

On "Galatoire's" music cuts off. They are standing U. R. in living room.

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

STELLA. (Kneels on chair by Stanley.) I put you a cold plate on ice.

STANLEY. (Going to icebox.) Well...

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

Stanley has taken a plate from icebox and steps down to table, showing it to Stella. Plate contains some cold ham and a couple of slices of liverwurst.

STANLEY. Isn't that just dandy! (Eats some meat.)

STELLA. (Kneels on chair above table.) So we'll go to one of the little places in the Quarter afterwards, and you'd better give me some money.

She looks in his upper pocket for money, extracts some bills.

STANLEY. Where is she?

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

STANLEY. Over what?

STELLA. She's been through such an ordeal.

STANLEY. Yeah?

STELLA. Stan, we've—lost Belle Reve!

STANLEY. The place in the country?

STELLA. Yes.

STANLEY. How?

Separating money and putting some of it back in his pocket, Stella crosses into bedroom, puts money she has retained on dressing table. Her tone is vague.

STELLA. Oh, it had to be—sacrificed or something.

A pause, while Stanley considers. Stella starts for bedroom. When she comes in, be sure to say something nice about her appearance.

Stanley comes into bedroom, starts D. L. toward bathroom, hears Blanche singing in bathroom—"My Bonnie Lies Over the

Ocean." Moves back to a position above armchair in bedroom.

And 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.

A look passes between Stanley and Stella. Stella puts on dress.

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. (*Sitting in armchair, feet on backless chair.*) So?

Stella crosses to him, standing just at his L.

STELLA. And admire her dress, and tell her she's looking wonderful. That's important to Blanche. (*Kisses Stanley, takes a step L., fixes dress.*) Her little weakness!

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

Blanche stops singing.

STELLA. Oh!—yes...

STANLEY. (*Grabbing a corner of Stella's dress and restraining her as she starts to move L.*) 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. (*Tying her dress belt.*) You saw how she was last night.

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

STELLA. I haven't seen any.

STANLEY. What do you mean to tell me!—She didn't show you no papers, no deed of sale or nothing like that?

STELLA. (*Turning away to dressing table, finishes dressing.*) It seems like it wasn't sold.

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

STELLA. (*Taking step toward bathroom door.*) Shh! She'll hear you.

STANLEY. I don't care if she hears me. (*Rising.*) Let's see the papers!

STELLA. (*Directly to him.*) There weren't any papers, she didn't show any papers, I don't care about papers! (*Crosses to dresser chair.*)

STANLEY. (*Catching her arm.*) Listen; did you ever hear of the Napoleonic Code?

Breaking free, Stella sits at dressing table, powders nose.

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

STANLEY. (*Moving above dressing table, leans against it, looking down at Stella.*) Let me enlighten you on a point or two.

STELLA. Yes?

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

Stella persists in using powder puff, which Stanley takes from her firmly, puts it down on dressing table.

STELLA. My head is swimming!

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

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

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

STELLA. Not sold—lost, lost!

Stella starts back to dressing table. Stanley follows quickly, grabs her, pulls her back into living room, passing her below him to a position R. of Blanche's trunk.

(Protesting.) Stanley!

ACT III

SCENE 1

Some weeks later. The rooms have been made pathetically dainty with some of Blanche's bits of finery, pillows, fan, slip-covers, etc.

First lights to come up are those in street area. Stanley starts across to the porch area. As he crosses, lights come up in apartment. Stella is hovering over table in living room, which is set for four, decorated with party favors, colored napkins. Her approaching maternity is more evident than earlier in the play. At rise she brings birthday cake from cabinet, puts it at C. of table, then goes to cabinet, gets knives, forks, and spoons, starts placing them around table, beginning with upstage place and working to R. side, below, then to L. place, during opening dialogue of scene. Blanche is in bathroom, where she is singing scraps of a sad blues song. Blanche's trunk is closed and covered with a net drapery. Stanley enters apartment, puts lunch pail on top of icebox, surveys party set-up.

STANLEY. What's all this stuff for?

STELLA. (Gets silver.) Honey, it's Blanche's birthday.

STANLEY. She here?

STELLA. (Laying silver.) In the bathroom.

STANLEY. (Mimicking.) "Washing out some things"?

Blanche sings in bathroom.

STELLA. I reckon so.

STANLEY. How long she been in there?

STELLA. All afternoon.

STANLEY. (Mimicking.) "Soaking in a hot tub"?

STELLA. (Unperturbed.) Yes.

Blanche stops singing.

STANLEY. Temperature 100 on the nose, and she soaks in a hot tub!

STELLA. She says it cools her off for the evening.

STANLEY. And you run out an' get her Cokes, I suppose? And serve 'em to Her Majesty in the tub?

Stella shrugs, occupied with table.

Set down here. (Indicates chair L. of table.)

STELLA. Stanley, I've got things to do.

STANLEY. Set down!

Stella crosses to behind L. chair.

I've got th' dope on your big sister, Stella.

STELLA. Stanley, stop picking on Blanche.

STANLEY. That girl calls *me* common!

STELLA. (Moving to L. of Stanley above table.) Lately you been doing all you can think of to rub her the wrong way, Stanley. Blanche is sensitive. You've got to realize that Blanche and I grew up under very different circumstances than you did.

STANLEY. So I been told. And told and told and told! You know she's been feeding us a pack of lies here?

STELLA. No, I don't—and I don't want to hear—

STANLEY. (Overlapping Stella's speech.) Well, she has, however. But now the cat's out of the bag! I found out some things!

STELLA. What—things?

STANLEY. Things I already suspected.

Blanche sings in bathroom.

But now I got proof from the most reliable sources—which I have checked on!

Bathroom door opens, Blanche pops out in her bathrobe. Goes to dressing table, picks up a drink with ice cubes, waves to Stanley in other room.

BLANCHE. Hello, Stanley!

Gaily, she hums, clinks ice in her glass, goes into bathroom, shuts door. Stella backs upstage—looks at Blanche.

STANLEY. (Sitting above table.) —Some canary bird, huh?

STELLA. (Coming back to table, sits L. chair.) Now please tell me quietly what you think you've found out about my sister.

STANLEY. Lie number one: All this squeamishness she puts on!—you should just know the line she's been feeding to Mitch. He thought she had never been more than kissed by a fellow! You know Sister Blanche is no lily!

STELLA. What have you heard, and who from?

STANLEY. Our supply-man down at the plant has been going through Laurel for years and he knows all about her, and everybody else in the town of Laurel knows all about her, she is as famous in Laurel as if she was the President—of the United States—

Blanche sings blues song in bathroom.

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

STELLA. What about the—Flamingo?

STANLEY. She stayed there, too.

STELLA. My sister stayed at Belle Reve.

STANLEY. This is after the home place had slipped through her lily-white fingers! She moved to the Flamingo! A second-class hotel which has the advantage of not interfering with the private social life of the personalities there! The Flamingo's used to all kinds of goings-on. But even the management of the Flamingo was impressed by Dame Blanche! In fact they was so impressed that they requested her to turn in her room-key—for permanently! This happened a couple of weeks before she showed here.

Blanche sings in bathroom. Stella rises, moves a step L., looks toward bathroom listening to Blanche's song. Moves D. L. in living room, head bowed. Stanley rises, moves through C. to R. of Stella.

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

He tries to put an arm around her, she shrugs him off.