower!

[The men talk quietly as they lead him to the bathroom.]

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

[Sounds of blows are heard. The water goes on full till.]

STEVE:
Let's get quick out of here!

[They rush to the poker table and sweep up their winnings on their way out.]

MITCH [sadly but firmly]:
Poker should not be played in a house with women.

[The door closes on them and the place is still. The Negro entertainers in the bar around the corner play "Paper Doll" slow and blue. After a moment Stanley comes out of the bathroom dripping water and still in his clinging wet polka dot drawers.]

STANLEY:
Stella! [There is a pause] My baby doll's left me!

[He breaks into sobs. Then he goes to the phone and dials, still shuddering with sobs.]

Eunice? I want my baby! [He waits a moment; then he hangs up and dials again] Eunice! I'll keep on ringin' until I talk with my baby!

[An indistinguishable shrill voice is heard. He hurls phone to floor. Dissonant brass and piano sounds as the]
rooms dim out to darkness and the outer walls appear in the night light. The “blue piano” plays for a brief interval.

[Finally, Stanley stumbles half-dressed out to the porch and down the wooden steps to the pavement before the building. There he throws back his head like a baying hound and bellows his wife’s name: “Stella! Stella, sweetheart! Stella!”]

STANLEY:
Stell-lahhhhh!

EUNICE [calling down from the door of her upper apartment]:
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 [humbly]:
Eunice, I want my girl to come down with me!
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:
I'm 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. [During the pause, she looks up at the sky] There's so much—so much confusion in the world . . . [He coughs diffidently] Thank you for being so kind! I need kindness now.