

**IF YOU LOVED ME**

(A MEMORY PLAY IN TWO ACTS)

BY

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III

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**IF YOU LOVED ME**

*(IF YOU LOVED ME has had staged-readings at the TENNESSEE WILLIAM'S PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL, Key West, FL; NEW DRAMATISTS, NYC; and THE ATTIC THEATRE, Los Angeles, CA. The premiere of IF YOU LOVED ME took place on September 24, 2004 at the Cameo Theatre in San Antonio, Texas -- produced and directed by Jerry Pilato, Actors Theatre of San Antonio. It won the 2004-2005 Globe Award for Best Original Play, San Antonio Theatre Arts Council)*

**ACT 1**

**SCENE 1**

(Hank William's rendition of his song, HALF AS MUCH - "If you loved me half as much as I love you ..." plays. FADES to sound of RISING cattle auctioneer's voice and cattle lowing in background. All sounds FADE. Up on opening verse of I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN, sung by Lynn Andersen. FADES.)

**(SETTING: August, 1977. Office, Cattle Sale barn, South Texas. A Thursday morning.)**

(SALE BARN OFFICE, located above a large CATTLE SALE BARN in south Texas. There is a downstage right, semi-framed window, facing the audience, which overlooks the entire stockyard. The office is very worn, lived-in and cluttered. An old wooden sign is hanging from the ceiling; "Treadwell Cattle Company." In the corner is a wooden hat stand with western hats, an old canvas coat, lariats, spurs and several bridles hanging.)

(DEE DEE, early 20's, is standing at the window, facing audience, looking out at a cattle truck backing up and unloading at a chute. She's chewing gum and holding a P.A. microphone in her hand. She's wears old Levis, boots and a western shirt. MISS PAULINE SPEARS, 40's, is typing away at her desk. She's wearing a matching sweater and skirt, glasses round her neck.)

(As COUNTRY MUSIC FADES, we hear the low moaning of cattle in the distance.)

DEE DEE

(speaking into P.A., echoes)

Norberto and Faustino to loading chute  
number three, por favor. Got a  
gooseneck full of bramah heifers from  
the McDaniel Ranch.

(She waves at MR. MCDANIEL  
out the window.)

How're you Mr. McDaniel. You know, we  
oughta make you pull every tick off  
them cows of yours 'fore we weigh em.  
I 'spect they're carrying 'bout ten  
extra pounds of bugs each.

(laughs)

Now Mr. McDaniel ... don't you be  
pointing that finger this way. I'll  
get the "nut cutters" after you, boy.

(MISS PAULINE, disgusted, goes to the air conditioner window unit  
and turns it up full blast, causing a loud racket. She blows her  
nose and buttons her sweater up. DEE DEE eyes her, setting  
microphone down.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Miss P., if it gets any colder in here  
we're going to have to start wearing  
bearskins.

MISS PAULINE

(sniffs)

If God intends for people to live in  
Texas in the summertime he's going to  
have to pay for it.

DEE DEE

God don't pay it...

MISS PAULINE

(correcting)

Doesn't.

DEE DEE

God *doesn't* pay it Miss P., I do.

(DEE DEE switches air conditioner down a notch. Stares at  
thermostat.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Do you think we could possibly live  
with ...

(squints)

... God is right! It's sixty eight  
degrees in here.

MISS PAULINE

(typing, distracted)

I'll be hot, I'm sure.

DEE DEE

Why don't you take off that sweater  
you're wearing?

MISS PAULINE

(stops typing, patiently)

Why? This is a "match set." An  
*ensemble outfit* is not designed to be  
disassembled like parts on a lawn  
mower. "Integrity of presentation" is  
key to maintaining the *line of*  
*compartment*.

(DEE DEE stares at MISS PAULINE for a moment, lost.)

DEE DEE

(confused)

What ... are we talking about?

MISS PAULINE

"Compartment."

DEE DEE

(thinking)

Is that like when you've had too many  
beers and you're supposed to hold in  
your gut kind of thing?

(stares at MISS PAULINE)

What?

MISS PAULINE

(distant)

I was just trying to imagine what  
Gloria Vanderbilt could do with you if  
we gave her free rein.

(DEE DEE laughs and glances out the office window; picks up the  
P.A.)

DEE DEE

Dammit Norberto! You're putting those  
heifers in the wrong pens - *numero*  
*quince*.

(She flashes five fingers,  
three times)

*Quince cabron!*

MISS PAULINE

(typing)

I don't find it particularly  
attractive when I hear a young lady  
cussing in public Dee Dee.

DEE DEE

I wadn't cussing.

MISS PAULINE

(stares at DEE DEE)

Do you think I don't know what *cabron* means in Spanish? Honey, I grew up eating goat all my life.

DEE DEE

(patiently)

That's *cabrito* Miss P., not *cabron*.

MISS PAULINE

(indignant)

Well it all sounds ugly as a toenail sandwich when you're bellowing over the P.A. like some steer with it's tail caught in the gate.

(sighs, returns to typing)

Things sure used to be different around here before your Daddy died.

DEE DEE

(irritated)

Kenneth Treadwell had his way of doing things and I got mine. It's been more'n a year and a half since the funeral Miss P. -- I'm running the show now.

(MISS PAULINE is humming old hymn "WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS" to herself as she types, finally stops at the typewriter's bell.)

MISS PAULINE

(finishing song)

"...*What a priv-i-lege to carry,  
Everything to God in prayer!*".."

(yanks paper out of the typewriter)

I'm not saying you don't know how to run a business as good or better than any man or woman in this county. No ma'mm Marie - but you've got a lot to learn about human nature.

(MISS P. corrects a spot with liquid paper.)

DEE DEE

(weary)

Thank you.

(looks out window, holding  
P.A.)  
Norberto, *todo en numero quince!*  
(back to MISS P.)  
I bet I know as much or more about  
human nature as anyone in South Texas.  
(to NORBERTO)  
*Si, Si, ...* put that big muley steer  
over in nine, *nueve ... si.*  
(back to MISS P.)  
I deal with human nature every day of  
my life. How many women you know my  
age got their own business? How many  
got over 19 employees working for em?  
(sniffs)  
Tell me about human nature ...  
(looks out window, startled)  
God ... *blessit! Nueve Norberto.*  
*Chinga Cabron!*

MISS P.  
(indignant, slaps desk with  
palm)  
Dee Dee! If you call that old  
reprobate a "fucking goat" one more  
time I'm gonna snatch you baldheaded!

DEE DEE  
(furious, stomps foot)  
SHIT! They let the *pinche* steer get  
out on the highway. Watch the phones  
Miss P.

(DEE DEE picks up a rope and runs clumping out of the office.  
MISS PAULINE goes to turn up the air conditioner full blast. It  
makes a louder noise. She blows her nose and buttons up even  
tighter. She glances at DEE DEE's desk and slowly picks up a  
round can of "Copenhagen" snuff, opens it and smells it.  
Disturbed, she puts it back on the desk top, picks up the phone  
and starts to dial.)

MISS PAULINE  
(southern-lady sweet)  
Uh hello - hello is this little  
Ladonna, how are you darlin'? Is your  
Granny Matthews there? Well can I  
speak to her please? She's washing  
her hair in the sink - uh huh - well  
would you please tell her to wrap a  
towel around her head and get to the  
phone right away, it's rather urgent.

(Ladonna screams, causing MISS P. to hold the phone away from her ear, making face.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Hello Vivian? This is Pauline Spear  
... Ladonna?

(irritated)

Where's your grandmother? She's busy  
right now? You tell Vivian Matthews I  
just heard the preacher's boy run over  
a truck load of orange pickers coming  
up from the valley. Bodies are just  
laid out up and down Highway 281.

(assuming a very cheerful  
voice)

Vivian! Oh honey am I disturbing ya?  
Preacher's kid? Orange pickers? Oh  
my stars in heaven, that little  
Ladonna of yours has got an  
imagination like nothing I have ever  
seen.

(moaning)

Oh - oh, Vivian ... I wish you  
wouldn't make her cry like that. You  
know how their little imaginations run  
away with 'em at that age. You tell  
her Miss Pauline's sewing her a little  
skirt with her initials on it for  
Christmas. What was I calling about?  
Oh yes! Vivian, what does marijuana  
smell like? I said what does "mary -  
wana" smell like? Well idn't that boy  
of yours still working for the highway  
department - the one spent all that  
time up at the State Pen? I just  
thought he might have smelled some  
before - maybe he could tell us. I  
know you'd rather not talk about that  
experience Vivian Ann, but I'm afraid  
my Dee Dee may be on the darn stuff.  
I found this box of "weed" on her desk  
and just as sure as I'm standing in  
front of the almighty, this stuff has  
got to be some kind of *grass*. What  
does it say?

(Picks up the box, puts on glasses, reads.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Well, it says - it says "Copenhagen"  
on the box Vivian.

(thinking)

Isn't that awful - I've always been so fond of the little Danish people. Why they have to get messed up in this dope business I'll never ...

(shrill)

What? It's what? Snuff! Vivian are you sure? And the girls do it too? Well I've never heard anything like it in my life - this is just going to ruin her teeth. Oh me ...

(Sound of buzzer, light blinks on the phone.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

... Vivian ... Viv ... honey, I'd love to talk more but you know some of us have to work for a living. Let me go now so I can answer my other phone, uh-huh, bye - bye.

(Clicks incoming call.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Goodmorning, Treadwell Cattle Company. No I'm afraid Dee Dee's not in right now, can I take a message? Where is she?

(Looks out the window.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Well, I'll tell you exactly where she is Mister, she's out on the highway 'bout to rope a 900 lb. steer, then she's going to get her hair done about 3:30. Who is this? Who? I'm sorry you're going to have to speak up, the air conditioner's making a racket.

(Starts writing name down.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Charles - Lanier. And what is this related to may I inquire Mr. Lanier?

(writes)

Dee Dee's ... stepfather ...

(realizing)

Dee Dee's stepfather! Oh my goodness, which one is this? Chuck - the last one. I'm Connie Treadwell's first cousin, Pauline Spears ... oh I'm sorry, you'll have to excuse me. I

still always think of her as Connie  
Treadwell. How is she? We just  
hardly never hear from her ... how's  
that? What? Would you hang on a  
second.

(PAULINE takes off her shoe and throws it against the air  
conditioner. It stops rattling.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
That's better. What were you saying  
about Connie?

(Listening intently, MISS P. slowly sits. Her expression dazed.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
(continuing; small voice)  
Yes I'm still here. How did it  
happen?

(She reaches for a tissue in her pocket.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
Poor Connie, rest her soul. What?  
Nothing. I'm just a little shook ...  
no, no I'll be alright. We all went  
to school together you know, me and  
Kenneth and Connie. I guess you want  
me to tell Dee Dee. Oh I don't reckon  
they even spoke to each other once in  
the last three years. You know she  
never forgave Connie for leaving back  
then.

(startled)  
What? Oh my Lord. Oh no, I don't  
think she's gonna like that at all. I  
just don't know. Well yes I can see  
it's important to you, I just don't  
believe she'll want to ...

(DEE DEE comes back into the room with NOYES KUYKENDHAL. She  
slams to door, dust covering both of them. DEE DEE goes to the  
water cooler, drinks, wets her handkerchief and puts it on her  
head. NOYES is dressed much the same as DEE DEE, except for a  
western hat he's wearing. MISS P. is writing on a note pad.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
... uh yes ... yes I'll try ...  
alright and thank you for calling ...  
yes I have it. Goodbye.

DEE DEE

It is one ... hot ... mother out there. Who called?

MISS PAULINE  
(composing herself)  
Hello Noyes, did ya'll finally catch that old steer?

NOYES  
Dee Dee just throw'd her rope around his neck and walked him back to the pens 'bout like a yard dog.

DEE DEE  
Steer must be at least a hundred. Burger King won't even have to grind him.

(looks at MISS P.)  
Who called? You alright?

MISS PAULINE  
Noyes is that a new shirt you got on son? Oh that is handsome. I just love pearl snap buttons. My Daddy used to have some of the prettiest western shirts, course they weren't at all fancy like they are nowadays.

(DEE DEE stares at MISS P.)

DEE DEE  
Miss P., who called while I was out?

NOYES  
Oh I don't wear just western shirts Miss P., no ma'am, I got some of them slick city-boy shirts made out of silk and nylon. Hell, you can wear 'em to church or disco, either one.

(NOYES stops talking. MISS PAULINE walks slowly towards DEE DEE, she takes her hand.)

MISS PAULINE  
Connie's dead honey. Your Mama's dead.

(DEE DEE's face is frozen. NOYES removes his hat.)

NOYES  
Aw Dee Dee I'm real sorry ...

DEE DEE

How?

MISS PAULINE

(wipes nose)

Car wreck. They were over in Europe.

NOYES

Dee Dee why don't you sit down here.

DEE DEE

I'm fine.

(BEAT)

Nothing happened to him?

MISS PAULINE

I guess not, I didn't ask. Honey come over here and lie down; you're white as a sheet. Noyes turn up the air conditioner.

(MISS P. starts to lead DEE DEE over to the old settee. DEE DEE pulls herself away.)

DEE DEE

I'm Ok!

(controlled)

I'm fine. I don't want ya'll hovering around me like a bunch of crying angels. Alright she's dead. I'm sorry - I'm sorry she walked out on me and Daddy twenty years ago.

(looks at MISS P.)

Who's responsible for the body?

MISS PAULINE

Honey I don't know - you shouldn't be thinking about those things right now.

DEE DEE

(trance-like)

You're right. Someone will call and tell me what to do ... don't you think?

(DEE DEE slowly walks to her desk and sits. She starts to shuffle through some papers.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

They have to notify you when something like this happens, it's the law.

(BEAT) Miss P. did you ever get the

invoice from the feed company  
straightened out or do I still have to  
sign something?

(MISS P. walks over to her desk, picks up a paper and hands it to  
DEE DEE.)

MISS PAULINE  
Here it is Dee Dee.

(DEE DEE starts to look over the paper. MISS P. takes a deep  
breath.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
Honey.

(DEE DEE looks up.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
He's here.

DEE DEE  
Who's here?

MISS PAULINE  
Your stepfather.

DEE DEE  
(takes a pause)  
Which one?

MISS PAULINE  
Chuck, the last one. The one you  
never met.

DEE DEE  
I never met any of them, unless you  
call a picture on a Christmas card a  
formal introduction. What does he  
want, a handout?

MISS PAULINE  
I don't know. He just said he had to  
give you something.

NOYES  
Maybe they cremated her Dee Dee.  
Maybe he's got the ashes.

(MISS P. quickly grabs her purse.)

MISS PAULINE

Noyes, here's six dollars son. Why don't you run on down to the Dairy Queen and buy us all a Beltbuster for lunch. Take your time - don't use the drive-in window.

DEE DEE

(anxious)

What am I gonna do with her ashes?

(agitated)

That's just like her to pull something like this. She never could do anything like normal people. I bet I'm the only person in town ever had a mother cremated.

MISS PAULINE

Now Dee Dee, we don't know that's what he's got.

(DEE DEE stands; pacing, emotional, very angry.)

