

FADE IN:

EXT. DELTA TERMINAL - KENNEDY AIRPORT - DAY

On a taxi arriving at the Delta terminal of Kennedy Airport. A man in a well-tailored gray suit gets out of the taxi.

CUT TO a CLOSER SHOT of the man as he pays the cabbie. He is WILLCOX HILLYER, the middle-aged "Buddy" of this story and the observer through whose eyes it is seen. He has a dry, ironic, rather agreeable manner and he should seem like everyone's idea of a successful author, a slightly graying, trim, still-youthful-looking fifty. The CAMERA follows him as he walks into the terminal carrying a small travel bag.

INT. DELTA TERMINAL - KENNEDY AIRPORT - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Willcox Hillyer at a counter getting his ticket processed. A little smile is on his face as he talks to a pretty airline girl. This character likes girls; his aloofness is modified, his face changes when he talks to them. The airline girl smiles back, she finds him attractive. We don't hear what they are saying, no dialogue on track -- it is obvious he is flirting with the girl in a mild way, but now a frown comes on his face and he turns his head as if slightly annoyed by something.

CUT TO a POV shot of a tall, gaunt, almost totally bald man at the next ticket counter. The man is about sixty-five and looks like a half senile Great Dane. He is DAVE WILKIE, erstwhile husband of the heroine of this story. Age has not been at all kind to Dave; his face is lined with bitterness, he is a sour, angry, lonely man and now he is making a very unpleasant scene with a ticket girl and an airline representative, waving his ticket and gesticulating angrily. He wears an expensive, ill-fitting suit and a Texas-type hat. We don't hear his angry complaints, no dialogue is on the track.

CUT BACK to a CLOSE SHOT of Willcox Hillyer as he stares with a frown at the man. It's as if he knows the man but can't place him. The airline ticket girl speaks to him and he turns back to her, his face softening as he answers her, obviously saying he'll carry his bag. He nods goodbye to the girl, turns and the CAMERA follows him as he walks some distance away and stops, looks back with another pensive frown at the tall, gaunt man at the next counter.

CUT TO ANOTHER POV shot of Dave Wilkie, a longer shot than

the first. The man is now arguing angrily with two airline representatives, still waving his ticket and shaking his head. We don't hear him. Lip-readers might pick up what he is saying: "I'm supposed to be in first class, not tourist. What's the matter with this friggin' airline?"

CUT BACK TO Willcox Hillyer, a CLOSE SHOT of his face as he rubs his chin and frowns obviously struggling to remember the man. The CAMERA holds on him as he stares at the gaunt angry Dave, racking his brain. He shakes his head, he cannot place the man and yet he knows him. The CAMERA moves in closer on Willcox Hillyer's face as he stares in pensive puzzlement at this ghost from the past and now we hear, as if from a distance, FAINT MUSIC on the track -- it is "Dixie," played with beautiful lazy mocking love by the great Louis Armstrong in his prime. At first we can barely hear it, then the MUSIC becomes LOUDER as Hillyer's frown deepens and he seems almost to know the man.

MAIN TITLE (SUPERIMPOSED): "RAMBLING ROSE"

The MUSIC remains a bit in the distance, but it can be heard.

OTHER TITLES (SUPERIMPOSED): over the following action.

VARIOUS SHOTS, on Willcox Hillyer. He gives up his effort to recognize the strangely familiar Dave with a little shrug, turns and walks away with his travel bag.

INT. DELTA TERMINAL - LOUNGE - DAY

We see him entering the departure lounge and boarding the plane.

INT. DELTA AIRPLANE - DAY

A shot of him as he smiles rather nicely at a very attractive young stewardess as he walks down the aisle of the plane. He is not a crass or lewd flirt, but life comes into his face when he sees a pretty girl -- he seems to have a real affection for girls: toward men he is polite but rather dry and ironic, almost aloof, but girls he likes. We see him sit in a seat, open his travel bag and take out long galley sheets. He stares for a moment rather wearily at the galleys, then sighs, puts on reading glasses and begins to make corrections as boarding passengers walk by in the aisle.

Something or someone disturbs him, he looks up with a slight frown and CUT TO a POV shot of Dave Wilkie, all wonder and enthusiasm. This OVER the TITLES and we do not hear the dialogue they speak, what we heard is LOUIS ARMSTRONG, but I

will put the dialogue in here so the actors can act it. We do not want to hear it, the sense of what they are saying will be obvious from the acting.

DAVE WILKIE

(not on track)

Buddd-dee! My God, if it ain't
Buddy! Well, if this ain't the
darnest thing!

ANOTHER ANGLE, on them both as Dave blocks the aisle, an idiot false-toothed grin on his face. Hillyer has a pained embarrassed smile.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(not on track)

Excuse me... your voice is familiar
and I'm sure I know you from
somewhere...

DAVE WILKIE

(not on track, with
delighted injury)

Awww-rr, Buddy, come on, you know
me!

WILLCOX HILLYER

(not on track)

Well, I... I... ah-h, let's see...

DAVE WILKIE

(not on track)

It's Dave Wilkie! I'm Dave Wilkie,
don't you remember me?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(not on track)

Oh. Oh, God. Of course, Dave, how
are you?

The men shake hands, Dave enthusiastically, Hillyer less so. We see Dave stow his suitcase and take the seat next to Hillyer.

EXT. KENNEDY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of a big Delta jet making its final taxiing turn and ROARING into a take-off.

INT. KENNEDY - DAY

CUT TO a dramatic underbelly shot of the jet going up.

END OF TITLES.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DELTA AIRPLANE - DAY

A shot of the attractive, young stewardess, harried as she fixes drinks.

INT. DELTA AIRPLANE - DAY

CUT TO Dave and Willcox Hillyer as the young stewardess gives them drinks. Dave bestows a sour glance on her when he sees the single drink, but at the moment he is in the midst of an aggressively self-satisfied conversation and says nothing to her. He speaks to Hillyer, who is making a real effort to be polite but is less than happy about the encounter.

