

MITCH. (*Leaning over table, confidentially.*) I'm going to the "head."
Deal me out.

STEVE. (*Dealing.*) Sure, he's got ants now. Seven five-dollar bills in his pants pocket folded up tight as spit balls.

Mitch is taking Sen-Sen from small envelope in jacket pocket.

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

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

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

STEVE. (*Dealing.*) All right, boys—this game is Spit in the Ocean.

Men resume their play. Mitch moves to pillar beside curtains, knocks timidly.

BLANCHE. Yes?

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

Oh, hello.

MITCH. Hello.

Mitch makes a little gesture toward bathroom, crosses below her to bathroom door.

Excuse me.

BLANCHE. The Little Boys' Room is busy right now.

MITCH. (*Pausing at foot of bathroom door, embarrassed.*) We've—been drinking beer. (*Crosses back toward c.*)

BLANCHE. I hate beer.

MITCH. (*Up by armchair.*) It's—a hot weather drink.

BLANCHE. Oh, I don't think so, it always makes me warmer. (*Waving her cigarette-holder.*) Have you got any cigs?

MITCH. (*Reaching for his case.*) Sure.

BLANCHE. What kind?

MITCH. (*Crossing to her L. with open case.*) Luckies.

BLANCHE. (*Taking one, fitting it into her cigarette-holder.*) Oh, good. (*Noticing case.*) What a pretty case. Silver?

MITCH. Yes. Yes, read the inscription.

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

Mitch lights match for her, moves closer.

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

She takes light for her cigarette from match. He takes case from her, putting out match, placing it in tray on dressing table.

MITCH. You know it?

BLANCHE. I certainly do!

MITCH. There's a story connected with that inscription.

BLANCHE. It sounds like a romance.

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

Card game is finished. Pablo deals new hand.

BLANCHE. (*In a tone of deep sympathy.*) Oh!

MITCH. She knew she was dying when she give me this. A very strange girl, very sweet—very! (*Backs up to L. of armchair.*)

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

MITCH. That's right. They certainly do.

BLANCHE. Sorrow makes for sincerity, I think.

MITCH. It sure brings it out in people.

BLANCHE. The little there is belongs to people who have known some sorrow.

MITCH. I believe you are right about that.

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

STANLEY. (*Bellowing.*) Mitch!

MITCH. (*Looking through curtains.*) Deal me out. I'm talking to Miss— (*Looks to Blanche to supply name.*)

BLANCHE. DuBois.

MITCH. (*Repeating name into living room.*) DuBois. (*Pulls curtains back into place, turns to Blanche.*)

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

MITCH. You're French?

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

MITCH. You are Stella's sister, are you not?

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

MITCH. Oh!

BLANCHE. Just a little. Less than a year.

MITCH. Uh-huh.

BLANCHE. Will you do something for me?

MITCH. Sure. Yes, what?

Blanche rises, crosses to package containing paper lantern on dressing table.

BLANCHE. (*Taking lantern out of bag.*) I bought this adorable little colored paper lantern at a Chinese shop on Bourbon. Put it over the light bulb! Will you, please? (*Hands him lantern.*)

MITCH. (*Unfolding lantern.*) Be glad to.

Card game is finished. Stanley deals.

BLANCHE. I can't stand a naked light bulb, any more than I can a rude remark or a vulgar action. (*Puts bag on bureau, U. L.*)

MITCH. (*Fussing clumsily with lantern, as if it were an accordion.*) I guess we strike you as being a pretty rough bunch.

BLANCHE. (*Crosses back to below screen.*) I'm very adaptable—to circumstances.

MITCH. Why?

"Varsouviana" is heard again, faintly.

BLANCHE. Something's the matter tonight, but never mind.

Hearing music, she turns away from him to back of armchair.
I won't cross-examine the witness. I'll just— (*Touches her forehead vaguely.*) —pretend I don't notice anything different about you!— that—music again...

MITCH. (*Moves a step to her L.*) What music?

BLANCHE. The polka tune they were playing when Allan—

Sound of a distant shot. "Varsouviana" music stops abruptly.