DEE DEE

Damn her, damn her ...

MISS PAULINE

Honey ...

DEE DEE

Why did she have to be cremated? They'll start calling her that "crazy Treadwell tramp" again. Why does she have to put me through this all over again?

(MISS P. takes DEE DEE into her arms. DEE DEE begins to sob.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Why did she have to ... die?

MISS PAULINE

There, there ...

DEE DEE

(sobs)

I don't even know why I'm acting like this. She's just this stranger ... this stranger who had

(exasperated)

... beautiful hair!

MISS PAULINE

Connie was a beautiful girl.  
Prettiest girl in school. And your  
Daddy was the most handsome. Just try  
to think about the good times, sugar.

DEE DEE

I wish I could remember when they were  
both happy. I can't even imagine it.

MISS PAULINE

Once upon a time me and your Mama and  
Daddy were like peas in a pod.  
Happiest years of my life. Thought  
we'd all go on being friends forever.  
Thought we'd always ...

(pauses, changes subject)

... Dee Dee, this Mr. Lanier fellow  
got in last night and he's staying  
down at the Casa Loma Motel - why  
don't you give him a call and arrange  
to meet him.

(DEE DEE pulls away, wiping her eyes, composing herself.)

DEE DEE

No. I don't want to see him.  
Whatever he's got he can leave with  
Carmela down in the snack bar.

NOYES

But Dee Dee he's come all the way ...

DEE DEE

I mean it. He's not my stepfather  
anymore.

MISS PAULINE

Honey, he's just here outta respect.

DEE DEE

Why didn't he come out of respect when  
he married her? He wasn't interested  
in me then, was he? None of em were.  
I don't want to meet anymore leeches.

NOYES

Aw Dee Dee, all you ever think is  
somebody's trying to squeeze in on  
this old cow barn your Daddy left you.

(DEE DEE glares at NOYES.)

DEE DEE

My Daddy spent a lifetime trying to put something together for me. He loved me. And I'll tell you something else, if he'd a still been married to my Mama they wouldn't of half filled his grave 'fore she'd of cashed the whole shebang in for a lifetime world cruise.

(MISS P. gently rubs DEE DEE's shoulders)

MISS PAULINE

Noyes didn't mean to upset you Dee Dee. I'll go down and tell Carmela we'll be expecting something to arrive from Mr. Lanier.

(MISS P. starts to exit, stops.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

But if you change your mind, he's in Room 312 at the Casa Loma.

(MISS P. exits.)

NOYES

Dee Dee, I'm sorry.

DEE DEE

You know this is all I've got. This "cow barn" is my life.

NOYES

(sighs)

Don't I know it.

DEE DEE

It sure ain't gonna run itself. What's the matter Noyes, don't I pay you enough? You find some better opportunity around here Pancho, then haul ass. I ain't gonna hold your career back.

NOYES

Dee Dee, there's other things in life that go along with having a career.

DEE DEE

Like what? Taking a world cruise?

NOYES

Let me ask you something ... you plan on ending up like Miss P.? You gonna be just another old maid yourself?

DEE DEE

Don't call her that.

NOYES

I ain't trying to be mean, I just want to know what is?

DEE DEE

I don't know what you're talking about.

NOYES

I'm talking about babies and mortgages and split-level ranch houses and backyard barbecue's and three car garages and ...

(DEE DEE stares at him frowning.)

NOYES (CONT'D)

... what?

DEE DEE

I'm waiting for the part with the picket fence before I get sick.

NOYES

When you gonna stop thinking of me as some grade-schooler with snot on his sleeves? When you gonna let us grow up?

DEE DEE

Hell, grow up Noyes! Grow a goddamn mile if you want to. I don't give a hoot. Nobody's holding you by the goober.

NOYES

Yeah, there is somebody holding me by the goober Dee Dee. I can't get on with the rest of my life til you make up your mind. It's you I want, you I've always wanted. I don't need your little nest egg here to grease my ego with. Why, just last week one of them Lattimer brothers asked me if I

wanted to buy into their 'Stop and Go' out on the Interstate; make me a full partner. You know what kinda money they been making? Shoot, I'm liable to have my own sale barn one day. Look at me Dee Dee; I'm a hard-working, slow-drinking, nice-looking, easy-romancing, fair-minded, big-peckered, Christian lover man - and I'd just like you to tell me what more any woman could possibly want?

DEE DEE

(BEAT) "Humility" springs to mind.

NOYES

(annoyed)

You start getting cute every time I try to get serious.

DEE DEE

Well if that's a marriage proposal Noyes Kuykendahl, you sure picked one hell of a day.

(DEE DEE rises from her chair and walks to the water cooler.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm not interested in marrying anybody right now.

(BEAT)

But if I did, you'd be up there at the top of my list Noyes, I mean that.

NOYES

(sharp)

The only man you've ever let yourself love is that Daddy of yours. He brought you up like a business partner instead of a daughter so you'd be married to him and his goddam cows the rest of your life.

DEE DEE

You didn't know Kenneth Treadwell. You never knew what he was like when he was a young man.

NOYES

Hell Dee Dee, all you ever hear is a bunch of old stories Miss P. drags up bout how wonderful he was. Well, he

wadn't no movie star cowboy, that's for sure. He was just like any other man around here; no better, no worse.

DEE DEE

You're wrong. Everyone loved him. Sometimes ... sometimes you even remind me a little bit of him, but you've never been hurt like he was.

NOYES

(smirks)

We got the walking-wounded everywhere you turn in this town.

(points to door)

It's World War III out there - got "dead people" pumpin' gas and flipping burgers on every corner!

(MISS P. opens the door, stops.)

DEE DEE

You don't understand.

NOYES

And you don't understand nothing doesn't come with a tail, a brand, horns and a bill of sale!

MISS PAULINE

(interrupting)

I ... Carmela asked me if ya'll wanted her to send up a couple of cheeseburgers. She's shutting off the grill directly.

DEE DEE

No ... thanks.

(DEE DEE starts to leave.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

I got to do some running around. I'll pick up some onion rings down at the Sonic.

NOYES

(sighs)

You want company or you want to be alone?

DEE DEE

Suit yourself.

MISS PAULINE

Not much nourishment in onion rings  
Dee Dee. Why don't you let me tell  
Carmela to fix you a little hamburger  
and salad ...

DEE DEE

(terse)

Because I don't want you too, that's  
why!

(BEAT)

Look I'm not hungry, I'm really not.  
I'll be back later.

(to NOYES)

Noyes, if you're coming let's go.

(DEE DEE exits)

NOYES

She'll be alright Miss P. Let her get  
outta the office for awhile - we'll  
drive around some. She'll be OK.

(NOYES starts to leave, stops.)

NOYES (CONT'D)

Miss P. ... she don't mean it, acting  
this way. She just, well, I guess you  
must see a lot of Mr. Treadwell in her  
don't ya?

MISS PAULINE

(nods slowly)

I see a lot of things.

NOYES

(smiles)

You remember what it's like being  
young - you don't always know why you  
do stuff.

MISS PAULINE

(waves him on)

Go on, get outta here.

(NOYES exits, MISS P. follows him to the door. Hollers.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Ya'll have a chicken basket or  
something, I'll pay for it! Gonna get  
sick not eatin' right.

(After a moment pause, MISS P. turns and goes to her desk,  
shaking her head.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
(continuing; sighs)  
Yeah, I remember being young. I sure  
do.

(She flicks on the radio on her desk. An early 50's love ballad  
-- JOHNNY RAY singing "The Little White Cloud That Cried", is  
playing. She continues typing, then slowly she stops. Staring  
ahead, she listens to the song for a moment then determinedly  
returns to her typing.)

(We suddenly hear the soft voice of CONNIE/DEE DEE singing along  
with the melody.)

## SCENE 2

(TIME CHANGE - EARLY 1950's. **Lighting shift, downstage  
highlighted.**)

(MISS P. stops typing again, raises her head and removes her  
glasses.)

MISS PAULINE  
Connie?

(Moving away from the typewriter, MISS P. calls.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
Connie?

CONNIE (OFF STAGE)  
Is that Johnny Ray's new song Pauline?  
Turn it up.

(PAULINE is startled, unaware of her bearings.)

PAULINE  
Connie come out here.

CONNIE (OFF STAGE)  
Can't. I'm waiting for my nails to  
dry. Kenneth's coming over later.  
You buy any of that new mascara they  
had down at Ben Franklin?

PAULINE

Yeah ... yeah I got some.

(PAULINE goes to her purse and pulls out an old mascara kit and brush. In her purse is a small mirror and other makeup supplies. During their conversation PAULINE removes her sweater, unbuttons her blouse, kicks off her shoes - creating a younger image.)

CONNIE (OFF STAGE)

Did you try it on? How's it look?

(PAULINE applies the mascara, in addition to lipstick, rouge, etc.)

PAULINE

Wait a minute I'll tell ya. Oh by the way Lustre Creme Shampoo was on sale. First time this year. I bought us two jars each.

CONNIE (OFF STAGE)

(perturbed)

Pew God! How much?

PAULINE

Forty cents. You don't have to pay me back.

(CONNIE [DEE DEE] enters on-stage dressed as her mother in high school.)

CONNIE

That's alright. I can wash the dog with it.

PAULINE

(frowns to herself)

Thank you Pauline.

(looks in mirror)

Connie, this mascara's great; I've got Kim Novak's eyes.

CONNIE

... and Victor Mature's face.

PAULINE

Shut-up! I want my \$5.00 back you borrowed last week.

CONNIE

Can't. Bought some monogrammed handkerchiefs for Kenneth.

PAULINE

With my money!?

CONNIE

That's alright, he'll never know.

PAULINE

God Connie, with cousins like you ...

CONNIE

With cousins like me the world's a more interesting place for cousins like you.

PAULINE

What's that supposed to mean?

CONNIE

(laughs)

Oh Pauline, you're priceless sometimes. I hope you'll always be able to hold on to that childlike quality of yours.

PAULINE

(fuming)

Look, I gotta go babysit for Miss Feeny in a little bit. Are you gonna show me that new dance step you and Jenci Ragsdale learned, or what?

CONNIE

God no. I'd rather stand naked over a hot stove frying chicken than have you stomp all over my feet.

PAULINE

(begins dancing by herself)

Don't be so stuck on yourself. I won't finish your math homework for you.

CONNIE

It's done.

(PAULINE stops dancing.)

PAULINE

Who did it?

CONNIE

Me.

PAULINE

Liar.

CONNIE

Carol Lee Baird helped some.

PAULINE

Carol Lee Baird's dumber than all get out! What does she know about math?

CONNIE

Nothing. She's letting me wear her new sweater to the picture show Saturday night.

PAULINE

(suspicious)

What's Carol Lee getting out of this?

CONNIE

(weary)

Ohhh - I told her she and Wayne could sit with Kenneth and me at the movie.

PAULINE

(angry)

No you didn't! I thought the three of us were going to that picture.

CONNIE

Well gosh Pauline, isn't this the weekend you're going to the church revival with your folks up in Kerrville?

PAULINE

That's next weekend.

CONNIE

What about the date with Allen Martindale?

PAULINE

It's not a date. We're gonna stand on stage and hold flags at the VFW rally, that's all.

CONNIE

Well gosh that sounds like fun. I never get asked to do any of that stuff.

PAULINE

They don't ask people who date.

CONNIE

Well you can still come, we'll all have fun anyway.

PAULINE

What fun am I gonna have watching Wayne Turgis slobber all over Carol Lee Baird?

CONNIE

Bring Allen with you.

PAULINE

Oh Lord Connie - and what? Wave flags at each other during the movie. He's so immature.

CONNIE

He's a year older than us.

PAULINE

He hasn't grown any since sixth grade.

CONNIE

Pauline Spears - I hope if I ever get polio you're not gonna talk about me like that.

PAULINE

I can't help it. I don't want to go to the movie with Allen or Carol Lee or Wayne. You promised.

CONNIE

Oh we'll see, for crying out loud. What else is on the radio? You want me to teach you how to mambo or not?

(CONNIE plays with the dial on the radio until she finds an appropriate station.)

PAULINE

(excited)

Yes, yes, yes!

(CONNIE finds a Latin dance music station and starts to sway. PAULINE is confused.)

CONNIE

There we go.

PAULINE  
Connie that's Mexican music.

CONNIE  
Isn't it heaven?

PAULINE  
I don't wanna do the *cucaracha*, I  
wanna learn something new.

(CONNIE starts her dance steps.)

CONNIE  
I'm trying to teach you dummy. It's  
the mambo, the latest thing.

PAULINE  
(studying CONNIE)  
I don't know - It looks a little  
whorish for south Texas.

CONNIE  
You afraid those Mexican boys across  
town'll see you dancing and get their  
tallywackers up?

PAULINE  
Connie don't even say that!

CONNIE  
Men are men Pauline, skin color makes  
no difference.

PAULINE  
Meaning what?

CONNIE  
No difference to me, that's what.

(CONNIE grabs PAULINE to dance.)

CONNIE (CONT'D)  
Come on. Now just follow what I'm  
doing. One, two - twist, turn. Yeah,  
now remember I'm leading, one, two -  
twist, turn. Good - don't fight me  
like some wild hog.

PAULINE  
Thanks a lot ... like this?

CONNIE

Don't swing your feet so much Pauline,  
you're blowing like a tree in a  
hurricane. That's better.

PAULINE

Is it really? It's awfully loose  
isn't it? We must look terribly  
nasty.

CONNIE

I can hear the Mexican boys marching  
across town right now.

(waves)

*Hola*, over here!

PAULINE

(laughing)

Oh Connie, I wonder if sex is this  
much fun?

CONNIE

(solemn)

No.

(PAULINE immediately stops dancing.)

PAULINE

Connie!

CONNIE

What?

PAULINE

How do you know?

CONNIE

If dancing were more fun than sex  
every boy in town would be wearing  
tights and tap shoes.

(PAULINE resumes dancing.)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Now you go under my arms. Good. Then  
back again. Good! You're getting the  
idea.

(PAULINE follows through on her steps, then grabs CONNIE and  
sweeps her in a low, dramatic dip.)

PAULINE

I saw Tyrone Power do this in BLOOD  
AND SAND.

CONNIE

You go to too many movies Pauline.

PAULINE

Not near enough. I could go see a  
movie every day for the rest of my  
life.

(beat)

You think Gary Cooper will ever come  
to our town?

CONNIE

No.

PAULINE

Darn it.

CONNIE

Movies are alright. I'd rather live  
it though. I want to go where they  
go, do what they do. I want to feel  
it Pauline - I don't want to always be  
looking at it from a distance.

PAULINE

You talk big. You'll marry Kenneth  
Treadwell, settle down here and raise  
a pack of kids just like everybody  
else.

CONNIE

Maybe ... maybe not. I'm not shutting  
any doors.

(BEAT)

You want to know my biggest fantasy?

PAULINE

What?

CONNIE

Nah, you'll tell.

PAULINE

I will not!

CONNIE

You told Sally Becker I thought her  
dress pattern looked like potty  
smears.

PAULINE

Well, she agreed with you.

CONNIE

She still won't talk to me.

PAULINE

Oh come on.