DAVE WILKIE

Well, I am in the construction business, Buddy, and without braggin' I have done real good at it.

(with a meaningful
bitterness)

There are those who wouldn't have expected that out of me.

(pauses as if waiting for
a reaction, but Hillyer
is very silent)

Right now I'm buildin' a giant motel unit near Alexandria, outside Washington, D.C. Not fi-nance, I'm on the construction side.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(making polite talk)

Well, that's interesting, Dave. I always liked Washington, it's a pretty town.

DAVE WILKIE

Oh, it's all right, beats Jew York. But the niggers have took it over, just like every other city we got, only worse.

Hillyer gives a barely perceptible wince at this speech, but Dave doesn't notice, he goes on with aggressive self

satisfaction after a swallow of whiskey.

DAVE WILKIE (CONT'D)

But I have done real good in the construction field. What I don't know about buildin' ain't worth knowin'. I knocked off twenty-eight thousand smackeroos last year, how's that for an old country boy?

Dave pauses, realizes this might not impress; glances down with curiosity at the galley sheets, then an unpleasant smile.

DAVE WILKIE (CONT'D)

Ha ha, course you make a lot more.
(points at the galleys)
What's that you got there, Buddy?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(reluctantly)
Galley proof.

DAVE WILKIE

Galley what?

WILLCOX HILLYER

Page proof of a book I'm working on.

DAVE WILKIE

How about that. Well, you always were a screwball.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(lifts an eyebrow in mild irony)
Oh, yeah?

DAVE WILKIE

(unfazed)
I don't mean that the way it sounds.
(stares at galleys as if rattlesnake)
Imagine it, a book. And I used to know you personal way back when.
(pauses, then earnestly)
Tell me something, Buddy, how do you dream up all that stuff?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(absolutely straight)

Well, actually, we have a little black boy named Her---t who lives in the garage. He does it for me.

DAVE WILKIE

(for a moment half

believes it, then a slow, stupid grin)

Heh heh heh heh, same old Buddy, always jokin' around. Almost as much of a joker as your Daddy.

(drains his drink, grimaces; a heavy drinker, Dave)

I saw your Daddy a coupla years ago, I was up in Glenville lookin' at a motel site. I guess that's where you're headed, huh, to see him?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(stares out of plane window)

That's right, Dave, I'm headed for Glenville on a whisperin' jet.

DAVE WILKIE

(suddenly calls out)

Hey, girl! Hey, you, give us another drink!

(to Hillyer, sullenly)

Dumb little bitch, supposed to give us two in the first place.

Willcox Hillyer listens with a pained half smile, a hand at his temple.

DAVE WILKIE (CONT'D)

This friggin' airline's out of its mind.

(a martyr)

The sons of bitches tried to put me in tourist.

(portentuously philosophical)

But our whole civilization is screwed up, Buddy. The heebies and the coconuts have took it over and ruined it.

Willcox Hillyer half closes his eyes in weariness, but says nothing. Gently, he rubs his temple. It is plain Dave Wilkie gives him a headache.

INT. DELTA AIRPLANE

ANOTHER ANGLE, on the pretty young stewardess as she brings two more drinks. Dave stares sourly at her, wholly unmoved by her charm.

DAVE WILKIE

Took your time gettin' here.

WILLCOX HILLYER

She has other things to do, Dave.

Willcox smiles apologetically at girl.

DAVE WILKIE

Supposed to get two drinks in the first place. This friggin' airline can't do nothin' right.

The stewardess purses her lips at Dave, who is bowed over his drink busy opening it. Hillyer lifts an eyebrow at the girl as if to say, "Don't blame me because of this damned idiot," and she half smiles at him.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(obviously getting him off subject)

Tell me about that job in Alexandria, Dave, the big motel you're building.

DAVE WILKIE

(with pedantic exactitude, the man is a complete pain in the ass)

Near Alexandria. It isn't in Alexandria, it is outside it.

WILLCOX HILLYER

I see. Outside it.

DAVE WILKIE

That's correct -- outside it, not in it. As for the job, well, the Jewboy suppliers give me a lot of grief and we use a pile of niggers

to haul and tote and they ain't worth a sorry-ass damn.

(takes big swallow of drink)

But I can build anything, Buddy. Give me the plans and I can build a goddamn staircase to the moon. It's a fact, I can build anything...

(pauses, then bitterly)

... but she never believed that. Oh, hell, no, she never believed in me.

This is another pointed bitter reference to the unknown "she." Once again, Willcox Hillyer is deliberately unresponsive.

WILLCOX HILLYER

Um-m, well...

DAVE WILKIE

(broodingly)

Doubted my ability all along, the little bitch. I never remarried, Buddy, you know that, don't you?

WILLCOX HILLYER

Well, no, I didn't actually.

DAVE WILKIE

She's te reason -- cured me of women once and for all. Oh, I got rid of her, Buddy, I didn't waste no time kickin' that bitch out. Hell, she was screwin' everybody in Savannah. I caught her in a motel with this long tall son of a bitch and boy did I beat the everlastin' piss out of him!

Dave Wilkie's eyes narrow with vindictive anger as he says it and one can well believe the streak of raw violence in the man. It is frightening even now; he is a clown, but he is a dangerous clown. As his long, bitter, impassioned tirade continues, Willcox Hillyer becomes increasingly tense and pale -- it is obvious he detests what the man is saying and he is struggling to control himself.

Dave's tone and voice are laconically Southern, but the hatred and misery in his eyes are raw.

DAVE WILKIE (CONT'D)

She didn't marry him, though, later she married another guy and went to Winston-Salem. It didn't last. That girl couldn't have no lastin' marriage, she left him and married another dumb sucker and went out west. Little bitch left him, too, and you know what she's married to right now?

