

ELAIN. Carnelle? Good; not here. (*She looks around the empty dressing room then goes and sits down at the dressing table. She gazes at her face in the mirror. She straightens her hair.*) You're not yourself today. Not yourself.

DELMOUNT'S VOICE. Carnelle! Carnelle, you here? Honey? (*He enters L. and spots Elain.*) Oh. Has Carnelle come back yet?

ELAIN. I don't know. I haven't seen her since she ran off and hid after the parade.

DELMOUNT. Think she'll be all right?

ELAIN. I doubt it.

DELMOUNT. Lord, you waiting here for her?

ELAIN. No. I just came by to get my dress. (*She rises and starts gathering up the red dress.*) I don't think she's that interested in seeing me. Looks like she doesn't admire me so much anymore.

DELMOUNT. I don't understand you. I know you're probably a kind person. You gave Popeye your earrings; you have a need to be excited by life. So why do you go back to being what Mama wanted? You know she was mean!

ELAIN. (*Turning to him angrily.*) Yes, I know she was mean and you know it too. So why do you straighten your wild hair? Why do you have horrible, sickening dreams about pieces of women's bodies? Some all beautiful; some all mutilated and bloody! I hate those dreams. I wish you didn't tell me about them. They scare me.

DELMOUNT. I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

ELAIN. It's okay.

DELMOUNT. I—I don't have those dreams anymore. I've stopped having them.

ELAIN. You have?

DELMOUNT. Yes.

ELAIN. Well, good. That's good. Do you want some wine?

DELMOUNT. Sure. Give me some wine. (*She hands him the bottle—he takes a drink. He hands the bottle back to her—she takes a long drink.*)

ELAIN. You know about those earrings I gave Popeye . . .

DELMOUNT. Yeah?

ELAIN. I hated the damn things. They pinched my ears. I was glad to get rid of them.

DELMOUNT. (*After a moment.*) Swayne.



ELAIN. What?

DELMOUNT. You're incredible.

ELAIN. Well, you've always forgiven me.

DELMOUNT. Yeah. I always have.

ELAIN. So I better be going.

DELMOUNT. Where're you going?

ELAIN. (*Referring to the red dress.*) To take this out to the car. Then on out to have some real fun before I drop dead off this planet. I've got myself a date for the fireworks. I'm meeting him in the grove down under the wisteria trees.

DELMOUNT. Well, Honey, I hope you have yourself a real good ole time.

ELAIN. Don't you worry. I'm gonna be a reckless girl at least once in my dreary, dreary life. Bye, bye now. (*She leaves the dressing room. He follows her to the doorway.*)

DELMOUNT. Bye.

ELAIN. (*As she exits down R., carrying the red dress.*) Be seeing you!

DELMOUNT. Bye. (*He stands looking after her. Popeye enters L. from the dressing room. She wears binoculars around her neck and is eating peanuts from a sack. Turning to see her.*) Popeye—

POPEYE. Hi.

DELMOUNT. Hello.

POPEYE. Is Carnelle come back?

DELMOUNT. No. I'm waiting here for her.

POPEYE. Oh.

DELMOUNT. I'd like to see her.

POPEYE. Yeah.

DELMOUNT. Course, I'm not even sure if she's coming back here or what.

POPEYE. Oh. (*Uneasy, she starts to leave.*)

DELMOUNT. Would you like to wait here too?

POPEYE. (*Stopping.*) Sure. Alright. Peanut?

DELMOUNT. Thanks. (*A pause.*) So you'll be leaving Brookhaven?

POPEYE. I reckon.

DELMOUNT. It's funny cause I'm leaving here too.

POPEYE. You is? Where was you planning to go?

DELMOUNT. I thought I'd be going to New Orleans—get back to the University and learn to be a philosopher. That way,



after I have time to study and think it all through, I'll be able to let everyone know why we're living. It'll be a great relief . . . I believe. And where are you going to go?

POPEYE. Well, I don't know the particulars. But I heard a this place name of Elysian fields.

DELMOUNT. Elysian fields?

POPEYE. Right. See, they got this ambrosia t'eat and wine and honey t'drink and all sorts of people carrying on. Do you know what state it's located in?

DELMOUNT. It— isn't in a state.

POPEYE. It ain't?

DELMOUNT. No. It isn't even in the world. It's— it's fictional. It's a made up place. Why it's only in books and stories.

POPEYE. Oh. Well, shoot. Guess I won't be going there.

*(Tessy enters L. into the dressing room. She is wearing a big straw hat.)*

TESSY. Oh, Delmount!! Are you here? Delmount?! *(She steps from the dressing room to the outside area.)* Oh, there you are! *(Looking at her watch.)* Right on the nose! You punctual thing! Do you like this hat?

DELMOUNT. It becomes you.

TESSY. Isn't he sweet. Well, do come on. Well. Tell your friend good-bye and let's head to the fireworks.

DELMOUNT. Ah, Tessy . . .

TESSY. Yes?

DELMOUNT. Well, I—I can't go with you to the fireworks.

TESSY. Oh, you can't?

DELMOUNT. No, I—I promised Popeye I'd go with her. I'm sorry. I tried to tell you this afternoon.

TESSY. I see. I see. I try to turn the other cheek and you slap it too. You're ungrateful and unworthy and low and dirty and mean! Why, I'm never gonna forgive you again! Never! I hope you rot in H!! *(She exits down R.)*

DELMOUNT. Brother.

POPEYE. Why did you lie t'her?

DELMOUNT. Huh?

POPEYE. You told her you was promised t'go t'the fireworks with me.

DELMOUNT. Oh. Well, I just didn't want to go out to the fireworks with her and . . . And you can't go around obliging other people in this world.



POPEYE. Oh.

DELMOUNT. Of course I do want to go watch the fireworks. They always have a nice, colorful display. You weren't planning to—I don't know, go to the fireworks yourself?

POPEYE. Sure. It's why I brung my binoculars. Had me a place picked out and everything.

DELMOUNT. Oh. Hmm. Well, I guess you . . .

POPEYE. Huh?

DELMOUNT. No, nothing. I'll be seeing you. Bye. (*He exits down R. Popeye sits on the bench and stares ahead. She reaches into her peanut bag. There are none left.*)

POPEYE. (*Miserably.*) Guess that's the last of em. (*Delmount reappears abruptly from D.R.*)

DELMOUNT. Popeye would you mind going to watch the fireworks with me tonight?

POPEYE. No. I wouldn't. Sure. Alright.

DELMOUNT. (*Overlapping.*) Good. Good then. Good. Let's go! (*They exit D.R. The stage is empty for a moment before Carnelle sneaks on from under the tent. She is wearing a short trench coat over her red bathing suit. She looks around, sees no one and heads into the dressing room. Mac Sam suddenly appears out of the darkness.*)

MAC SAM. Hey! Red! Where ya going?

CARNELLE. Mac Sam! Dammit! I didn't want anyone to see me.

MAC SAM. Well, I saw ya. How ya been?

CARNELLE. Oh, alright.

MAC SAM. Hey, you sure blew up this afternoon.

CARNELLE. I know it.

MAC SAM. Well, you really did explode.

CARNELLE. I know. I'd never been so mad as I was. And I spit out at everyone. I just spit at them Oh! That's so awful it's almost funny!

MAC SAM. Hell, it was the best part of it!

CARNELLE. Oh, I don't know. I better get my stuff out of here.

MAC SAM. You know, I went looking for you after the parade. Where'd you get off to?

CARNELLE. Oh, nowhere. Just out walking by the railroad tracks.

MAC SAM. What were you doing down there?