CONNIE

Swear?

PAULINE

I swear it. Even if I have to go on  
PERRY MASON before the whole country -  
I will never tell a living soul what  
you are really, really like. Never.  
(crossing heart)  
Cross my heart.

(CONNIE, confused, gives PAULINE a long look)

CONNIE

Well ... someday I'm gonna get on an  
airplane and take off for New York  
City and go straight to the Waldorf  
Astoria Hotel and ask for one of their  
First Lady Suites, overlooking Park  
Avenue, and then I'm going to put on a  
hat with a red veil and go downstairs  
to the Peacock Alley Cafe and have a  
tiny waldorf salad and three very  
cold, very dry martinis each with a  
baby onion at the bottom of the glass,  
and then I'll tip the waiter a hundred  
percent of the bill and gracefully  
stroll out the door down Park Avenue  
and the very first, incredibly  
handsome man I see I'll walk up to,  
lift my veil and ask him if he'd like  
to come back to my First Lady Suite  
and have sex.

PAULINE

Connie you tramp!

CONNIE

(engrossed in story)

Did I mention I'm going to be wearing  
a very tight, dusty rose mohair suit,  
slit up the back - and a pair of

matching pink sling-backs I saw in the  
Speigel catalog for \$39.95?

PAULINE

(excited)

Yes! I circled the same pair of  
shoes.

(annoyed)

Shoot, I was going to wear those to  
somebody's wedding some day.

CONNIE

You can have them after I get back  
from New York. Anyway, this stranger  
and I are going to make love for  
twelve solid hours, and whenever we  
feel like it we'll stop and eat roast  
pheasant and drink nothing but  
sparkling burgundy wines - now here's  
the really interesting part - this  
room's going to have just enough light  
in it so that I can't really remember  
what this stranger looks like, see?  
One minute he'll appear blonde and  
slender, the next he'll look dark and  
stocky, or redheaded, or hairy, -  
he'll keep changing into these  
different types - foreigners, young  
ones, old ones, baldies ... I'll have  
experienced a hundred men before  
daybreak!

PAULINE

(staring at PAULINE,  
shocked)

Connie, I want you to come with me to  
that church revival in Kerrville next  
weekend.

(KENNETH TREADWELL [NOYES] enters stage left, unnoticed by them.  
He's dressed western, in the appropriate style of the time. He  
watches them, amused.)

CONNIE

Oh Pauline, you're so constipated.  
Don't you every have any fantasies?

PAULINE

Yes I do.

(BEAT)

I've always wanted a dog like Lassie.

CONNIE

Brother, if that's the best you can come up with a new pack of gum ought to send you round the moon. Isn't there anything you really want out of life?

PAULINE

(quietly)

Well,

(BEAT)

I'd like to be a big band singer someday.

(CONNIE doubles over with a loud guffaw.)

CONNIE

Ha! You sound like a sick cow.

PAULINE

I do not. Brother Stout says I have the strongest voice in the choir.

CONNIE

(laughing)

That's right, everybody in town knows it too.

PAULINE

(angry)

Alright Connie ...

(KENNETH turns the dial on the radio to a country and western station, playing a dance tune from the time. CONNIE and PAULINE turn. PAULINE races excitedly to him, obviously attracted. CONNIE appears aloof.)

KENNETH

What ya'll listening to this Meskin stuff for? Don't you wanna do some real dancing?

(PAULINE playfully hits KENNETH and he begins dancing a brisk western two-step with her, circling CONNIE.)

PAULINE

Kenneth Treadwell, you stinker. You better not have been looking at us. Connie's teaching me a new dance called a mambo and it's real dirty.

KENNETH

(gliding by CONNIE)

Oooo-eee, Connie! You been holding out on me girl. How come you never teach me those dirty dances?

CONNIE

I wish you two would grow up. All anybody knows around here is a two-step and I'm bored to tears with having my feet mangled by pointy toe boots.

PAULINE

You don't mean Kenneth. Kenneth dances like a dream.

KENNETH

Yeah, you sure don't seem to mind getting mangled sometimes.

CONNIE

Well boy howdy, if all I ever wanted out of life was to know how to two-step, I guess I would be in heaven.

(KENNETH accidentally steps on PAULINE's shoes.)

PAULINE

(delicately)

Ouch.

KENNETH

Sorry Pauline.

PAULINE

That's alright Kenneth, I barely noticed.

CONNIE

(irritated, to KENNETH)

I thought you were supposed to be helping your Daddy build fences this afternoon.

KENNETH

Naw, it rained too much last night, grounds too soft.

PAULINE

(dreamy)

Oh - did it rain last night?

KENNETH

Three inches, where were you?

PAULINE

Reading "Forever Amber".

(BEAT)

It's a book.

(BEAT)

I get lost reading books.

KENNETH

(shakes head)

Naw, I ain't read it - I'm gonna have to start boning up on my reading though.

PAULINE

Why's that?

KENNETH

(glancing over at CONNIE)

Oh, they say college boys need to know a lot of different things - you know, book stuff.

(PAULINE stops dancing.)

PAULINE

(excited, hugs KENNETH)

Kenneth you got in! Tech or A&M?

KENNETH

Tech.

CONNIE

(hugs him)

Oh Kenneth that's wonderful.

PAULINE

I'm so proud of you.

KENNETH

Well they're both good schools, but Tech's got a better ball team this year.

PAULINE

I don't know, A&M's looking pretty good.

KENNETH

Yeah, but they ain't even conference material.

PAULINE

Shoot, you watch, they got some new boys coming in. Daddy says it's gonna be one heck of a season.

(CONNIE's enthusiasm lags, she steps away.)

CONNIE

I don't believe this. I do not believe you'd pick a school just because of a stupid football team. What about an education?

KENNETH

Well what about it, one's as good as another.

CONNIE

It's asinine that's what. You're supposed to be going there for your mind - who's got the better teachers, better courses - not who's gonna win the Southwest Conference.

(KENNETH and PAULINE stare at her.)

KENNETH

It's just an Ag school Connie.

PAULINE

Yeah, isn't school spirit important?

CONNIE

(shakes head)

No! I wish I were lucky enough to go off to college somewhere, even Ag school. I hope to God there's more to life than just rodeo, football and two-steppin'.

(Sound of car horn honking. PAULINE looks off-stage.)

PAULINE

Dang! It's Miss Feeny and those bratty kids.

(groans)

I gotta go.

(hugs KENNETH again)

Well I think it's just great Kenneth,  
I'm real glad for ya.

(Car honks again.)

PAULINE (CONT'D)  
(continuing; yells)  
I'm coming!

(PAULINE picks up the radio, turning it off. Goes to CONNIE.)

PAULINE (CONT'D)  
Don't be such a sourpuss, and don't  
forget about you know what, when and  
where on Saturday. Bye ya'll.

(Car honks again. PAULINE runs off-stage.)

PAULINE (CONT'D)  
Alright!

KENNETH  
(looking after PAULINE)  
Don't forget about who, who and who?

CONNIE  
Oh - if Pauline doesn't sit next to us  
at the movie Saturday night she's  
gonna bust a gut.

KENNETH  
(grinning)  
God, she is a pistol, isn't she?

CONNIE  
Gets on my nerves.

KENNETH  
Boy, maybe you ain't getting enough  
sleep, Connie. You're about like  
clabbered milk today, what's wrong?

CONNIE  
Nothing, just bored I guess.

(KENNETH puts his arm around CONNIE.)

KENNETH  
You ain't bored with me are ya?

CONNIE

You're not gonna be around long enough to get bored of. You'll be off chasing cheerleaders around the Panhandle and I'll be folding cotton blouses, talking weather to old ladies down at Marietta's Dress Shop.

KENNETH

Who says you can't go to college too?

CONNIE

Stop it Kenneth. You know we don't have any money. Mama always says if by some miracle we ever pay off Daddy's medical bills she'll climb the altar down at the Catholic church and treat the Virgin Mary to a Wild Turkey and soda.

KENNETH

I know how to get you to college.

(CONNIE stares at him.)

KENNETH (CONT'D)

You could marry me.

(CONNIE walks away slowly, her face a puzzle.)

KENNETH (CONT'D)

Well goddern Connie, aren't you even gonna say anything?

(BEAT)

Look, I know I ain't much to brag about now, but Daddy say's he'll help bankroll me for the next few years. You know I'll work hard and I'll be good to ya and ... and ... I'll never cheat on ya, you know that.

(beat)

Dang, you sure don't make it easy for a guy. Look you know you're the only girl I ever felt this way about. Connie I ...

CONNIE

(turns quickly to KENNETH)

Yes.

KENNETH

... love you.

(BEAT)

Yes, you will?

(CONNIE nods her head.)

KENNETH (CONT'D)

You mean that?

(CONNIE nods again. KENNETH embraces her.)

KENNETH (CONT'D)

Aw Connie, Connie ... I been thinking about this all summer long. God, I was afraid you'd turn me down. If you'd a said no, I'd already made up my mind I wasn't going to leave.

CONNIE

Don't be crazy.

KENNETH

I was gonna take that job down at the sale barn just so I could be near you.

CONNIE

That old stinkin' sale barn's gonna be here always. Listen Kenneth Treadwell, you got a chance to make something of yourself.

KENNETH

WE got a chance, you and me Connie, that's all I want out of life ... just you and me.

(As they stand embracing, MUSIC UP ON JOHNNY RAY SONG again.)

CONNIE

Kenneth?

KENNETH

Hmmmm?

CONNIE

(shakes head)  
Never mind.

KENNETH

What honey, tell me.

CONNIE

I was just wondering ... have you ever heard of the Waldorf Astoria?

(MUSIC SWELLS. **Slow fade of lights on KENNETH & CONNIE.** They exit.)

**SCENE 3**

(Present. **Lights come up in the office.** MISS P. enters wearing her original outfit, followed by CHUCK LANIER. He's wearing a handsome business suit and carrying an expensive attache case. His left hand is bandaged. MISS P. is very nervous.)

MISS PAULINE

We had a little visiting preacher from Nashville last year stay down at the Casa Loma. He was real fond of the place. Said he could barely keep his eyes off the cable TV movies long enough to write his sermons.

(laughs)

Come on in Mr. Lanier, I hope we're doing the right thing.

CHUCK

Please, you can call me Chuck.

MISS PAULINE

Dee Dee ought to be back from lunch shortly.

(points to his arm)

Does that hurt you much?

CHUCK

No, it's just bruised. Doctor told me it'd be as good as new in a few days.

(MISS P., fidgety, paces around the room.)

MISS PAULINE

I dropped a jar of mayonnaise on my little toe bout a year ago and hobbled around like a sand crab all summer long - wasn't a thing to be done for it - soaked it in epsom salts every night, but it didn't help much ...

(MISS P. opens the door to the office.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

... I think you better leave.

CHUCK

I just got here.

MISS PAULINE

I know that, but this is all a big mistake. Dee Dee will never forgive me.

CHUCK

She doesn't even know me.

MISS PAULINE

You don't understand, she's got a grudge against her Mama bigger than Hoover Dam.

CHUCK

Maybe it's time she heard the other side of the story. I promised my wife.

(MISS P. slowly shuts the door.)

MISS PAULINE

You promised her ... well I tried.  
(BEAT) Did Connie suffer much?

CHUCK

No. She was unconscious before the ambulances got there. She just sort of - fell asleep in my arms.

MISS PAULINE

(sitting)  
How did it happen?

CHUCK

We were driving from Lake Como to Trieste - it's in the Italian Alps. You see I'm in the export business. Anyway, Connie was at the wheel. It was a Sunday morning. We'd stopped for coffee in a little village and as we were leaving she saw a herd of cattle grazing.

(smiling)

She was always looking you know, she was like a kid. She said, "Those cows down there look exactly like the cows my Daddy raised when I was a little girl in Texas." I laughed. Then she turned to me with this strange, sad little smile on her face and ...

(beat)

The truck sideswiped us coming round the hill, the car went through the guardrail. I was thrown out ... she wasn't in pain long.

MISS PAULINE

You never think people you know - your family - something ... like that could happen to them.

(BEAT)

You weren't married long were you?

CHUCK

Three years. It's long enough to love someone.

MISS PAULINE

Connie was always so attractive, so easy to love. I don't think she ever really realized the effect she had on people ... she was different. Very different from the rest of us.

CHUCK

You think so?

MISS PAULINE

(surprised)

Yes! Connie had her own ... orbit. We all just kind of stood by waiting for a little of her stardust to land on us.

CHUCK

I understand you did most of the raising of Dee Dee.

MISS PAULINE

(shrugs)

Oh! I cooked a few meals for her and Kenneth, washed clothes, got her off to school once in awhile. I just live a couple of houses away. I didn't have a family of my own, I didn't mind. Kenneth was an awful good Daddy. I tried to present a feminine side is all - don't know as if I succeeded much.

CHUCK

She's very independent, isn't she?

MISS PAULINE

Got a mind like a steel trap. When she sets herself to some idea - well you might as well fold tent and move on, she's not gonna budge for love nor money.

CHUCK

(smiling)

I wonder where she gets that from.

MISS PAULINE

(nods)

I wonder.

(BEAT)

Mr. Lanier ... Chuck ... why are you here?

CHUCK

I'm sorry?

MISS PAULINE

I don't want Dee Dee getting hurt. Maybe you know some things, better left to the past. She's all I've got left of any kind of family.

(BEAT)

I couldn't bear it if she were to turn on me.

(As they stare at each other, DEE DEE enters the office in a storm, followed by NOYES. They're dressed in their original clothes. DEE DEE hurls her shoulder bag on a chair. NOYES is chewing on a toothpick.)

DEE DEE

I'll bet you fifty dollars Cowboys won't make it to the Super Bowl this year. They don't stand a chance in hell ...

NOYES

You're on.

DEE DEE

They ought to take old Tom Landry and ...

(DEE DEE looks up to notice CHUCK. He rises. They stare at each other. MISS P. quickly goes to DEE DEE.)

MISS PAULINE

Dee Dee, sugar, now I know this wadn't quite the way you had it all planned. See when I called down at the Casa Loma they told me Mr. Lanier had already left and ...

DEE DEE  
You're Chuck?

CHUCK  
(nodding)  
Yes.

DEE DEE  
How old are you?

MISS PAULINE  
Dee Dee!

CHUCK  
Forty.

DEE DEE  
I never knew you were younger than my mother.

(CHUCK nods.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)  
You're not what I remember from the Christmas cards.

CHUCK  
You're not the sixth grade portrait you're mother carried in her wallet.

DEE DEE  
You're the first one I ever met, you know. The other two - "husbands" - didn't last long enough.

CHUCK  
Fortunately for me.

(NOYES clears his throat. DEE DEE steps aside to introduce NOYES.)

DEE DEE  
Noyes Kuykendahl. He works around here.

(The two men shake hands.)

CHUCK

How do you do.

NOYES

Pleased to meet ya. This is just my part-time job. Me and my Daddy got a little place east of town, we're in the cattle business too.

DEE DEE

Yeah, and up to their butts in debt like everybody else around here.

(motions to CHUCK)

Miss P. did you offer our guest something to drink?