(puts a big finger on
Hillyer's chest)

A kike. That's right, some kind of kike horse doctor named Schapiro out in Seattle, who's got the nerve to have the same first name I got. Wouldn't you know it, Rose would wind up married to a goddamn kike? She was always out of her friggin' head and I'll tell you why.

(his eyes narrow and again
he puts a finger on
Hillyer's chest)

Buddy, she was sick in her mind and between her legs, too. She was a nymphomaniac.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(he has had enough; with a
pale trembling anger and
in even tone)

Dave, you are as full of shit as a Christmas turkey and you know it. Now if you want to start a fight on this plane and get yourself in jail, go right ahead. But I am telling you, you are full of shit right up to your eyeballs.

DAVE WILKIE

(with surprising mildness;
a little smile almost as
if he is pleased)

I don't want to start no fight with you, Buddy. Why do you say I'm full of shit?

WILLCOX HILLYER

Dave Schapiro is no horse doctor and Rose has been a good wife to him for a long time. To call her a

nymphomaniac is the most stupid thing I ever heard in my life.

DAVE WILKIE

(again surprisingly mild)

You loved her, didn't you. Well, so did I.

(a little shrug)

You'll have to admit she had four husbands.

WILLCOX HILLYER

Yeah, it took her a while to grow up and find Mr. Right, but she did it. She found him.

DAVE WILKIE

(another little smile)

She used to call me Mr. Right. Remember that, Buddy?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(he is pale with anger)

Yeah, I remember it.

Willcox picks up galley sheets, half turns away.

DAVE WILKIE

Well, I tell you, I don't know what the world's come to these days. Things used to be better. We didn't have any money, but things were better.

(grimaces in anger)

Goddamn niggers and kikes burning the flag, rioting, raising hell -- they ought to shoot their asses off. I tell you, Buddy, where this country made its mistake was allowing people without property to vote.

During this speech, Willcox Hillyer grits his teeth but says nothing. He keeps his eyes down on the galley sheets. As Dave shakes his head in sorrow at the state of the nation ..

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ATLANTA TERMINAL - HERTZ COUNTER - DAY

A shot of Willcox Hillyer at a Hertz Counter in the Atlanta

airport. A tense, wrought up Dave Wilkie is in the b.g. of the shot. During the following brief exchange, Hillyer is politely cool, Wilkie under a great strain.

DAVE WILKIE

(holds out hand)

Well, got to get a plane to Savannah. Great running into you, Buddy. Give my best to your Daddy.

WILLCOX HILLYER

Yeah, I'll do that, Dave.

DAVE WILKIE

(sweating, tense, under some kind of awful emotional strain)

Ah-h, if you happen to run into Rose sometime... do me a favor, give her a message for me, will you?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(a trifle wearily)

Dave, I haven't seen Rose for years.

Hillyer takes rental car papers from a pretty young HERTZ GIRL, gives the girl a little smile, picks up his travel bag. In desperation, Dave takes his arm.

DAVE WILKIE

Buddy, I'm a sick man. I had a heart attack last year, I wasn't expected to live.

Hillyer turns to Dave, puzzled and interested; Dave earnestly explains.

DAVE WILKIE (CONT'D)

You might see her. She writes your Daddy, and she and that doctor came to see him, didn't they? I wish you'd tell her something... I never could write letters.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(in a different tone, interested, curious)

What do you want me to tell her, Dave?

DAVE WILKIE

(a painful inward
struggle; the man is
tormented, miserable)

Oh, to hell with it, never mind.
Don't tell her anything. Don't even
tell her you saw me.

(half turns his back, his
face twisted with strong
emotion)

Got to run, Buddy, I'll miss my
plane.

Willcox Hillyer and the pretty young Hertz Girl stare after
Dave Wilkie as he walks away with spasm-like steps. Hillyer
seems affected, less hostile toward Dave now. He speaks half
to himself, half to the Hertz Girl.

WILLCOX HILLYER

He still loves her. The poor damn
fool still loves her.

HERTZ GIRL

Who was she?

WILLCOX HILLYER

A girl named Rose.
(pulls himself back into
the world of reality)
Still take R75 to Glenville?

HERTZ GIRL

Yes, sir.

Willcox nods thanks and walks away carrying his travel bag.

EXT. ATLANTA AIRPORT - ROAD - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the red Ford driving from the airport.

EXT. INTERSTATE 75 - DAY

A shot of the red Ford on Interstate 75, Atlanta skyline in
b.g.

EXT. GEORGIA INTERSTATE - DAY

On the red Ford as it speeds along a Georgia Interstate
through red clay hills in green springtime.

INT./EXT. CAR - GEORGIA INTERSTATE - DAY

CUT TO a shot on Willcox Hillyer CLOSE ON his face in the car. He is lost in reflection. A look of bitter sweet emotion is on his face, an expression of sadness mixed with amusement. As the CAMERA holds on his face, we hear again on the track Louis Armstrong's great version of "DIXIE," or music of comparable power, beauty and nostalgic evocation. Now the music is stronger, much stronger than behind the titles, we are beginning to hear it full force.

DISSOLVE TO:

BLURRED SCREEN FLASHBACK:

EXT. HILLYER HOME - DAY

A shot of a thirteen-year-old boy on the front porch of a house in the sleepy Depression South of many years ago. He is BUDDY, Willcox Hillyer as a boy. The MUSIC continues as he shades his eyes to look at something far away.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

CUT TO a LONG POV shot of a young and very pretty blonde girl walking slowly up an oak-shaded driveway. A ZOOMAR LENSE takes us TOWARD her. She is carrying a cardboard suitcase tied with a string. Her clothes are cheap, her shoes are dusty, runs are in her stockings. She is sweaty, tired and seems very nervous. ROSE is a very attractive girl, but her primary quality is not sexiness, but an innocence and sweetness. She pauses to wipe sweat from her forehead with the back of her hand and nervously moistens her lips as she stares ahead uncertainly at the "nice" Southern home which to her seems very grand. It is apparent she is badly frightened and apprehensive about what lies ahead. She is also exhausted from the heat and a long hot walk in the Southern sun. She blinks at perspiration, swallows in anxiety again and forces herself to walk on.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PORCH

CUT TO a shot of Buddy on the porch. Expressionless, unreadable, neither friendly nor hostile, he stares with an even gaze directly into the CAMERA. He has his hands on his hips in a distinctive way that we will later see is a mannerism of his father's.