Blanche, relieved:

There, now, the shot! It always stops after that. (*Listening.*) Yes, now it's stopped. (*Moves R. a step.*)

MITCH. (*Behind her.*) Are you boxed out of your mind?

BLANCHE. (*Moving into living room.*) I'll go see what I can find in the way of— (*Turns back to him.*) Oh, by the way, excuse me for not being dressed. But I'd practically given you up! Had you forgotten your invitation to supper?

She goes to cabinet, clatters among bottles, takes out clean glass.

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!

He turns to bedroom, crosses to below bed. He puts his R. foot on bed, near head, facing upstage.

What am I looking around here for?

She wavers uncertainly above table. Holds glass she has taken from cabinet.

Oh, yes, liquor! We've had so much excitement around here this evening that I *am* boxed out of my mind!

She remembers bottle under seat, goes to it, holds it up.

Here's something! Southern Comfort! (*Standing in c. door, facing Mitch.*) What is that, I wonder?

She crosses to R. of him, carrying bottle and glass.

MITCH. If you don't know, it must belong to Stan.

BLANCHE. (*Pushing his foot off bed.*) Take your foot off the bed. It has a clean cover on it. (*Moving to L. of armchair, pouring herself a drink.*) Of course, you boys don't notice things like that. I've done so much with this place since I've been here.

MITCH. I bet you have.

BLANCHE. You saw it before I came. Well, look at it now. This room is almost—dainty! I want to keep it that way.

MITCH. (*Above her, a bit to her L.*) Aren't you leaving pretty soon now? (*Crosses D. to her.*)

BLANCHE. (*Tastes drink.*) I wonder if this stuff ought to be mixed with something? Umm. It's sweet, so sweet! It's terribly sweet! Why, it's a *liqueur*, I believe! Yes, that's what it is, a *liqueur*!

Mitch grunts. Blanche offers him glass.

I'm afraid you won't like it, but try it, and maybe you will.

MITCH. I told you already I don't want none of his liquor. And I mean it!

Blanche moves D. L., Mitch crosses to her R. and a bit above.

You ought to lay off his liquor. He says you been lapping it up all summer like a wild-cat!

BLANCHE. (*Turns to him.*) What a fantastic statement! Fantastic of him to say it, and fantastic of you to repeat it!

She goes to cabinet in living room, puts away bottle and glass. Mitch follows.

I won't descend to the level of such cheap accusations to answer them, even! What's in your mind? I see something in your eyes!

MITCH. It's dark in here!

BLANCHE. I like it dark.

Apprehensively, she moves away from him, crossing around R. end of table to C.

The dark is comforting to me.

MITCH. I don't think I ever seen you in the light. That's a fact!

He goes to light switch on pillar U. R., turns on overhead light.
BLANCHE. Is it?

She flees from Mitch and the light into bedroom.

MITCH. *(Following, keeping close behind her.)* I've never seen you in the afternoon.

BLANCHE. *(Below dressing table.)* Whose fault is that?

MITCH. *(Following.)* You never want to go out in the afternoon.

BLANCHE. *(Facing away from him, near bathroom door.)* Why, Mitch, you're at the plant in the afternoon!

MITCH. *(Behind her.)* Not Sunday afternoon. You never want to go out till after six, and then it's always some place that's not lighted much.

BLANCHE. There is some obscure meaning in this, but I fail to catch it.

MITCH. *(Overlapping her speech; turns her to him.)* What it means is, I've never had a real good look at you, Blanche.

He leaves her, moves toward bracket which holds paper lantern.

Let's turn on the light here! *(Picks up dressing-table chair, shoves it upstage.)*

BLANCHE. *(Fearfully.)* Light? Which light? What for?

MITCH. This one, with the paper thing on it!

He rips paper lantern off bulb, tosses lantern to floor in front of Blanche. She drops to her knees with a little cry, trying to rescue lantern.

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!

MITCH. *(Laughing.)* Magic!

BLANCHE. *(Still on her knees.)* Yes, yes, magic! I try to give that to people. I do misrepresent things to them. I don't tell the truth, I