MISS PAULINE

I certainly did. Carmela, our girl down in the snack bar makes a delicious fresh squeezed lemonade. You sure you wouldn't like one?

CHUCK

No thank you.

(BEAT)

You have your Mother's hair you know.

(Dee Dee absentmindedly touches her hair, surprised.)

DEE DEE

Really? Why don't you ... have a seat.

(Silence. They all sit and stare at each other. MISS P. speaks finally.)

MISS PAULINE

Noyes, is that a new shirt you got on? I just love pearl snap buttons.

NOYES

(interrupting, checking out CHUCK)

I know.

(MISS P. picks up a paper and starts to fan herself furiously.)

MISS PAULINE

Oooo-eeee. it's hotter than the devil's pocket watch in here. Dee Dee why don't you reach over and turn up that cooler?

(DEE DEE slowly flicks a knob on the air conditioner.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

(Momentary pause, then DEE DEE speaks.)

DEE DEE

Mr. Lanier ...

CHUCK

Chuck - please.

DEE DEE

I understand you've got something you want to give me.

(MISS P. flies out of her chair, grabbing NOYES)

MISS PAULINE

Come on Noyes, let's go on downstairs and I'll make you lemonade better'n Carmelas.

NOYES

I ain't thirsty no more.

MISS PAULINE

Get up son, life's too short to be sitting all day in an air conditioned office at your age - you'll thank me for it when you're older.

(MISS P. gets him up on his feet.)

NOYES

I wanna see what the urn looks like.

MISS PAULINE

(slaps his arm)

Noyes are you just stupid as a spoon, or you trying to get me riled?

DEE DEE

It's alright Miss P.

(DEE DEE slowly rises from behind her desk and walks towards CHUCK.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

What Chuck, has brought, we can all see.

(deep breath)  
Where is it?

CHUCK  
In my pocket.

(NOYES shakes his head in disbelief.)

NOYES  
(slowly)  
Nuh-unh.

DEE DEE  
Alright - let's have it.

(CHUCK reaches into his suit pocket and pulls out an envelope,  
handing it to DEE DEE. She stares at it.)

NOYES  
(quick whistle)  
Boy, somebody was cutting corners  
somewhere - didn't even put it in a  
little bowl.

DEE DEE  
What is this?

CHUCK  
A letter.

DEE DEE  
Just a letter?

CHUCK  
And a document.

DEE DEE  
Where's my mother's ashes?

CHUCK  
Ashes?

DEE DEE  
Wasn't she cremated?

CHUCK  
No. I brought her with me to be  
buried ...

(After a second, DEE DEE turns away.)

CHUCK (CONT'D)

... it was one of the last things she said. She wanted to come home.

MISS PAULINE

(somewhat distressed)

Well ... well, that was very kind of you. Seems they all come home in the end, don't they? Very fitting. Our family has a little plot in town, not very fancy for Connie, but her folks are both there ...

DEE DEE

(back turned)

We'll bury her next to Daddy.

MISS PAULINE

(shocked)

What?

DEE DEE

It's what he would have wanted.

MISS PAULINE

Next to your father? It's not what SHE would have wanted! Why the very idea's insane. You'll do no such thing.

(DEE DEE turns to MISS P.)

DEE DEE

Are you telling me where to bury my own mother, Miss P.?

MISS PAULINE

(angry)

I was more of a mother to you! Are you really that contemptible? Send her to eternity lying alongside Kenneth Treadwell - I won't allow it.

DEE DEE

YOU won't allow it?

MISS PAULINE

No! And if you weren't such a selfish little girl you'd think about other people's feelings besides your own. I'm ashamed for you.

(seeking to gain composure)

You'll please forgive me Mr. Lanier,  
I'm rarely this irritable unless I  
haven't had my lunch.

(picks up purse, puts on  
lipstick)

I'm taking a longer than usual hour  
today Dee Dee. I saw a pair of pink  
sling-backs on sale down at Marietta's  
Dress Shop I think I might just wear  
to somebody's funeral real soon.

(She starts to exit.)

DEE DEE

Miss P.?

MISS PAULINE

(turning; regal)

Pauline! My name is Pauline. You may  
call me MISS Pauline if you like, but  
from this moment forward I never want  
to hear the term, "Miss P." again. I  
am not a one letter diminutive. I am  
Miss Pauline Spears - business woman,  
choir director of the Second Baptist  
Church and prominent single citizen in  
her own right. Good day.

DEE DEE

(stunned)

I've never seen her like this.

NOYES

Boy that's for sure. She's got all  
her pistols cocked and loaded.

DEE DEE

Noyes, I want you to go with her.

NOYES

For what? She's liable to blow a hole  
in my head if my stomach growls.

DEE DEE

Just go.

NOYES

(grudgingly)

Well, I ain't going into Marietta's.  
Last time I was in there some old lady  
pinched my butt and asked me if I

wanted to see the mole on her chest  
shaped like the Liberty Bell.

(NOYES exits)

DEE DEE

Our little town must look kinda  
primitive after Europe.

CHUCK

(shakes head)

No.

DEE DEE

You're not from the South, are you?

CHUCK

I was born in Connecticut, but we  
lived all over. My father worked for  
the government.

DEE DEE

Oh. You must have been one of those  
people went to four high schools in  
four year.

CHUCK

Four high schools in four countries -  
my father was in the Foreign Service.

DEE DEE

You went to high school in a foreign  
country?

CHUCK

The Jakarta International Secondary  
Academy - that's what it says on my  
diploma. You see, small American  
towns are still pretty exotic to me.

DEE DEE

Mars must seem closer. Did ya'll have  
sock hops, pep rallys; play football  
even?

CHUCK

I couldn't catch a football if it came  
Federal Express. But we did have  
fireworks every July 4th, we were  
hopelessly patriotic Americans.

DEE DEE

(shakes head)  
I can't imagine what it's like not growing up in the same town all your life. Not really ever knowing people, having real friends.

CHUCK  
Oh ... sometimes I feel I missed alot, sometimes I think I gained more. I like to think I have lots of friends, least I know a lot of people.

DEE DEE  
Not the same, knowing people and having real friends, two different things.

CHUCK  
I feel like I know you and we've never met before now.

DEE DEE  
(defensive)  
What do you mean?

CHUCK  
I feel like I've come to know you through your mother's eyes.

DEE DEE  
(smirks)  
That's funny. We couldn't be more unalike, we never knew each other.  
(BEAT)  
How'd you two every meet anyway?

CHUCK  
New York, in a museum - we shared a lunch table one day. I'd never met anyone like her before.

DEE DEE  
I'll bet.

CHUCK  
(continues)  
She was working for a gallery, divorced from Russell then ...

DEE DEE  
Oh yes Russell, he was the Doctor right? The one with the cream colored

turtlenecks, or was that Paul the lawyer with the moustache? I always got their pictures confused, course I knew them so well ...

CHUCK

My understanding was you wouldn't meet any of your Mother's husbands. She tried to get you to come see her.

DEE DEE

For what, apple pie and a hug? Look she just wasn't the Mother type, no big deal, I was her mistake and I knew it. Big deal.

CHUCK

I think you're wrong.

DEE DEE

(impatient)

Look, thank you for bringing her body back. Did you want to stick around for the funeral or would you like me to send pictures?

(Silence.)

CHUCK

I think you should read her letter. She wrote it over a year ago ... never did mail it.

DEE DEE

(glancing at letter on table)

I'll read it later.

CHUCK

There's something else in there.

DEE DEE

What?

CHUCK

Open it and see.

(DEE DEE stares at him, then briskly opens the letter. She pulls out a document and glances over it.)

DEE DEE

What is this, some legal bullshit?

CHUCK

If you're really that impatient I can summarize it for you ...

(deep breath)

... It says I presently own part of your business here.

(DEE DEE looks at CHUCK, then stares at the document for a long time. She walks to the phone and dials.)

DEE DEE

Mr. Flournoy please, this is Dee Dee Treadwell ... I'm fine, let me speak to Mr. Flournoy or one of the other attorneys please ... Terrell? This is Dee Dee Treadwell, yes fine ... Terrell you need to do me an important favor ... I want you to look back through all of Daddy's old papers and see if you can find a copy of some deed dated

(looking)

... December 3rd, 1965 ... uh huh, some kind of document, it says: "I Kenneth Treadwell bequeath to Connie Mildred Spears Treadwell one quarter interest of net profits from Treadwell Cattle Company etc., etc., etc., that upon the decease of said party any and all such right and interests shall revert to the deceased party's immediate family or designee as signed below". What does that mean? She is dead Terrell ... today ... yes, yes ... car wreck ... she was married at the time ... he's here, that's why!

(looks at CHUCK)

Where were you married?

CHUCK

New York.

DEE DEE

New York. What does that mean "Community Property State"? HIS name's on the goddamn document ... Why wasn't I ever told about this? A year and a half Terrell ... I've been running things for a year and a half now, when was somebody gonna let me know about this? Yes Miss P. manages

the books ... yes, she signs the  
checks ...

(voice grows quiet)

She's ... how long has she known? I  
see ... yes ... you'll let me know  
then ... thank you.

(DEE DEE hangs up the phone.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

(continuing; slight smile)

"Treadwell Charities." Miss P. and  
Daddy supported her all these years  
... and her husbands.

CHUCK

She married successful men, they  
didn't need her money.

DEE DEE

But it'll be good enough for you,  
won't it? She didn't put my name on  
that document - I'm family aren't I?  
(thinking)  
Why did he do it?

CHUCK

Maybe he ... loved her. Look Dee Dee,  
I don't want her money.

(DEE DEE stares at him)

DEE DEE

Then what?

(CHUCK rises slowly and walks to the window. He stares out over  
the stockyards.)

CHUCK

When Connie died ...

(BEAT)

when your Mother died - I'm wasting my  
time telling you this. You won't  
understand.

(BEAT)

I came to bury the dead.

DEE DEE

(far away)

I loved my Father more than anything  
in this world. I thought I was all he  
lived for.

CHUCK

I want to have that document changed into your name. Believe me, I don't want any of this. I would like for you to help me make some decisions about your Mother's funeral. Could you do that much?

DEE DEE

Look I ...  
(BEAT)  
... I'll try.

(DEE DEE walks slowly to CHUCK, offers her hand. CHUCK holds her hand briefly.)

CHUCK

Thank you.  
(smiles)  
I guess now we just have to reconcile with Miss Pauline.

DEE DEE

(Suddenly moving away)  
Sometimes I think she feels like she married Daddy. She's always been jealous of him.

CHUCK

You seem to be very important to her.

DEE DEE

(nods)  
We've never been exactly close. She runs around here bottled up with too much of the past.  
(thinking)  
I can't get over them sending those checks all these years, month after month.

CHUCK

I guess he felt he owed it to her in some way. The man loved her.

DEE DEE

Love - or maybe a little guilt. I know more than I let on. I've heard all the lies. There are a lot of friendly people in this town. Connie'd have no reason to lie to you though would she? I want to know - please.

(CHUCK moves to her.)

CHUCK

Why don't we go somewhere and talk. I passed a sign down at the Dairy Queen - buy 2 hamburgers get a free Dallas Cowboy glass with Tony Dorsett's picture on it. My treat.

DEE DEE

Are you a Cowboy fan?

CHUCK

Just cause I can't play it doesn't mean I don't like it.

(DEE DEE stops at the door momentarily.)

DEE DEE

I guess if anyone comes in they'll know we're gone. Maybe I should leave a note for Miss ...  
(catches herself)  
... Pauline.

CHUCK

We won't be long.

(DEE DEE flicks off the light switch, they exit.)

(Up on Rosemary Clooney version of "HALF AS MUCH". After a moment's pause, the front door opens again. Slowly.)

#### SCENE 4

(TIME CHANGE - MID 1950's - **Stage lights shift**)

(PAULINE enters the office with KENNETH. KENNETH is wearing a black western suite, boots. PAULINE is wearing an emerald green satin dress with petticoat. They are both slightly intoxicated. PAULINE "sh-h-hh's" KENNETH, he flicks on the light.)

PAULINE

Turn that off ! You want everybody in town to see us up here?

(PAULINE turns on a lamp. KENNETH flicks off the overhead light. MUSIC FADES.)

KENNETH

Ain't nobody up at this hour. Even the calves has stopped bawling out there.

PAULINE

(removing earrings)

Well I don't care, people'll be driving home from the country club and see the lights on.

KENNETH

You worry too much Pauline, that dance'll be going on for at least another couple of hours.

PAULINE

And what if Connie decides she's not so sick after all? What if she comes down here looking for you?

KENNETH

She's home asleep. I knew she'd wanna leave early, she hates those country club dances.

PAULINE

Kenneth, if she ever were to find out about us ...

KENNETH

(nuzzling her ear)

I told you - the only reason she came to the dance is cause I begged her. Nobody around town ever sees her no more, people think she's grown horns or something.

(KENNETH moves away from PAULINE. Lights a cigarette.)

KENNETH (CONT'D)

(continuing; sighs)

I don't know. Maybe we shouldn't of come back here after college. She begged me, pleaded with me to move to Houston ... hell, I ain't a city boy. I figured maybe, maybe if I made us a good living ... seems all I'm good at is running this cow barn.

PAULINE

You've made it boy! Young as you are to have worked your way up like you

have. You got a business to be proud of.

KENNETH

If I had Connie with me, I'd have it all.

(PAULINE turns from KENNETH. He puts his hand on her shoulder.)

KENNETH (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Pauline, but you know how I feel.

PAULINE

I've always known how you feel. My problem is I never met anyone else I felt that way about.

KENNETH

(stubs out cigarette)

You must really hate me sometimes. You ought to be meeting other men, going out, doing things. Doesn't it ever feel like I'm using you for one thing?

PAULINE

Does it ever feel like I'm using you for one thing?

(KENNETH retrieves a bottle and two glasses.)

KENNETH

Crazy world, idn't it? I love Connie, you love me ...

(offers PAULINE a drink)

... Connie loves -- Connie.

PAULINE

(smiles)

Whatever it is it ain't here, not in this little town. I guess this is how all the old stories get started - somebody gets bored, somebody strays, somebody gets hurt.

(PAULINE walks towards the window, nursing her glass.)

PAULINE (CONT'D)

Kenneth - what would it take to make you leave her?

KENNETH

Nothing. I'll never leave Connie,  
why?

PAULINE

(deep breath)

I'm pregnant.

(After a pause PAULINE turns to KENNETH)

PAULINE (CONT'D)

That's OK, I wanted to hear your  
answer before I told you. This won't  
change anything.

(KENNETH moves to her.)

KENNETH

Are you sure you're pregnant?

(PAULINE moves away, covering her face.)

PAULINE

(stifling laugh)

That's what they always ask in the  
movies, "Are you sure?" Maybe if I  
tell you twice it'll just go away.

KENNETH

(concerned)

Pauline, I don't know what to say.  
Why don't we ... I can ...

PAULINE

What Kenneth? Wave a magic wand? I  
used to think you could do everything  
- not this time though, not this time.

(A silhouette appears in the translucent office glass door.)

KENNETH

We can drive over to Corpus on Monday  
and have a doctor take another look  
...