Buddy tries to imitate the style of his father, not always with complete success. Unreadable as a Sphinx, he stands there, waiting.

EXT. HILLYER HOME PORCH - DAY

CUT TO a POV shot of Rose at the foot of the porch steps. A tentative little smile is on her face. It is very plain she is nervous and frightened.

ROSE

Hello. I'm Rose, and I've come to live with you and your family.

Silence. The damn boy says nothing. A trifle crestfallen, Rose moistens his lips and swallows. She ventures another little smile and the CAMERA follows her as she walks up the steps. The at-times-insufferable Buddy comes into the shot. He still has his hands on his hips Daddy-style and his expression is inscrutable, neither friendly nor hostile.

ROSE (CONT'D)

What's your name? What do they call you?

Finally, the boy speaks -- and he is not so bad. He's a child after all.

BUDDY

Lots of things. Buddy, mostly.

ROSE

(greatly reassured, a real smile now)

Buddy. Well, now, that's a nice name, I like it. I am real pleased to meet you.

(solemnly holds out her hand, they shake)

Hey, look, do you think you got a cold drink of ice water somewhere?

BUDDY

Sure. Let me take your suitcase.

A warm and beautiful smile comes on Rose's face and a little twinkle comes into her eyes. The innocence and sweetness are not lost, that is never lost, but this is a girl who likes boys and men.

ROSE

You're sweet.

INT. HILLYER HOME BEDROOM STUDY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Buddy's mother, Mrs. Hillyer, in a Morris chair in her bedroom study.

MOTHER is a sensitive, kind and rather appealing if slightly eccentric lady of about 37 or 38. She wears glasses, has a Victorian hairdo and a 1930ish style dress. At the moment Mother is absorbed in her studies -- notebooks and history books are littered and piled everywhere around her chair. She is drinking a Coca-Cola and smoking a cigarette held by a bobbie pin. Calmly, she glances up as Buddy enters the room. The CAMERA pulls back to include him.

BUDDY

The new girl is here.

MOTHER

Wonderful. What's she like, Brother? What is your impression of her?

BUDDY

She talks a great deal and smiles a lot. She's very pretty, she has a real good figure. She's very girlish or womanish, if you know what I mean. She wouldn't hurt anybody, this girl. She couldn't.

Mother accepts her son's precocious pronouncement as perfectly normal; talks to him as if he's an adult.

MOTHER

Your impression is very reassuring, Brother. Of course she's had troubles, poor thing, but I sensed that was that the girl was like and I'm glad to have it reconfirmed.

BUDDY

You mean confirmed, Mother. I didn't confirm it before. I would have had to confirm it previously, in order for it to be reconfirmed.

MOTHER

All right, all right. Doll and Waski are upstairs taking their nap, you go get them and bring them down to the living room. Where is the girl?

BUDDY

In the kitchen drinking all the ice water in Glenville. She walked out here, she didn't go by the hotel.

MOTHER

Walked, in all that heat? It's a wonder she hasn't got sunstroke. I'll phone Daddy and you go get Doll Baby and Waski.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM

A shot of Mother, Rose, Buddy, Doll and Waski in the living room of the Hillyer household. DOLL is a pretty little girl of about 11, WASKI a boy of 5. Mother's tone is very gentle, very sweet, very kind. Her unabashed admiration for her own children has an ingenuousness that is more amusing than offensive.

MOTHER

Rose, this is Waski. His real name is Warren but we call him Waski. He doesn't like it much and I suppose someday we'll have to stop calling him that.

WASKI

You can stop it right now.

MOTHER

When he was baby we called him "Wa Wa," a baby name, you know. You will find him a very good boy. His brother can be bad and so can his sister, but Waski is a very good boy. And as you can see he's beautiful.

WASKI

Oh, Mother, cut it out.

MOTHER

(serenely)

There are plenty of girls who would give thousands of dollars to have your auburn hair. Beauty is beauty and that's all there is to it. Beauty is there and we have to

recognize it. Now Rose, the little girl sitting across from you with the blue eyes is Doll Baby. She looks like an angel and she is an angel, but she can be a naughty angel sometimes, although her father won't believe it. Her real name is Frances, but we call her Dolly or Doll.

DOLL

I don't like that, either, it's worse than Waski. I want to be called Fran.

MOTHER

Daddy wouldn't hear that. Now the redhaired boy you see sitting there, of course you have met him, he is my oldest son and my most brilliant child. All children have great creative powers, but I don't want to rattle on about my children, they say I brag too much about them, especially about Brother. Am I boring you, Rose?

Rose has not as yet caught on to Mother's style and is staring at her with lips apart and blue eyes slightly popped.

ROSE

(feebly)

Oh, no, ma'am.

MOTHER

Well, it's rather interesting about Brother, actually. I realized the remarkable thing he had when he was six weeks old. He looked at me and understood me, he knew exactly who I was. I know it sounds crazy but it's true. He's very remarkable, he was born for the ministry and could move millions, but he doesn't know that yet. I have to warn you about him, he can be very dangerous, there is an evil streak in him, a streak of pure sheer meanness. But at heart Brother is saintly and that is why he was born for the ministry even if he doesn't know

it.

Thus, Mother. Slightly cuckoo, a bit out of touch with reality, but no fool. A very intelligent woman really, and very, very gentle and kind. Her style, however, takes a little getting used to and her long speech throws Rose completely. She stares at Mother in speechless open-mouthed awe, unable to say a word.