PAULINE

I'm pregnant Kenneth. I've been to  
two doctors. Now I've just got to  
find the "other" kind of doctor.

(KENNETH takes PAULINE into his arms.)

KENNETH  
Pauline, I'm sorry.

PAULINE  
Don't - don't say another word.

(Suddenly the front door of the office opens, the lights flick on. CONNIE walks inside the room wearing a mid-length evening dress, looking very fashionable for the time. KENNETH and PAULINE separate.)

CONNIE  
I saw the car out front. I went back  
to the club to pick up my wrap.  
(BEAT)  
Can I join you all for a drink?

KENNETH  
Come in.

(CONNIE flicks off the light switch.)

CONNIE  
That's better. Everything always  
looks worse with overhead lighting,  
don't you think?

(KENNETH turns off the radio, pours a quick drink.)

KENNETH  
How're you feeling, head still hurt?

CONNIE  
(sitting)  
Much better ... Pauline I didn't get a  
chance to tell you how lovely your  
dress looked tonight.

PAULINE  
Thank you ... and yours.

CONNIE  
(looks around room)  
Oh Kenneth, isn't that the picture  
Mother and Daddy gave you last  
Christmas? It looks very nice in  
here. I should really come down more  
often - see what you do all day around  
here.

(KENNETH hands her a drink, spilling slightly.)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Oh!

KENNETH

Sorry.

CONNIE

It's alright - everything comes out in the wash. Well, what should we drink to?

(CONNIE looks at them both, no response.)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

Anybody? Well let's see ... how bout, "here's to old friends, one big happy family."

(barely takes a sip)

Wait! I got a better one. "Here's to husbands and cousins and big happy families."

(PAULINE moves to CONNIE.)

PAULINE

Connie please don't hate me.

CONNIE

(innocent)

Why would I hate you Pauline? You wouldn't do anything to hurt me, would you?

PAULINE

No, of course not.

KENNETH

Were you listening outside the door?

CONNIE

Listening? Was I supposed to hear something?

(KENNETH and PAULINE glance at each other.)

KENNETH

No ... I just thought ...

CONNIE

What did you think Kenneth? That I heard something?

PAULINE

Connie don't do this, you'll drive me crazy.

CONNIE

I'm sorry Pauline. I thought I was the crazy one around here. You know - Kenneth Treadwell's little high-strung wife, she's not quite normal, cooped up in that house - day in, day out - never seeing anybody, always so depressed, so bored. Yes, something's very wrong with Kenneth Threadill's little wife.

(CONNIE walks around the room.)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

But you know, come to think of it, I am hearing things. I seem to hear Kenneth's voice saying, "Maybe Connie would like to go up to New York for awhile, maybe get a big room at the Waldorf Astoria, see some shows, go shopping, meet some interesting people."

KENNETH

I think that's a good idea honey, we can go whenever you want ...

CONNIE

Alone. I distinctly hear the word, alone.

KENNETH

You can't just run off to New York City by yourself.

CONNIE

(whispers)

Watch me.

(KENNETH grabs CONNIE by the shoulders.)

KENNETH

Connie listen to me, I love you. It has to mean something.

CONNIE

It used to mean a lot more.

(CONNIE pulls away from KENNETH. Pours other drink.)

PAULINE

You're the type that brings on your  
own misery. You don't know what you  
want.

CONNIE

(handing PAULINE the drink)  
And what about you Pauline? What is  
it you want? What do we all want?

(CONNIE hands a drink to KENNETH. Raises her glass.)

CONNIE (CONT'D)

I'd like to propose a real toast ...  
to "true love" ... If you can find it.

(The three of them freeze in a vignette. **Lights fade to black.**  
Radio is highlighted, up on song "The Wheel of Fortune" sung by  
Kay Starr.)

**(INTERMISSION)**

ACT 2

SCENE 5

("Intermission Music" concludes with Ray Charles version of HALF AS MUCH.)

(**Slow fade up on lights in office.** Continuation of song HALF AS MUCH.)

(SATURDAY NIGHT BEFORE THE FUNERAL. Two days later. CHUCK dressed in his suit trousers and an open shirt enters office. He walks to the radio and turns off music. DEE DEE enters, wearing a different outfit.)

DEE DEE

(noticing radio)

Miss Pauline must've left it on. She forgot to turn off the coffeemaker one weekend and it blew up on our cat.

CHUCK

Did it hurt him?

DEE DEE

Not really. Vet said a cat can live just as long with half a tail as a full one.

(BEAT)

Thanks for dinner tonight. It was real nice.

CHUCK

I thought we'd all do better with a decent meal and a good nights sleep - funeral being so early in the morning.

DEE DEE

By the way thanks for the last couple of days - you've made it a lot easier for us.

(BEAT)

I want to apologize again for acting the way I did at the Dairy Queen. I just had to get away and think to myself.

CHUCK

I understand.

(BEAT)

I thought you knew more.

DEE DEE

You did the right thing, please. People have always tried to protect me with lies or hurt me with gossip. I can appreciate honesty, really I can.

CHUCK

How do you feel now?

DEE DEE

I can handle the past Ok. It's getting on with today and the next day that worries me the most.

CHUCK

Aren't you a little hard on yourself?

DEE DEE

Somebody had to be. I'm sure Daddy always thought of me as about six years old. He wanted everything to be so wonderful for his little girl. Thought he could live life for me I guess.

CHUCK

You seem to have done pretty well so far.

DEE DEE

(thinking)

I know I'm good at what I do. I just wonder sometimes if this is ... enough. Maybe I'd like to ...

(embarrassed)

I don't know ... sing in a band someday or write a book - get married and have kids, who knows?

CHUCK

Then you'll do it, won't you?

(CHUCK moves to the window, laughing softly.)

DEE DEE

What's so funny?

CHUCK

"I wonder if this is enough?" Now  
where have I heard those words before?

DEE DEE

I'm what you expected, huh?

CHUCK

No, I didn't say that. First of all I  
didn't expect I'd ...

(catches himself)

- I mean I didn't know how I'd feel  
towards you.

DEE DEE

And how is that?

CHUCK

Well, you're my stepdaughter. I feel  
a certain ... attachment.

(DEE DEE stands from behind the desk, frowning; pours a cup of  
coffee.)

DEE DEE

(smiles)

Attachment? Sort of like a jar and a  
lid, a handle on a door - that kind of  
attachment?

(DEE DEE holds the coffee pot towards CHUCK; he declines.)

CHUCK

Did I say something wrong?

DEE DEE

(shakes head)

No, no. It's all been just right.  
Right as rain. You've been here two  
and a half days, you've met everyone  
Connie ever went to school with,  
picked out dozens of flowers, ordered  
an expensive casket, driven Miss  
Pauline to the Mall in Beeville for a

hat twice. You've done everything  
just completely right.

CHUCK  
Then what's the matter?

DEE DEE  
Nothing.

CHUCK  
Something's the matter.

DEE DEE  
Why do you say that?

CHUCK  
You just stirred your coffee with that  
pencil you're holding.

(DEE DEE, alarmed, quickly sets the cup down.)

DEE DEE  
Chuck - I guess what I really wanted  
to do at some point was ...  
(shakes head)  
... forget it.

CHUCK  
What?

DEE DEE  
No, it's stupid.

CHUCK  
Tell me.

DEE DEE  
(exhales)  
Oh - I just wanted to ... I wanted to  
give you a hug for being a nice guy  
and to make up for being so rude when  
you got here.

CHUCK  
Oh.

(Moment's pause.)

DEE DEE  
Chuck?

CHUCK

Hmmm?

DEE DEE  
Would that be alright?

CHUCK  
(eyes closed)  
I'm getting myself ready for my hug.

DEE DEE  
(smiles)  
We can do it some other time ...

CHUCK  
No, no! Now's good.

(DEE DEE slowly across the room and puts her arms around CHUCK.  
They hold each other momentarily.)

CHUCK (CONT'D)  
(continuing; wide-eyed)  
Dee Dee?

DEE DEE  
Hmmm?

CHUCK  
What are you thinking?

DEE DEE  
Right now?

CHUCK  
Yes.

DEE DEE  
This very minute?

CHUCK  
Yes.

DEE DEE  
You smell really good.

(CHUCK nods nervously and DEE DEE lets go her embrace. They  
stand apart, awkwardly. CHUCK exhales.)

CHUCK  
I ... I guess I should be getting back  
to the motel.

DEE DEE

Yes.

CHUCK  
(scattered)  
If you need anything ... uh, you know  
... uh, call me.

DEE DEE  
I'll do that.

(CHUCK starts to exit.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)  
Are you Ok?

CHUCK  
(nervous)  
Fine, fine.

DEE DEE  
(points to where they were  
standing)  
Was that ... did I do something ...

CHUCK  
No, no! I just, I just - felt a  
little ... deja vu.

DEE DEE  
Connie?

(CHUCK, emotional, nods.)

CHUCK  
Well, I - I better go.

DEE DEE  
Good night.

CHUCK  
Night.

(CHUCK exits. DEE DEE sits at her desk, flicks on the radio.  
Country & Western ballad, "SOMEDAY" (Elton Britt and the  
Skytoppers) plays. **Office light out.**)

## SCENE 6

(DEE DEE stands and puts on a black suit jacket to match her  
skirt. Changing from sandals to black pumps, she pulls her hair  
back and steps from around the desk.)

(**Lights up in the office.** Music DOWN and OUT. Morning of the funeral. DEE DEE now stands at the plate glass window, staring out. She's holding the P.A.)

DEE DEE

(speaking into P.A., she  
squints)

I can't see ... hold it up ... higher.  
What is it?

(looking surprised)

A wreath? Thank you, what's it made  
out of?

(nodding)

Hay and baling wire ... that's real  
nice. Thank you Norberto and  
Faustino. I appreciate that. Ya'll  
be sure and come on out to the service  
later on.

(DEE DEE lowers the P.A., continuing to stare out the window. MISS P. enters the room from the side bathroom. Sound of toilet flushing. She's dressed in a black, sleeveless dress, sunglasses and a black floppy hat on her head. She's also wearing elbow length black leather gloves, a black cloth orchid on her shoulder, and on her feet a pair of bright pink sling back heels. She blows her nose on a kleenex and slips it into her very large black purse. DEE DEE speaks without looking at her.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Norberto and Faustino made Connie a  
wreath outta hay and baling wire.

MISS PAULINE

Idn't that sweet. If it wadn't for a  
couple of prison records longer than  
my arm those boys would make real fine  
Christians. Well, how do I look?

(DEE DEE turns to look at MISS P. Her eyes lock on the shoes.)

DEE DEE

Real ... special.

MISS PAULINE

I never knew I had so many black  
things. I started going through all  
my drawers and everywhere I looked it  
was "black, black, black".

DEE DEE

(looking at shoes)

You couldn't find any black ...

MISS PAULINE

(anxious)

What? Stockings? Honey I looked high and low, nobody has em. Even the Rexall was sold out.

(looks at watch)

You know there's still time, I could probably get Chuck to run me over to Beeville ...

DEE DEE

You look fine. You really do.

MISS PAULINE

Do I? You don't think I look too ... sad?

DEE DEE

No.

MISS PAULINE

I don't want to look sad. Not at Connie's funeral. She wouldn't like that. In her own way I feel like she'd want me to have a good time.

DEE DEE

You gonna dance or something?

MISS PAULINE

(laughs)

Course not. I just mean that ... seems like there's always so much sadness around. Maybe it's time we celebrated living for once.

(BEAT)

Dee Dee?

DEE DEE

Hmmm?

MISS PAULINE

May I ask a favor of you? Now you don't have to say yes, I just want you to think about it. It's just a little idea I had.

DEE DEE

What?

MISS PAULINE

Would you ... would you mind if I sang  
a song at the service?

DEE DEE

A song? What song?

(MISS P. reaches into her purse and fishes out a folded-up piece  
of paper. She unravels it and hands it to DEE DEE.)

MISS PAULINE

Well ... I know this is gonna sound  
crazy but when we were girls Connie  
and I had this one particular,  
favorite song we used to sing all the  
time. I couldn't recall all the  
lyrics so I had to copy them down off  
an old 45 last night. It does have an  
upbeat tempo that might possibly be  
very stirring to the mourners.

DEE DEE

What is it?

MISS PAULINE

"Hernando's Hideaway".

DEE DEE

Miss Pauline I ...

MISS PAULINE

It was her favorite song.

DEE DEE

(BEAT)

Well ... if you think she'd want us  
all to have a good time, I guess it's  
alright.

MISS PAULINE

Oh thank you honey. Trust me it's the  
little gestures that make such a  
difference on occasions like this.

DEE DEE

I guess we should go ahead and go on  
now.

MISS PAULINE

Yes.

DEE DEE

It's still kind of early.

MISS PAULINE

I get nervous as a cat just hanging around. I brought some bluebonnet seeds and a garden hoe with me. I may decorate a few plots while we're waiting.

DEE DEE

That would be nice.

(DEE DEE starts to turn and head for the door, she stops and turns back to MISS PAULINE. Slowly she lifts her hand and reaches out to MISS PAULINE.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Ready?

(MISS PAULINE, after a moments hesitation, smiles and takes DEE DEE's hand.)

MISS PAULINE

Ready.

(They exit. **Lights fade out.** Up on first verse of "Hernando's Hideaway." Music fades out.)

## SCENE 7

(**Lights up in office.** Mid-afternoon - after funeral. NOYES, with his back to the audience, is wearing Kenneth Treadwell's old suit, [From his Last Scene; Act 1, Scene 4]. He's standing in front of the large, glass window, pouring two drinks from a bottle. He turns and offers a glass to CHUCK, who's sitting nearby.)

NOYES

Well - sure was a nice day for a funeral. Not much wind, under a hundred, no flies - sure was a nice day.

(hands drink to CHUCK)

Here ya go.

CHUCK

Thanks. Been meaning to tell you, that's a handsome suit you're wearing - like to have a western suit of my own someday.

NOYES

Aw ... this belong'd to Mr. Treadwell. Dee Dee gimme some of his old clothes

after he passed on. He could sure afford better stuff than me, I'll tell ya.

CHUCK

(motioning to window)

How long do you think Dee Dee and Miss Pauline are gonna be walking around those pens?

NOYES

(shrugs)

Hard to say. Miss P., I mean Miss Pauline - boy I'm going to have to start watching that - she usually gets to sneezing after five minutes.

(looks out window)

I don't know though, looks like they got some serious talking to get done. I hope whatever it is, they get it all worked out. Been enough tension around here to play a tune on the phone cord.

(NOYES sits at DEE DEE's desk, leans back in the chair and props his boots up.)

CHUCK

You're very fond of Dee Dee aren't you?

NOYES

Hell I guess. I've asked her to marry me two dozen times. Course I been asking since junior high school.

CHUCK

You never see any other girls?

NOYES

Nah ... nobody serious. Oh I go out with my buddies once'n awhile, we usually meet a couple of good- timers, but it's not the same. You know what it's like when you got your mind made up, nothing else looks as good to ya.

CHUCK

(rising, he nods)

And what does Dee Dee say about it all?