The CAMERA moves in CLOSER on Rose as she moistens her lips, swallows, tries to talk and can't. She is very, very nervous. Now she flinches and looks around as we hear a deep masculine VOICE OVER the shot. It is the voice of DADDY, Mr. Hillyer, Buddy's father.

DADDY'S VOICE

Honey, you'll scare the gizzard out of the girl going into the fourth dimension like that.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Daddy in the doorway of the living room. He is a handsome man of about forty with a style and a manner all his own. As extravagant as his remarks often are and funny though he is at times, the man has a courtly Southern dignity that is never lost. He is no clown, he is not even a comedian, he is a man and a formidable man at that: all the characters in this story love and fear him. We see now where Buddy got his unreadable expression thing and his hands on the hips thing. Daddy is unreadable. A straw hat is on the back of his head, a rolled-up Glenville Tribune is in his hand, his hands are on his hips. He is staring with what seems to be stern fierceness at them all, but his attitude really is inscrutable.

MOTHER

It isn't the fourth dimension. To you it's the fourth dimension, maybe, to me it's simply the truth.

DADDY

(staring fiercely at Rose)
Well, well, well. So Miss Rosebud has arrived. Un-hmm. And you're all assembled here. Yes, indeed. Un
hmmm.

Daddy walks in as Rose stares wide-eyed at him. It is obvious he scares the absolute bejesus out of her, she looks actually as if she might faint, her hands trembling on her lap and her knees quivering beneath her cheap and tacky dress. But she has a surprise coming. She is soon to lose all her fear of

him, every bit of it. Daddy walks over and sits in a chair beside her, stares fiercely at her for a moment, then begins a long speech. Again, extravagant as this speech is, he is no clown, he is not "being funny," he means every word he says.

DADDY (CONT'D)

Well, Rosebud, now you are here, darling, and I swear to God graceful as the capital letter S. You will adorn our house, Rosebud, you will give a glow and a shine to these old walls. If there's one thing I like to have around, it's a frizzy-haired blonde. Now I assume Mrs. Hillyer and the children have introduced themselves and made your acquaintance, and so forth and so on?

Rose can barely answer, eyes fixed in rapt fascination on him, a half whisper.

ROSE

Yes, sir.

DADDY

All right. Now as head of this household I have a couple of remarks to make. It is my dear wife's belief, which I accept although I do not totally grasp it, that to hire a person to do household work is a criminal practice. Therefore, you are here not as a servant, you are here as a friend, as a guest and hopefully as a member of this family. You will eat your meals with us, you will share life itself with us -- in love and harmony, dear Rosebud, in love and harmony. Do you understand me?

ROSE

(a half whisper)

Yes, sir.

Daddy pauses, then in a different tone, his hidden gentleness and kindness are much more plain; as he talks Rose's eyes begin to well with tears.

DADDY

Now, I know you've had some troubles in your life, those... scoundrels in Birmingham and so forth trying to... lead you astray. I hope you find a safe haven here, honey, I know you've had a hard time. Life can be cruel to a young girl all alone. We welcome you to our home, Rosebud, we all welcome you from the heart and hope you are happy here.

Rose bites her lip, her eyes are filled with tears; an inaudible whisper.

ROSE

Yes, sir.

INT. HILLYER HOME

VARIOUS SHOTS of Rose doing household chores: sweeping the floor, vacuuming, cooking. She is cheerful in her work, smiling, good-humored and she works hard. It is obvious she is happy. We see the children in most of these shots. It is apparent Rose is a very good worker and very happy in her new home.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Rose is washing the dishes while the children finish breakfast. Buddy looks up from this cornflakes with a slightly sly expression.

BUDDY

Rose, who were those scoundrels in Birmingham?

ROSE

Nobody.

BUDDY

But who were they?

ROSE

They were just bad men, that's all.

BUDDY

In what sense were they bad?

ROSE

Bad is bad, Buddy. There ain't no sense to it.

BUDDY

Did they try to induce you to become a prostitute?

Rose turns around, lifts her eyebrows, tosses down the dishcloth.

ROSE

I don't answer talk like that, Buddy. I just don't hear it, I turn my back and look away.

Rose turns her back on him.

BUDDY

Was that what they tried to do? Was that why Daddy gave you the job, to save you from those scoundrels?

ROSE

Your Daddy is a wonderful man, I'll say that. He's the best and most kind-hearted man in the world.

BUDDY

Hey, Rose, did you hear about that terrible thing down in Cave Springs?

ROSE

What terrible thing in Cave Springs?

BUDDY

There was this old man that ate his niece.

Rose stares emptily for a moment, then bites her lips together.

ROSE

I didn't hear you. I didn't hear that.

BUDDY

He really did, he ate his little niece. He made pork chops out of her.

ROSE

I don't hear you. I just turn my back on that kind of talk and look away.

BUDDY

Well, it's only the truth. There are horrible things in the world, Rose.

ROSE

Buddy, you are in one of your evil moods, I don't want to talk to you. I'm going out and sweep the patio.

Rose exits and the CAMERA stays on Buddy, Doll and Waski.

BUDDY

Rose is almost as sentimental as Mother. If there's one thing I can't stand it's sentimentality. In Chattanooga this man committed an almost perfect murder. He killed his wife with a black widow spider.

DOLL

Oh, shut up, Buddy.

WASKI

Yeah, shut up.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Rose on the stone patio of the Hillyer house, an attractive area with outdoor furniture and crabapple tree limbs overhead. Rose is busy sweeping. The CAMERA PANS to follow her and we pick up Mrs. Hillyer, Mother. It is a nice day and she is studying out on the patio, books and notebooks piled around. Rose glances down curiously at her.

ROSE

What are you studying now, Mrs. Hillyer?

MOTHER

More history, Rose.

ROSE

Are you going to get your degree

soon?

MOTHER

Well, I am working on my thesis.