NOYES

Now that's a very interesting question  
Chuck. You tell me and we'll both put  
it in the paper, how 'bout that?

CHUCK

I see ... nothing spelled out.

NOYES

Not one word Jack. Oh I think she  
likes me alright, she knows I'm a hard  
worker and a good enough person, she  
just don't want to make any kind of  
commitment. Beats all I ever saw. If  
you knew somebody'd walk up Pike's  
Peak backwards for ya, wouldn't you  
show a little interest in 'em?

CHUCK

I believe I would.

NOYES

Well? What's wrong with her then?

CHUCK

(smiles)

I guess maybe she's still looking ...  
I don't know.

NOYES

Who else is she gonna find? Who else  
around here could take the place of  
me; I'd just like to know.

(CHUCK takes a long sip of his drink, staring at nothing in  
particular. NOYES starts to realize something and stares at  
CHUCK.)

NOYES (CONT'D)

Say, uh ... how much longer you gonna  
be around here, uh, Chuck?

CHUCK

Pardon. Oh well another day or two at  
least. I want to make sure all the  
paper work on the document is  
finalized.

(NOYES rises and goes to pour CHUCK another glass.)

NOYES

So tell me, Chuck, seeing as we're almost family.

CHUCK

(amused)

Are we?

NOYES

Well someday you might just be my stepfather-in-law.

CHUCK

Oh?

NOYES

Sure, sure. You know I like the name Chuck, be a good name for a boy.

CHUCK

Yes - better than for a girl.

NOYES

Yessir, I think if Dee Dee and I have a little boy we're gonna name him Chuck.

CHUCK

Well ... I'm honored. If I ever have a son I'll name him Noyes Two.

NOYES

(laughs)

Noyes Two ... I like it, that's pretty good.

(serious)

Chuck, you don't have any other reason for stickin' around here do ya?

CHUCK

Like what Noyes?

NOYES

Like ...

(quick laugh)

... like maybe ...

(more laughter)

... I just thought maybe you might be interested in Dee Dee yourself.

(NOYES doubles over in laughter. Sets his drink down, gains composure.)

NOYES (CONT'D)

Idn't that a hoot?

CHUCK

(smiling, raises glass)

A hoot.

(NOYES has another hearty laugh, than stops abruptly.)

NOYES

Are you?

(Office set darkens.)

**SCENE 8**

(Lights up downstage left. DEE DEE and MISS PAULINE enter stage left, strolling. They're walking through the livestock pens, looking at cattle from the above ground catwalks found in most stockyards. Both are still dressed in their funeral clothes. Faint sounds of cattle are heard in the background. MISS P. occasionally dabs her face with a tissue. DEE DEE is escorting her by the elbow.)

MISS PAULINE

(pointing)

You're gonna have to sell that old cow in about a month, she'll be springing by then. After we get some early fall rain, she and her calf will bring you a good price.

(looks in other direction)

Good looking pen of heifers. Who's are they?

DEE DEE

Old man Easley.

MISS PAULINE

You ought to make him an offer, I wouldn't give more than 28 cents a pound, but those sisters'll make you some money in a couple of years.

(staring ahead)

Catholic services are always so long. Never did know why your Mama's Daddy became a Catholic. None of his people were. Your Grandmother told me once it was cause the Methodist preacher's boy whapped him after school one day and he was too ashamed to go back being protestant. I wouldn't set much

stock by it though - just an old story.

DEE DEE

Granddaddy took me to mass a couple of times. We always sat in the back row so he could snore. Hearing Latin seemed to have a calming effect on him.

MISS PAULINE

(smiles)

Ah - they were lovely people your Grandparents. Wished you'd known them longer, rest their souls.

(looks sharply)

Who's bull is that?

DEE DEE

Vernon Mosers.

MISS PAULINE

(squinting)

Gracious isn't he a big, old ugly thing. What is it? Charolais, Simmental ... what?

DEE DEE

It's a Bramah bull ... your eyesight getting bad?

(They continue walking.)

MISS P.

Dee Dee I tell you, in the last year it's gotten so I can't even see my TV set less I'm sitting right in front of the thing. I read in TV Guide I'll probably be radiated to death.

(deep breath)

Yes, in all I'd say it was a real fine service. Connie would have been proud I reckon. Did you ever see such a turnout in August? Sakes, that motorcade must've been two miles long.

(takes DEE DEE's hand)

Dee Dee, I want to thank you again for what you did. Connie would have wanted to be laid to rest near her Mama and Daddy, her people.

DEE DEE

Well it's done. What does it really matter?

MISS P.

It matters if it matters.

(BEAT)

How'd the song go?

DEE DEE

You didn't tell me you were gonna sing two of them.

MISS P.

I didn't know I was either. I just felt the crowd pulling me on.

DEE DEE

Do you really think "South of the Border" was the appropriate choice?

MISS P.

It was the only thing I could remember! You don't think anybody was offended do you?

DEE DEE

When I heard Father Andrews mumble "Ole" at the end of it, I knew we were alright.

MISS PAULINE

(laughs)

Old Chuck seemed to get into the spirit of things. He told me later Connie used to sing "Hernando's Hideaway" to him all the time.

(BEAT)

What do you think of this Chuck fella?

DEE DEE

Why?

MISS PAULINE

He seems like a nice man.

DEE DEE

Kinda lonely, don't you think?

MISS PAULINE

Lonely? That's everybody's problem. I mean what do you think of him in general?

DEE DEE  
I think I like him.

MISS PAULINE  
Like him how?

DEE DEE  
Why do you want to know?

MISS PAULINE  
God forgive me for saying this cause  
you'll turn around and do just the  
opposite thing, but I think he needs  
you right now. You're his way of  
letting Connie go.

(DEE DEE stares ahead, they walk.)

DEE DEE  
He's different isn't he? You think  
all Yankees have such nice manners?

MISS PAULINE  
Honey, three out of four walk in God's  
divine grace, it's the other 25% you  
could choke with a dishtowel and be  
doing your country a service.

DEE DEE  
Do you want to sit a spell?

MISS PAULINE  
(sitting)  
Just a minute or two. I didn't take  
my hay fever medicine.

DEE DEE  
(somewhat anxious)  
You know ... I have a letter from Mama  
Chuck brought me.

MISS PAULINE  
Oh?

DEE DEE  
She wrote it, I guess, bout a year ago  
- something like that.  
(BEAT)  
She mentions you in it.

MISS PAULINE  
(dabs forehead)

Oh?

DEE DEE

I guess she didn't know whether to send it or not. Maybe she never intended for me to read it, I don't know.

(MISS PAULINE anxiously dabs her throat.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

She says some thing in it ... well some things I already know ... but also some things I'd never heard before.

MISS PAULINE

Yes, I'm sure she had lots to tell.

DEE DEE

One of the things she said, she said it over and over, was how happy she was she'd found Chuck. How much she loved him, how much she wished for me to find the right person someday. She said how lonely it is never finding that someone to give balance to your life.

MISS PAULINE

Well I'm glad it all worked out for Connie ... that aspect anyway.

DEE DEE

(deep breath)

And she said to tell Pauline that she loved her very much and that we should both be thankful to her for having never stopped loving us.

MISS PAULINE

(to herself)

It comes so easy now doesn't it Connie? You left it all behind you. Never heard the things people said.

DEE DEE

I've heard what they say.

MISS PAULINE

(sharp)

What do you know about any of it?

(DEE DEE stands, looks away.)

DEE DEE

(quietly)

I been hearing it long as I can  
remember - how you're supposed to be  
my real mother.

(**Lights down on** MISS PAULINE and DEE DEE)

**SCENE 9**

(**Lights up in the office.** NOYES is staring out the plate glass  
window, looking at MISS P. and DEE DEE.)

NOYES

I seen it all now. Dee Dee and Miss  
Pauline are out there hugging each  
other tight enough to squeeze the head  
off a tick.

CHUCK

That's good. It's good they're still  
friends.

NOYES

(sips from drink)

How many friends you got Chuck?

CHUCK

How many? Good friends - not many.

NOYES

Come on now, what? Four, five ...  
eight?

CHUCK

Eight's too many. Why you asking?

NOYES

Ought to have at least one, right?  
It's important, isn't it?

CHUCK

What - good friends? Sure.

(NOYES is staring out window at DEE DEE.)

NOYES

Best friend I got I ain't never told.  
She probably don't even know it.

(takes sip)

Hell of a thing isn't it?

CHUCK

Something you should try to correct  
someday, I should think.

NOYES

Yup.

(turning to CHUCK)

Maybe that's all you really need Chuck  
buddy - a good friend. Sure it is,  
you just never had a good friend.

CHUCK

I think it's more than that.

NOYES

You do huh? Maybe you think maybe you  
just oughtta take whatever you feel  
like you need, huh? See something you  
want and go for it. Well, I kinda  
admire that in a way, and in a way I  
think it's pretty goddam trashy  
behaviour.

CHUCK

Keep your shirt on Noyes.

(CHUCK pours himself another drink.)

CHUCK (CONT'D)

Nobody's taking anything thats yours.

NOYES

Oh yeah, that's what I want to hear  
... what's mine. You know, you're  
sharp as a tack - you come down here  
with your \$400.00 suits, your slicked  
back, clean fingernailed, highly-  
educated self and it looks real smooth  
and fine to us stupid shitkickers.  
Yeah buddy, you're just a walking  
display case for everything we ain't.  
You got Dee Dee and Miss Pauline  
running all over themselves trying to  
keep you entertained ...

CHUCK

I haven't asked for any ...

NOYES

You don't have to Chuck - don't you see? You're something different boy, your shit don't stink! I bet you've had it all your life; you just look it - catered to, satisfied - you ain't never been hungry for nothing have you?

CHUCK

(containing himself)

Look ... I buried my wife today. I don't particularly want to get into some theoretical discussion about whether or not life's been overly generous to me.

NOYES

I don't blame you. It's the strategy of the thing - milk it another day or two and you might just roll out of here with Dee Dee, the sale barn, Miss Pauline's blessings and a shoe box full of brownies.

CHUCK

Noyes, can I be honest? You've got the kind of stupid, narrow-minded asshole mentality that most people associate with southern rednecks. And it's exactly that kind of ignorant bastard reasoning that drove my wife from here in the first place.

NOYES

Chuck buddy, can I be honest? You're the kind of tiny-balled, overbred, uptight, hand wringing dumb shit eastern liberal that makes us southern rednecks look like ignorant bastards for putting up with your kind in the first place.

(NOYES holds up the bottle of bourbon.)

NOYES (CONT'D)

Want another drink?

CHUCK

More southern hospitality?

NOYES

(shakes head)

Cheap bourbon.

(Lights fade in office.)

**SCENE 10**

(Lights up on DEE DEE and MISS PAULINE. MISS Pauline is staring straight ahead, holding DEE DEE's hand.)

MISS PAULINE

I went off to Tyler for about two years and stayed with Mama's first cousins on Granddaddy Newman's side. Wasn't so bad really - took some business courses - I was an exchange alto with the African Baptist Church for a few months which certainly broadened my musical horizons a great deal - everyone thought my "husband" was in Korea.

(BEAT)

She weighed 6 lbs. 8 ozs. had yellow hair and light blue eyes - I didn't see her but once, but she was special, no doubt about it, all the nurses told me she was something real special. Couple from Oklahoma adopted her - I think they were both teachers maybe. I don't recall anymore. Kenneth and Connie had moved off to Houston and somehow that didn't seem to work out for 'em and sure enough we all ended up back here within a few months of each other.

(looks at DEE DEE)

And they had you with them. Well, I was surprised of course, but I'll tell you something - Connie started out to be a good mother. She really did. I think it just all eventually fell down on her though. I can hear her laugh to this day everytime I drive past the city limit sign. "City ... limits." In certain ways I always understood Connie real well.

(BEAT)

I don't guess a month went by 'fore I started hearing the talk. "Course you know Pauline Spears had an affair with that Treadwell boy." "Nobody seen 'em for a year and a half and up they all pop one day with Connie holding a baby

girl. I didn't even know Connie was pregnant," Yeah, poor simple Pauline. Least Kenneth and Connie had each other for awhile. Pauline got stuck playing Mother and never even got to be wife.

(PAULINE emotionally opens her purse and starts digging furiously.)

DEE DEE

What is it? Here I've got some more Kleenex.

MISS PAULINE

No.

DEE DEE

What? You need your hay fever medicine?

(MISS PAULINE shakes her head angrily.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

What's the matter?

MISS PAULINE

Oh ... Heloise!

(MISS PAULINE triumphantly pulls out a box of Tic-Tacs.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Here! I've been wanting one of these darn mints all day long.

(She shakes some in her hand.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Green's my favorite.

(She offers the box to DEE DEE.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Take some.

(DEE DEE shakes herself a few.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

I can't think of a single thing more unbecoming on older people than bad breath. Boy have you got to watch it after 45. I've stopped sending

Christmas cards to those old Wilson sisters. Between the two of them they could knock out half of West Texas with one good ...

(exhales deeply)

"he-e-e-l-l-o".

DEE DEE

(smiles)

That's not very nice.

MISS PAULINE

Well I don't care. If people won't even make an effort I'm just not gonna mess with 'em anymore.

(PAULINE stands, smoothing her dress. She smiles)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

You know I guess I really don't care. I've gone this long holding my own. No Dee Dee, you're your Mother's daughter - much as I'd like to claim ya, that's a fact. Somewhere out there though, probably still in Oklahoma I imagine - there's a young woman 'bout a year older than you - maybe has babies of her own, maybe running her own business, maybe cleaning rooms in some motel, I don't know - but she owes her life to me and your Daddy and no matter what she makes of it nobody can ever tell me creating that life was the wrong thing to do.

DEE DEE

I wish I'd known. I wish I knew her.

MISS PAULINE

Maybe you will some day. Maybe that'd be alright.

DEE DEE

Miss Pauline, why didn't Daddy marry you after the divorce?

MISS PAULINE

(turns to look at DEE DEE)

He never loved me. Funny how I just snapped to that one day. Nope, that part belonged to Connie always.

(shrugs)

Some people don't like lima beans, not  
much anyone can do about it, you know.  
I still wanted to be near him.

(Lights out on DEE DEE and PAULINE)

SCENE 11

(Lights up in the Office.)

CHUCK

Look pal, try to get this through your  
head. I don't want any part of this  
... "bovine Sotheby's." I happen to  
be a prosperous businessman in my own  
right.

(motioning around room)

I didn't leave this to me, Connie did.  
All I'm trying to do is turn it back  
to her daughter - completely.

NOYES

And Lord, won't she love you for that?  
Let me tell you a little something  
about Dee Dee. She thinks she's her  
Daddy's daughter, right? Man, she  
couldn't be any more like Connie if  
they was twins.

CHUCK

What about it Noyes?

NOYES

I'll tell you what about it - you're  
running round here looking better than  
an IRS refund, ya got every old lady  
in town mother-henning ya to beat the  
band - yes, you do boy, don't you deny  
it - and Connie's got her head so  
turned around right now ...

CHUCK

(riled)

Connie's dead!

NOYES

I said ... shit ... you know what I  
mean ... Dee Dee!