ROSE

(as she busily sweeps)

It must be wonderful to be so smart. I don't see how you do it, reading all those books, learning all that stuff.

MOTHER

(looks up, and gently)

Rose, you work too hard. Why don't you go sit down somewhere and drink a Co-Cola?

ROSE

(smiles, trusts and knows Mother now, not at all afraid of her)

You're so sweet.

Rose again busily sweeps.

MOTHER

Really, why don't you go sit down somewhere?

ROSE

I like to work. I don't mind work. It's the least I can do after all you and Mr. Hillyer have done for me.

(stares worshipfully at Mother)

You're so sweet. There never was nobody like you.

MOTHER

(gently)

Well, you run on now.

ROSE

Yes, Ma'am.

Exit Rose. Mother adjusts her notebook and turns the page of a history book as she resumes her studies. We hear the sound of an approaching CAR and she glances up.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of a slightly worn-out 1932 Model-A Ford as it rolls up the driveway of the Hillyer home, Daddy at the wheel.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

ANOTHER ANGLE, on Daddy as he gets out of the Model-A. He has his usual straw hat on the back of his head. The CAMERA FOLLOWS him as he walks onto the patio.

DADDY

Good morning, sweetheart. Beautiful day.

MOTHER

Yes, it's so nice I thought I'd work outside.

DADDY

How goes it, darlin'?

MOTHER

Slow, hon. But at least I can concentrate now that Rose is here.

DADDY

What do you think of her, honey?

Mother doesn't answer, she writes on, head bowed over her notebook. We see in this shot the hearing aid she wears and hear from it a faint BUZZ.

DADDY (CONT'D)

Turn up your hearing aid.

MOTHER

What?

DADDY

Your hearing aid, it's buzzing at me like a snake.

MOTHER

(adjusts hearing aid)
Oh. Did you say something?

DADDY

I asked you what you think of Rosebud, now that she's been here a

while.

MOTHER

Honey, she's perfect. She works all the time and she's wonderful with the children. And they love her, even Brother likes her though he won't admit it. I think she's just perfect.

DADDY

Um-hmm. Almost too perfect.

MOTHER

And she's such a good-hearted thing, there isn't an ounce of harm or malice in her.

DADDY

Well, I'll admit I don't see any flies on her yet.

MOTHER

There are no flies on Rose, I don't know what you're talking about.

DADDY

Well, she must have done something to encourage those scoundrels in Birmingham, even if she did run away from them.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Buddy in the window of the kitchen. He is propped on his elbows and listening with keen interest to the talk on the patio. We hear the VOICES of his parents OVER the shot.

MOTHER'S VOICE

If you mean... boys and men, I don't think so. Rose seems very calm about all of that.

DADDY'S VOICE

Well, so far I have to agree. She seems calm as lettuce.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Buddy as he draws back into the kitchen. We see Doll and Waski playing a game on the kitchen table.

BUDDY

Daddy says Rose is calm as lettuce.
Do you believe that, Doll?

DOLL

No.

WASKI

Neither do I.

BUDDY

Oh, Waski, you don't even know what
we're talking about.

WASKI

I do, too.

Buddy turns, looks back out the window.

EXT. HILLYER SOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO Mother and Daddy on the patio. Daddy stands up.

DADDY

Well, let's hope for the best,
darlin'.

MOTHER

Hope for the best? I don't
understand all this skepticism. I
thought you liked Rose.

DADDY

I love Rosebud, I am wild about
Rosebud. I just hope she doesn't
turn out to be a hidden hotcha
character, that's all. We have
growing children in the house.

MOTHER

Hotcha character. If I had to live
with your cynicism, I wouldn't want
to live at all. What you can't
understand is that the creative
forces of the universe are
positive, not negative.

DADDY

(gently, his irony is
mild)
All right, darlin', don't go off

into the fourth dimension.

MOTHER

I'm not in the fourth dimension --
(points a finger at him)
-- you are in the fourth dimension,
when you allow skepticism and doubt
to take control. As Blake said, if
God had doubt the sun would go out.

DADDY

(again gentle irony,
always courtly toward
her)
Forgive my crudity, darlin'. I
don't understand these deeper
things the way you do.

MOTHER

(reaches up, takes his
hand)
Be nice to Rose. She's never had a
real home.

DADDY

You're a wonderful woman, darlin'.
As long as you're around, I'm sure
the sun wouldn't dare go out.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll and Waski in the kitchen.
Doll and Waski are playing parchesi on the kitchen table.
Buddy turns from eavesdropping at the window and strolls
across the kitchen, hands in his khaki pants.

BUDDY

It's pitiful. Neither one of them
know.

DOLL

(as she shakes dice)
I think Daddy suspects.

BUDDY

No, he doesn't. Not really.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Buddy as he goes to the hall door,
carefully opens it to make no noise and peers down the hall.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - DAY

CUT TO a POV shot of Rose busy dusting hall furniture, humming as she works. We hear on the track the SOUND of the Model-A starting, and Rose freezes. Then, quickly, Rose hurries down the hall toward the front door.

ON Buddy as he watches her through a crack in the door. He has his hands on his hips Daddy-style and his face is expressionless.

ANOTHER ANGLE, POV of Buddy but CLOSER on Rose at the end of the hall. She is staring soulfully through the glass of the front door as we hear the Model-A go down the driveway. Rose lifts a hand between her breasts, sighs. A lovesick expression is on her face.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

ON Buddy, as he comes back into the kitchen sadly shaking his head.

BUDDY

It's really pitiful. She's in bad shape.

DOLL

She's watching the car again?

BUDDY

Yeah.

DOLL

I get so irritated with Daddy. He's so dumb sometimes.

WASKI

Yeah, I know.

BUDDY

Oh, Waski, you don't know anything.

WASKI

I do, too!

BUDDY

All right, what do you know?

WASKI

Rose is madly in love with Daddy...

DOLL

(pauses, then solemnly)
Well, don't tell Mother.