(CHUCK grabs bottle of bourbon, pours himself a long drink,  
sips.)

CHUCK

You know what your problem is young Noyes - you haven't got any. Your life's spread out before you like a Sunday afternoon picnic. All you have to worry about is who you're gonna share that nice, big blanket with. Real neat.

NOYES

You're pro-junior in the living life department ain't ya? Mr. import/export, Mr. Done-it-all. Three years of marriage and you're giving lessons.

(loud)

Well we ain't interested. You can go back to Thai-i-i-land, or wherever you come from, and lay that bullshit on somebody else's ignorant-ass head.

(CHUCK continues drinking from glass.)

CHUCK

(points finger)

Don't test me studly - don't push it any further than you can take it.

NOYES

Come on jet-set. Let's see how tough you are.

CHUCK

Maybe if you lost a couple of front teeth you'd develop a more thoughtful attitude around people.

(CHUCK grabs NOYES by the neck. The two men lurch around the office, bumping into furniture. CHUCK suddenly slams NOYES aside the P.A. With determination NOYES picks up the mike and speaks as CHUCK has him in a strangle hold.)

NOYES

(choking)

Dee Dee ... Miss Pauline ... ya'll better get up here fore I kill this goddamn Yankee!

(DEE DEE and MISS PAULINE hearing, rush off-stage. CHUCK has NOYES' arm twisted from behind.)

CHUCK

What's happened to the big heroics  
Tex?

NOYES  
(still speaking into P.A.)  
He's got one more minute fore I  
throttle him!

CHUCK  
Good ... I ought to have both your  
arms broken by then.

NOYES  
(loud, into P.A.)  
Ya'll better hurry! Somebody's fixin'  
to die!

(DEE DEE and MISS PAULINE enter the office, startled by the mess  
and confusion.)

DEE DEE  
What in the ...

MISS PAULINE  
Noyes quit hollering into the P.A.!  
You'll have every cow on the place  
aborting.

DEE DEE  
What's going on up here? Chuck let go  
of Noyes.

(CHUCK releases NOYES. NOYES springs to as if he's been in  
control the whole time.)

NOYES  
Ha! Good thing ya'll got here when  
you did.

(NOYES turns away from them for a second to flex his arm and make  
a private face of pain.)

NOYES (CONT'D)  
I nearly had to put "Mr. Gentleman"  
in the hospital.

DEE DEE  
What's this all about?

CHUCK  
(composing himself)  
Some words were said.

DEE DEE

Chuck I don't understand?

(MISS PAULINE picks up the bourbon bottle, sniffs it.)

CHUCK

I'm sorry. I let things get out of control.

MISS PAULINE

Women cry at funerals - men drink. Personally I wish it were the other way around sometimes.

NOYES

Old Chuck buddy's got a temper like rolling barbwire.

DEE DEE

(to NOYES)

What did you say to him?

NOYES

Nothing he don't already know.

CHUCK

Look it's my fault. I jumped on Noyes. My head's been working overtime since I got here. I can't sleep. I'm losing control and I'm sorry. I'll leave.

(MISS PAULINE takes a bottle of pills from her purse, and pours another glass of bourbon.)

DEE DEE

Nobody has to go anywhere. Why don't you lie down here for awhile.

(DEE DEE leads CHUCK over to the settee and sits beside him as he stretches out.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Maybe some hot milk would help.

MISS PAULINE

(handing pills to CHUCK)

Here.

DEE DEE

What is it?

MISS PAULINE  
Old Crow and a librium.

CHUCK  
Librium?

MISS PAULINE  
Fifty years in a small town friend -  
Midol won't cut it anymore. Trust me,  
works faster than milk.

(CHUCK stares at the pill then reluctantly takes it, downing the  
bourbon.)

CHUCK  
If I could maybe just sleep for a  
little while.

MISS PAULINE  
You'll sleep.

CHUCK  
Dee Dee I'm sorry. I don't want to  
embarrass you, if I broke something  
I'll pay for it.

DEE DEE  
Nobody's embarrassed.  
(looks at NOYES)  
Maybe just a little surprised.

(CHUCK suddenly rises up.)

CHUCK  
Noyes did I hurt you?

(NOYES, caught off guard flexing his arm, feigns false bravado.)

NOYES  
Are you kidding, no way.  
(BEAT)  
Did I hurt you?

CHUCK  
(lies back, not listening)  
I'm sorry about your arm.

NOYES  
(loud)  
I said did I ...

(MISS PAULINE gives NOYES a look)

NOYES (CONT'D)

... skip it.

CHUCK

(eyes closed, weary)

I hate fighting. Connie and I had an argument night before the car wreck. God it was over some stupid lamp she bought in Bellagio - ridiculous thing with cherubs and grape leaves. I wanted her to get rid of it or ship it home but she insisted we could use it for barter in Yugoslavia. Stupid huh? So many things we could have talked about, should have talked about our last night together ... life's too precious ... too short. God, I miss her.

(opens eyes to look at DEE

DEE)

(CHUCK slowly places a hand behind DEE DEE's head, drawing her towards him. He softly kisses her on the lips, then releases her and falls back on the settee, eyes closed.)

(MISS PAULINE and NOYES stare in disbelief. MISS PAULINE, nervously clears her throat, busys herself at her desk.)

MISS PAULINE

Well ... Noyes, how'd you boys make out in that ball game over in Floresville last week?

NOYES

We lost.

(NOYES picks up the bottle of bourbon and starts to exit.)

MISS PAULINE

Noyes, where are you going?

NOYES

(shouts)

The Dairy Queen! Is that alright with everybody? I'm going to the ... Got ... damn ... Dairy Queen!

MISS P.

(shouts back)

You'll spoil your dinner!

NOYES

(exasperated)  
Miss Pauline - right now - I don't  
give a fuck.

MISS P.  
(reaching into her purse,  
normal voice)  
Well, long as you're going bring me  
back a Dillybar, would ya?

DEE DEE  
(rising)  
Noyes don't go.

(DEE DEE goes to NOYES, who's standing by the door. She places  
her hand on his arm.)

NOYES  
(bitter)  
Hey, it's your life. Some of us don't  
have to keep making the same mistakes  
... Connie.

(NOYES turns and exits. DEE DEE is stunned.)

DEE DEE  
(hurt)  
Why did he say that?

MISS PAULINE  
(sighs)  
'Cause he thinks if you'd just open  
your eyes and love him right back  
everything'd be perfect.  
(gazing out the big window)  
If you loved me ... I'd have  
everything ...

(Lights fade slowly in office.)

## SCENE 12

(Lights up, downstage left. NOYES re-enters stage left as KENNETH  
TREADWELL. He's wearing a western hat, along with the same suit.  
He sits on the bench and begins to whittle on a piece of wood.  
[A SOFT VIOLIN SOLO PLAYS CHILDREN'S SONG 'Put Your Little Foot'  
- "The Varsovienne." KENNETH is watching an imaginary DEE DEE  
dance for him.)

KENNETH  
Where'd you learn to dance like that?  
In kindergarten class, well I'm real

proud of you. Yes ma'am. Sure is a pretty dress you got on, who give you that? Miss P.? She's been awfully good to us, hasn't she? Now let's see here, you're gonna be six on July the 14th ... 17th, July the 17th - I knew when it was. Your Daddy doesn't forget birthdays!

(stops whittling looks at DEE DEE)

Do you know how much I love you?

(shakes his head)

Bigger'n that. Your Daddy loves you bigger than anything in this entire world. Yes he does.

(BEAT)

And your Mama loves you too - your Mama loves you with all her heart. Even if we don't see her for a a time she'll always be your Mama. Every time you look up at the stars at night you just close your eyes and think of your pretty Mama and she'll start thinking of you, no matter where she is. I know 'cause God told me so.

(BEAT)

Course God loves your Mama. God loves everybody. Maybe he even loves your Mama just a little bit more.

(Rising, he brushes his britches and hands her the carving of a little wooden horse.)

All done. You go take this pony and show him the sale barn, huh? He's gonna need you to teach him the ropes around here. Ok, go show Miss P. first.

(calling)

You wipe your feet 'fore stepping in her office - she don't like people tracking in dirt.

(nods, watching her run off)

I love you too Dee Dee. We're gonna be alright ... you and me, baby!

(KENNETH stares a moment longer. **Lights fade** on KENNETH; he exits.)

**SCENE 13**

(Darkness. **Lights up in the office.** CHUCK is lying flat on the settee, asleep. MISS PAULINE is sitting at her desk playing solitaire and nursing a drink of bourbon in front of her. DEE DEE is talking on the phone.)

DEE DEE

Uh-huh ... I see. So all Mr. Lanier has to do is just sign the papers ... I think possibly a day or two ... I understand. Yes, well, thank you Terrell, no problem. Glad we got it all straightened out. Same to you ... Oh and Terrell, thank you for the flowers, yes they were very pretty ... say hello to your wife for me.  
(hangs up)

MISS PAULINE

(concentrating on game)  
I've always liked Old Terrell Flournoy. He sure was an ugly little cuss when he was a kid. All those Flournoy children got that droopy-dog look from their Grandmother Burris. Now she was married to a right nice looking fellow - came from Arkansas I believe. First name was Robert. My Daddy and he had a big peach orchard together back during the depression, out on Tompkins Rd. You remember where it was.

DEE DEE

How long did you know?

MISS PAULINE

Know what?

DEE DEE

About the money Daddy was giving Mama?

MISS PAULINE

(looks up from cards)  
Since the beginning.

DEE DEE

And you didn't say anything?

(MISS PAULINE turns back to her cards)

MISS PAULINE

No, I didn't say anything.

DEE DEE  
Why didn't somebody tell me?

MISS PAULINE  
It wasn't your concern.

DEE DEE  
(barely controlling voice)  
This IS my concern.

MISS PAULINE  
I don't think anybody particularly  
wanted to keep it a secret, Dee Dee.  
Just wasn't anybody else's business  
'cept tween Connie and Kenneth.

DEE DEE  
He could have arranged it so that it  
would've come back to me someday.

MISS P.  
(dryly)  
Maybe he figured giving you the actual  
sale barn was enough.  
(sighs)  
They say it's a rough old business  
being a parent. You just can't win.

DEE DEE  
Do you know how hard this has been for  
Chuck to give it back?

MISS PAULINE  
(glancing at DEE DEE)  
'Bout as hard as it was for you to  
take it, I imagine.  
(sighs)  
I have a difficult time seeing Chuck  
covered in cow manure and castrating  
yearlings. He doesn't want any part of  
this outfit anymore'n you want to go  
to Paris and be a painter.

DEE DEE  
I'm not so sure you're right about  
that.

MISS PAULINE  
(rising from her desk,  
stretches)  
Welp ... I learned a lo-o-ong time ago  
you can't make nobody do nothing.

(looks at DEE DEE, shakes  
head)

But you can sure as hell worry 'em to  
damn death trying.

(DEE DEE and MISS PAULINE both share a laugh. DEE DEE looks at  
CHUCK.)

DEE DEE

How long's he gonna be out like that?

MISS PAULINE

(shrugs)

I slept for three days once.

DEE DEE

When?

MISS PAULINE

Summer I took the choir to that  
revival up in Lubbock. I got real  
depressed about the quality of my  
soprano section as usual, next thing I  
knew I'd come down with the flu. I  
just went on back to the Best Western  
and crawled into bed with a diet root  
beer, a TV Guide and three libriums  
under my tongue. Woke up Monday after  
the revival was over ... never felt  
better in my life.

DEE DEE

Didn't anybody get worried? Nobody  
try to find you?

MISS PAULINE

They found me alright. Somebody  
managed to throw an overcoat over me  
and haul me down down to the church.  
They claim I stood right up in front  
of the pulpit and sang "ON THE WINGS  
OF A SNOW WHITE DOVE" followed by "I  
GOT A GAL IN KALAMAZOO". Apparently  
there wasn't a dry eye in the house  
when I finished.

DEE DEE

And you don't remember any of this?

MISS PAULINE

Honey, if I hadn't seen my picture in  
the Lubbock paper the next day -

"Choir Director Serenades Migrant  
Workers in Midnight Roadside  
Songfest."

(BEAT)

Well, that was the last time I ever  
took three libriums at one sitting.

DEE DEE

(looks at CHUCK)

You sure he's gonna pull outta this?

MISS PAULINE

He'll be fine. One won't hurt him.

(DEE DEE sits beside MISS PAULINE)

DEE DEE

You know I don't think I've ever seen  
you drink before.

(MISS PAULINE pours herself and DEE DEE another glass.)

MISS PAULINE

This is hard for a good Baptist to  
say, but once in awhile you just gotta  
get all wound up and blow a little  
wind out the back door. Works better  
than prayer sometimes.

(MISS PAULINE places her hand over DEE DEE's.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Do you mind me talking like this? I  
know I must sound terribly coarse but  
it's this old Bourbon making me do it.  
No telling what I'm liable to say  
next.

(After a brief pause, MISS PAULINE blurts out)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

Penis!

(MISS PAULINE and DEE DEE collapse in laughter. CHUCK starts to  
stir and DEE DEE "Sh-h-h-h's" MISS P.)

DEE DEE

We'll wake him.

MISS PAULINE

Sorry. Oh Lord, I'm probably going to  
hell just as sure as the world. I

hope I at least regret this in the morning - that'll make me feel better.

(More laughter.)

DEE DEE

Stop! I can't drink and laugh at the same time. I'll get the hiccups.

MISS PAULINE

(wiping eyes)

Oh Dee Dee, one time when me and your Mama were in high school we got Bosier Petrie to buy us each a bottle of cherry brandy ...

DEE DEE

Bosier Petrie the undertaker?

MISS PAULINE

Honey, he was good looking once upon a time, drove a red studebaker convertible, had wavy hair just like Rory Calhoun. Oh he was something else.

DEE DEE

No!

MISS PAULINE

((dryly))

Course none of us knew he just liked boys back then, but he was always real sweet to us younger girls.

(More laughter. MISS PAULINE drains her glass.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

(wipes her glasses)

I guess ...in spite of everything ... there were a lot of good memories. That's worth something.

(DEE DEE looks at MISS PAULINE)

DEE DEE

Pauline.

(MISS PAULINE puts on her glasses quickly, stares at DEE DEE.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Can I call you just ... Pauline?

(MISS PAULINE takes DEE DEE's hand.)

MISS PAULINE  
I think that'd be real nice. Just  
like we were old friends.

DEE DEE  
We are.

MISS PAULINE  
You bet we are.

DEE DEE  
(thinking)  
What do you think I should do?

MISS PAULINE  
What do you mean?

DEE DEE  
I'm not so sure I know what it is I  
want anymore ... What's really  
important.  
(BEAT)  
Why do I feel this way? I know it's  
wrong.

MISS PAULINE  
What's wrong, Dee Dee?

DEE DEE  
Oh God ...  
(motioning towards CHUCK)  
... It could never work out ... could  
it?

MISS PAULINE  
What about Noyes?

DEE DEE  
(nervous)  
You see ... I do like Noyes. How do  
you know you love someone, anyway?  
Buttons pop, doors open, candles light  
mysteriously in the dark? How do you  
know?