WASKI
Do you think I'm crazy?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A shot of the family at dinner in the dining room at night. Daddy is at the head of the table, Mother is at the other end.

Buddy, Doll and Waski are all seated in neat, nice clothes, hands washed and hair combed. Rose is serving, but a place is set for her. She wears an attractive little apron and is smiling, blushing, happy as Daddy teases and jokes at her.

DADDY
(in a good humor)
Rosebaby Blossom, these are the most delicious candied yams I ever ate! Why, they just melt in my mouth. And this fried chicken is fit for a king. How do you do it, Peachbird? What is the secret of your art, Plum Blossom, huh?

ROSE
(blushing, smiling)
Oh, I don't know, I... I...

DADDY
Rosebird Baby, you are the light of my life, darlin'. How did we ever get by without you?

ROSE
(stares at him, stricken)
I... I'll get the grits.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Rose as she exits, and STOPS on Buddy and Doll. Buddy slews his eyes toward his sister, who meets his gaze for a moment then looks down at her plate. The CAMERA MOVES on to Mother, who is utterly oblivious of anything going on between Rose and Daddy.

MOTHER
Rose does have a gift for cooking. She learns so fast, but mainly I

think it's that she tries so hard.

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

ANOTHER ANGLE, on the family as they eat dinner. Rose is seated at the table now. She is picking lifelessly at her food and glancing from time to time with a lovesick expression at Daddy, who is busy eating and seems wholly unaware of it. Mother also is wholly unaware, but all the children know what is happening. Rose takes a gravy for a biscuit and spills a little, her hand is trembling.

MOTHER

(gently, suspects
absolutely nothing)

Rose, you're in an awful dither tonight. What's the matter with you, honey, are you sick or something?

ROSE

(in a feeble voice)
No, ma'am, I'm just fine.

MOTHER

You look sick if you ask me. I hate to leave you with the dishes and all, but I'm supposed to go to a meeting of the Garden Club this evening.

(to Daddy)
I'll need the car keys.

DADDY

I'll drive you, darlin'. You've got no business behind the wheel of an automobile. You don't think about what you're doing and you'll run into a telephone pole.

MOTHER

I think about what I'm doing all the time, and I've got as much business behind the wheel of an automobile as anybody. Besides, I want you to stay and help Rose with the dishes, the poor girl isn't feeling well.

DADDY

All right, darlin'.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

A shot of Daddy alone in the dining room, reading a newspaper and drinking coffee. Rose comes INTO THE PICTURE, gets dishes as she clears the table. She stares with a lovesick expression at Daddy, who is absorbed in paper.

DADDY

(to himself, mostly)

Hmmp. Did you realize there are a thousand Coca-Cola millionaires in Atlanta?

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll tiptoeing down the darkened hall toward the front door. We hear the MODEL-A going down the drive. They peer out of the glass of the front door. They whisper.

BUDDY

There goes Mother.

DOLL

Yeah.

BUDDY

Let's go peep from the living room.

DOLL

Okay.

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The CAMERA FOLLOWS them as they tiptoe into the darkened living room. They go over to the sliding doors and silently struggle for the best peeping spot. Buddy gets up high, Doll down low, at the crack in the doors through which light shines.

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a POV shot of the dining room, as seen by children. Daddy sits absorbed in his paper, oblivious of Rose. She is staring down at him with a pale look of love.

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a CLOSE-UP of Buddy and Doll, their heads together. They whisper.

DOLL

I think she's gonna kiss him.

BUDDY

At least.

INT. HILLYER HOME DINING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a POV shot of Daddy and Rose, as seen by children. The table now is cleared and Rose stands half behind Daddy, staring down at him with a stricken expression.

DADDY

(half to himself)

Ehh, Lord, should have bought that stock when we had some money. A thousand millionaires.

Rose suddenly makes up her mind, places her hand on his shoulder, turns sideways, sits down on his lap, puts an arm around his neck.

ROSE

Oh, oh! Oh, Mr. Hillyer, I love you, I love you so much! I've tried, but I can't help it! Please kiss me -- will you kiss me?

For a long time Daddy stares groggily at her with a half frown as if he can't believe it. In order to stare at her, he must tilt his head back and, handsome man though he is, he looks a bit like a startled rooster. Her breasts are pressed against him, and her eager-pink lips are waiting for a kiss.

DADDY

(finally clears his throat)

Ahh-hem! Now, Rose, get off my lap. What are you doing, girl? Are you crazy?

ROSE

Yes, crazy about you! Kiss me, Mr. Hillyer!

DADDY

Why, I'm not going to kiss you, you crazy girl. Now I'm telling you

again, get off my lap. Come on,
Rose, get up. Now you get up, I
say, and stop this!

ROSE

No, no! You don't understand, I
love you! It's real love and I
can't help it! Please kiss me, Mr.
Hillyer, I love you, I love you so
much...

Rose breaks down and begins crying, her head on his shoulder.
She has her arms wound tight around him and Daddy seems at a
loss what to do.

DADDY

(in a shaken voice)

All right, all right. Now calm
down, Rose, the children will hear
you. Calm down, let's talk... about
this thing, let's discuss it.

ROSE

(sobbing)

Don't make me... me... me... get
up!

DADDY

Calm down, Rose, let's calm down
and discuss it ...

INT. HILLYER HOKE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll. Doll is down near the floor
and can't see as well. They whisper.

DOLL

I can't see. What are they doing,
what's happening?

BUDDY

They're discussing it.

DOLL

I can't see, let me see...

Doll tries to rise up and Buddy puts a hand on her head and
shoves her down.

BUDDY

This is my place and you can't have

it.

DOLL

(a whispered moan of
frustration)

Ohhh-hh... what's happening now?

BUDDY

(his eyes open wide)

He's trying to get up -- good God,
one of her titties is out!

DOLL

Let me see!