MISS PAULINE  
You may be asking the worst possible  
person honey. I was in love with the  
same man my whole life. I couldn't

begin to tell you what its like for  
other people.

DEE DEE

No. I just want to know about you.

MISS PAULINE

I guess I knew when I finally realized  
I couldn't have him and it didn't  
change things. And I went on feeling  
the way I felt - in a slightly  
different way - that I loved this man  
very much.

(thinking)

Well ... maybe it was a good thing he  
couldn't love me back ... I kinda like  
who I am today.

DEE DEE

Maybe you were the luckiest one of  
all.

(MISS PAULINE stares at DEE DEE for a moment, then bursts out  
laughing. She holds her glass up to toast her.)

MISS PAULINE

Maybe!

(laughs)

Maybe you're right Dee Dee. Maybe  
Kenneth and Connie are looking down  
from heaven right now saying,

(toasts)

"Here's to Pauline. At least someone  
really knew what they wanted out of  
life!"

(choking laughter)

It's too funny. Pauline Spears, the  
biggest success of all.

(MISS PAULINE continues to laugh. CHUCK stirs in his chair. DEE  
DEE goes to him.)

DEE DEE

Chuck, how are you feeling?

CHUCK

(groggy)

What day is it?

DEE DEE

It's still Sunday - it's dark already.  
You really slept hard.

CHUCK

(holding head)

Mmmmm! Take a couple of those babies  
you could sleep through a nuclear war.

MISS PAULINE

(very merry)

That's what I carry em for. A-bombs  
comin' my way - I'm gonna crawl into  
bed with a Tab and three libriums.  
They can have at it boy!

(CHUCK starts to rise.)

DEE DEE

You better not get up just yet.

CHUCK

(dizzy)

Ohhhhh. I'm trying to remember the  
last three days. It's a little  
blurred.

DEE DEE

(glancing at PAULINE)

That seems to be one of the side  
affects.

(MISS PAULINE sits on her desk, starts to click her heels. She  
points to her pink sling-backs.)

MISS PAULINE

(giggles)

Hey! Did I ever tell ya'll about  
these shoes I'm wearing? Ya'll  
probably think I don't know better  
than to wear pink sling-backs and a  
black dress to a funeral. Well ...

(big laugh)

... you see ...

(laughter)

... Connie had this dream ...

(gasping)

... she was going to New York one day  
and ...

(tries to catch her breath)

Aw nuts!

(MISS PAULINE hops off the desk, grabs the bourbon bottle and  
heads toward the door. She stops and turns.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)

You know the great thing about New York? It's always there ... waiting! You're never too old for New York City.

(MISS PAULINE starts to dance out the door.)

DEE DEE  
Where you going?

MISS PAULINE  
I'm gonna be down in the snack bar practicing my mambo.  
(turns to them)  
Hey!  
(BEAT)  
Do ya'll think I'm crazy?

(No answer. She laughs slamming the door.)

MISS PAULINE (CONT'D)  
Good!

(Exits. CHUCK stares at DEE DEE puzzled.)

CHUCK  
I know I must have missed something.

DEE DEE  
All I said was that the way things ended up between Mama and Daddy and her, she was probably the luckiest one of all.  
(BEAT)  
Seems to have amused her.

(CHUCK sits up straight.)

CHUCK  
(groaning)  
Oh boy.

DEE DEE  
Let me get you a glass of water, just sit still for a minute.

(DEE DEE goes to the water cooler.)

CHUCK  
What happened to Noyes? He out heating up the branding irons?

DEE DEE

He sort of left in a hurry ... right  
after you kissed me.

CHUCK

(staring at DEE DEE)

Kissed you?

(realizing)

I did kiss you ... in front of Noyes.

(DEE DEE hands him the glass of water, sits beside him.)

DEE DEE

Mr. Flournoy the lawyer called while  
you were asleep. Everything's done -  
just waiting for you to sign.

CHUCK

Oh - well I can do that first thing in  
the morning then.

DEE DEE

You know, you really shouldn't be  
signing those papers if you don't want  
to.

CHUCK

Why?

DEE DEE

(struggling)

Because it belongs to you. It does  
... and ... I don't need it.

CHUCK

I thought you ...

DEE DEE

(interrupting)

I do. I mean, I just don't want you  
doing this because of some ... I don't  
know, guilt for Connie's sake or  
something like that.

CHUCK

I thought I was doing it for you.

DEE DEE

If you mean that, if you really mean  
that ... I'd like to ask a favor.

CHUCK

What is it?

DEE DEE  
Give it to Pauline.

CHUCK  
You're serious?

DEE DEE  
(nods)  
Yes. That's who it really belongs to.

CHUCK  
(looking at DEE DEE)  
Ok. If that's what you want.

DEE DEE  
(thinking)  
I ... I've decided to make Pauline my partner here. I mean she is my closest relative and all. She taught me practically everything I know. What it would do, see, is free me up so I don't ... have to be here all the time. I'd have more time to, you know - "go places". What do you think of that?

(CHUCK smiles at DEE DEE)

CHUCK  
(hesitant)  
Sounds ... great.

DEE DEE  
Great but - not wonderful.

CHUCK  
(sighs, shaking head)  
Dee Dee - you're such an extraordinary, bright young woman ...

DEE DEE  
(grimacing)  
Please! I've already won the Kiwanis "Young Business Person of the Year" Award.

(Beat)  
Look, I think I'm ... attracted to you. And it scares me.

(after a BEAT, CHUCK stands, avoiding her statement)

CHUCK

You're mother would be so proud to see  
what you've accomplished ...

DEE DEE

Chuck ...

CHUCK

You're everything she tried to be, but  
wouldn't let herself.

(turning to DEE DEE)

I can't replace Connie. I'm sorry. I  
don't want to - yet.

(BEAT)

Dee Dee - coming here, meeting you,  
seeing this place - I never realized  
... She's still here, isn't she?

DEE DEE

(sadly)

They're both here - "The Kenneth and  
Connie Prison"

(looking around room)

Same desk, same rug - same sad paint  
on the wall.

(stares at CHUCK, emotional)

Who would I be if I wasn't the "Keeper  
of the Flame"?

CHUCK

You might want to open those jail  
doors one day. They've served their  
time.

DEE DEE

Connie got it right for once. She  
really did.

(shakes head)

Damn, why did it have to be you?

CHUCK

Me?

DEE DEE

I feel like I'm always growing up in  
front of the people I want to be the  
most grown up in front of.

CHUCK

(Placing hand behind DEE  
DEE'S neck)

Words of advise? Watch out for  
grownup.

(CHUCK slowly draws DEE DEE next to him and they embrace. After  
a BEAT, DEE DEE speaks, fighting tears.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)  
Where are you off to next?

CHUCK  
Back to Italy in a week. Pick up  
where I left. Fast moving world, isn't  
it?

DEE DEE  
Import-export ... that's the ticket.

(CHUCK releases DEE DEE. Gazing at her one last time.)

CHUCK  
I'll sign those papers first thing in  
the morning. There's a flight back to  
New York tomorrow afternoon I can  
catch. Will you say goodbye to Miss  
Pauline and Noyes for me? Oh, and  
tell Noyes I'm sorry for calling him  
an ignorant redneck. He's actually a  
brilliant redneck.

DEE DEE  
I wonder if we'll see each other  
again?

CHUCK  
I'd like that - I really would.

DEE DEE  
Keep sending postcards, huh?

CHUCK  
(smiles)  
"Your adoring stepfather, love Chuck."

(CHUCK gives a small wave, then exits. DEE DEE stares at the  
door.)

DEE DEE  
(to herself)  
Love ... Dee Dee.

(DEE DEE walks to the window overlooking the stockyards.  
Grabbing some tissues off the table, she turns on the radio. A

western-swing ballad is playing. She blows her nose. Turns off the radio. She sees something out the window. Picks up the P.A., echoes.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Norberto, Faustino ...

(waves)

... Hey ... Listen, make sure those bulls in number 10 have enough hay, will ya.

(BEAT)

And go home ... it's Sunday night for God's sake ... go be with your families. *Buenas noches*.

(waves again)

*Manana*.

(DEE DEE sits. Silence. She stares around the empty, lifeless office. After a moment she lays her forehead on the desk and covers her head. Another moment passes and NOYES enters the room in jeans and a fresh shirt. He's carrying a large, beat-up old suitcase. He sets it down with a thud.)

NOYES

I want my pay for the last two weeks. And I want my sick leave and vacation coming to me for the past three years and eleven months.

DEE DEE

(raising her head)

What are you talking about?

NOYES

I want my pay. I'm quittin'.

DEE DEE

Quittin'? Why?

NOYES

'Cause life's too short and I don't want to wake up one day and find out it's passed me by. I want to make something of myself. I want to be a success.

DEE DEE

You'll be one!

NOYES

Course I will ... in this two-tick  
little town. I want to know if I can  
make it just as big somewhere else.

DEE DEE

Where you going?

NOYES

Aruba.

DEE DEE

Aruba! Where's that?

NOYES

I don't know - but I got a job there.

DEE DEE

Doing what?

NOYES

I'm gonna tend bar at a place called  
be the "Med Club."

DEE DEE

(totally confused)

What?

NOYES

It's a resort for Doctors.

DEE DEE

The "Med Club"?

NOYES

You remember Billy Keelahar - his  
Daddy taught math in high school?

(DEE DEE nods)

NOYES (CONT'D)

He met some old boy at college that  
knew somebody spent last winter down  
there teaching a bunch of New Yorkers  
how to ride horses. Hell, he made all  
kinds of money off those Yankees.  
They're looking for some more people  
to work the horse barn and learn the  
"hospitality profession".

DEE DEE

(shocked)

I never knew you were interested in  
... "hospitality?"

NOYES

There's a whole lot about me Dee Dee  
you don't know about - never cared to  
know neither.

DEE DEE

You're right Noyes - I don't know you  
like I should.

NOYES

Well, just give me my money. I don't  
want to have to look at Chuck buddy's  
refined features again 'fore I leave.

DEE DEE

He's gone.

NOYES

Oh yeah? Gone to get another deed? A  
marriage license maybe? Just gimme my  
money, Ok?

DEE DEE

He's going back to New York, then  
Italy, then ... who knows?

NOYES

Without you?

DEE DEE

(shrugs)

That's the import/export business.  
Here today, gone tomorrow. Not like  
running an old cow barn is it?

NOYES

No.

(clears throat)

Well if you'd just give me my money  
I'd like to get as much driving done  
as I can tonight. I'm catching a  
flight outta Dallas tomorrow.

DEE DEE

Sure.

(DEE DEE pulls out a money box from her desk.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

I don't remember exactly how much it  
is we owe you Noyes.

NOYES

(quietly)

Three hundred and eighty five dollars  
and forty six cents. You can forget  
the sick leave and vacation.

DEE DEE

No you earned it - it's yours.

(DEE DEE starts to figure with a calculator.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

I'm just not real good about figuring  
accrued time and all that. Pauline  
always ... Pauline ...

(looks at NOYES)

How long you plan on being gone?

(DEE DEE immediately starts to write letter while listening to  
NOYES.)

NOYES

(shrugs)

I don't know. It ... it may not be  
what I really want. I just gotta find  
out. Man's gotta stretch himself a  
little if he's ever gonna amount to  
anything.

DEE DEE

You wouldn't want to throw away  
everything you've worked for here - in  
case the hospitality business doesn't  
suit you.

NOYES

Daddy said he'd look after things for  
me.

DEE DEE

How does three weeks paid vacation  
sound?

NOYES

Sounds alright - how do you figure?

DEE DEE

I can't. We probably owe you three  
months vacation.

(smiles)  
Hell ... neither of us has ever taken  
a day off.

NOYES  
Yeah - it's a shame. Both of us gonna  
be old 'fore we're young.

DEE DEE  
Yeah, pitiful.

(DEE DEE smiles at NOYES. After a moment they both speak  
simultaneously.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)  
Why don't I come with you?

NOYES  
Why don't you come with me?

(They both laugh, excited. DEE DEE continues scribbling note.)

NOYES  
(grinning)  
Damn! Who's gonna run this place?

DEE DEE  
Pauline. I've made her my business  
partner, didn't I tell you ...  
(suddenly realizing)  
Oh shit! I haven't even told her.

(She scoops a handful of money from the cashbox and hands it to  
NOYES.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)  
Here. Just take it. That ought to be  
enough to get us to ... where we going  
again?

NOYES  
"Haruba" - hell, I don't know what  
it's called - some place off the  
coast of New York's all I know.  
(looking at money)  
Dang, Miss P's gonna have herself a  
wall-eyed fit when she finds this  
missing.

DEE DEE  
She's the one that told me you gotta  
get wound up every once in a while and

blow a little wind out the back door,  
and Noyes - there's no better time for  
blowin' in the wind. There.

(DEE DEE tears out the message and goes to place it on PAULINE's  
desk.)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)  
I'll just leave her this note.

NOYES  
(takes DEE DEE's shoulders)  
Dee Dee.  
(BEAT)  
I have to tell you something.

DEE DEE  
(looks at NOYES, concerned)  
What?

NOYES  
No matter what else I feel about you.  
(embarrassed)  
You're the best friend I ever had. I  
want you to know that.

(DEE DEE brushes his cheek with her hand.)

DEE DEE  
You too. I guess we managed to do  
something right, huh?

NOYES  
Dee Dee - are you ever gonna marry me?

DEE DEE  
(exasperated)  
There you go again! How should I  
know? It's a big world out there. I  
got a lot of things to do 'fore I  
think about settling down and raisin'  
a bunch of spittin' up babies.  
(sly)  
Sides - some of us don't have to keep  
making the same mistakes over and  
over.

PAULINE  
(miffed)  
Maybe I'll just ask Sharon Thaner to  
marry me.

DEE DEE

(snorts)

Good luck, "Miss-holier-than-thou,"  
hypocrite, fatty-ass. Hell, I'll ask  
her for you!

NOYES

You know you're 'bout one of the most  
onery, stubborn, fractious cusses God  
ever put on earth.

DEE DEE

(smiling)

Idn't it great. Give me the keys, I'm  
driving.

NOYES

It's my truck.

DEE DEE

I get bored sitting.

NOYES

(grinning)

You can knit.

DEE DEE

(irate)

Knit? Give me those keys 'fore I  
knock the fire outta you.

NOYES

They're in the truck ... I'll race  
you.

(NOYES runs out of the room with his suitcase. DEE DEE stops to  
take off her heels, turns off the lights, grabs her purse.)

DEE DEE

Noyes, you know I can't run in high  
heels.

(shouting)

I've got the gas cards!

NOYES

(offstage)

I've got the money!

DEE DEE

*Chinga Cabron!*

(DEE DEE starts her exit then stops and stares back at the empty office. She slowly smiles to herself, then pushes the office door ajar and departs -- leaving the door to the "Connie and Kenneth Prison" wide open in her wake.)

(Spot on radio as we hear the dial tuning in station. Up on ghostly rendition of Glenn Miller's, "I'VE GOT A GAL IN KALAMAZOO". Fade to dark. Music up, CURTAIN.)

**THE END**