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a POV shot of Daddy and Rose, as he struggles to rise from the chair. They are half falling to the floor and now they fall, Rose still on his lap. One of her breasts has come out of her dress, which is very loose and low-cut. She has no bra, the breast is bare. Daddy is staring groggily at the breast as if slightly dazed.

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT BACK TO Buddy and Doll. Buddy is frustrated now.

BUDDY

Now I can't see. What are they
doing?

DOLL

(happy, peeping through
crack)

Boy! Wow!

Buddy groans and peers intently through crack.

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A POV shot of scene as observed by Buddy. He is up too high, the dining table blocks his view. We see the lower half of Rose and Daddy. Rose's skirt is up well above her knees.

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll.

DOLL

Wow! Brrrother!

BUDDY

What are they doing?

DOLL

Buddy, this is amazing, you wouldn't believe it.

BUDDY

What are they doing, Doll?

DOLL

(staring, enthralled)
He kissed her.

BUDDY

Is that all?

DOLL

(happily, enjoying it)
He had his hand on her titty.

BUDDY

Let me look.
(can't stand it, grabs her
around waist and pulls
her away; eagerly looks,
sags)
Aww-rr...

CUT TO a POV shot of the scene in the dining room.

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

DOWN LOW, we can see under the dining room table now. Daddy has his hands on Rose's shoulders and is firmly pushing her away.

DADDY

All right, that is enough of this nonsense, and I mean enough! Get up off this floor, Rose, and put your damned tit back in your dress! Do you hear me, girl, get up off of that floor!

Rose, on all fours, blonde hair over her face, making little whimpering noises of dismay:

ROSE

Ohh-hhh... ohh...

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO Buddy and Doll.

BUDDY

(disappointed)

She's putting the titty back.

DOLL

(a furious whisper)

Buddy, that was my place.

Doll forces her way in and they both peep through crack in door.

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a POV shot of Rose and Daddy. Rose stands sheepishly by the dining room table, half-crying as she adjusts her dress. Daddy sits in his dining room chair. Daddy is glaring at her.

DADDY

Goddamn you, girl! You've made me make a fool out of myself, damn your hide, but let me tell you I am standing at the pass of Thermopylae and I won't budge! The very idea, my own home with children in the house, to say nothing of my wife -- oh-h, you had better believe I am standing at Thermopylae, you little nut, you had better believe it! What are you, crazy? A man is supposed to be a fool like this, but a woman is supposed to have some control and sense! Are you a nitwit? What's the matter with you?

ROSE

(weeping)

Oh-h, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Mr. Hillyer... I just... couldn't help myself. I'm sorry...

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll as they peep at the door. Doll whispers angrily at him.

DOLL

Buddy, that was pretty snotty of you, pushing me away like that just when it was interesting.

BUDDY

You shouldn't watch such things, Doll.

They continue to peep with interest through the crack in the doors.

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Rose and Daddy. Now Rose is sitting penitent and crying in one of Daddy's handkerchiefs. Daddy's anger is gone, he has gotten control of himself and speaks to her now in a different tone.

He sits beside her, an arm around her shoulders in a fatherly way.

DADDY

Rose, Rose, Rose, you poor miserable little child, don't you know I love you? Do I have to put my hand on your body or kiss your pretty lips to prove it? You are beautiful to me, Rose, I've loved you since you first came here, darlin'. And don't you know Mrs. Hillyer loves you, too, that she's already taken you into her heart, and that that woman's heart is as wide as the blue sky itself and as deep as the stars?

ROSE

(weeping in handkerchief)
Oh, I know. She's so sweet, she's been so good to me...

DADDY

Do you know what a friend you have got there? Do you know she would fight for you like a tiger, that she would fly to your defense in an instant with all the courage in her soul if anyone tried to hurt you? Is this any way to repay her trust and love? Are you ashamed as I am

ashamed?

(pauses as Rose sobs in
handkerchief)

Don't cry, honey, don't cry. But
let me warn you, damn your hide,
this is Thermopylae and I am
standing here. Do you hear me, damn
you. I am standing at Thermopylae
and the Persians shall not pass!
Now get your tail out of here and
go wash those dishes, and stop
crying!

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO Buddy and Doll in the darkened living room. He
gestures that they'd better leave, and they do. The CAMERA
FOLLOWS them as they tiptoe out of the living room.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT STAIRS - NIGHT

ANOTHER ANGLE, on Buddy and Doll as they tiptoe up the front
stairs.

INT. HILLYER HOME - TOP OF STAIRS - NIGHT

ON Buddy and Doll at the top of the stairs. They pause to
talk and now they don't have to whisper. Doll is happy,
pleased.

DOLL

Wasn't Daddy wonderful? He wanted
to kiss her some more and play with
her, but he didn't, because he
loves Mother and all of us, and he
loves Rose, too. Isn't he
wonderful, isn't he great?

BUDDY

(dryly, aloof; he doesn't
mean this really)
Wonderful? He kissed her and played
with her titty, and I don't see
anything so great about that. He
was probably afraid Mother would
come back early and catch him.

DOLL

You know, Buddy, sometimes you make
me sick.

Doll gives him a venomous glance and walks away. The CAMERA STAYS on Buddy as he stares after her with a thin little smile. He seems wryly amused that he has made her angry. After a moment, he turns and stares in the direction of downstairs and his face changes. His smile fades, then slowly returns as he thinks of what has happened.

BUDDY

(quietly, to himself)

Thermopylae. The Persians shall not pass.

It is obvious that secretly Buddy admires very much his father's behavior.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A shot of Buddy at night in his small bedroom.

He wears a rather skimpy old-fashioned nightshirt that comes midway between his hips and knees. At the moment he is finishing brushing his teeth at the bureau, using an old fashioned water pitcher and bowl. The CAMERA FOLLOWS as he walks across the room in the light of the lamp by his bed. He looks around cautiously, then picks up the mattress of his bed. He pushes it far back and we see springs. He takes out a small "book" or pamphlet and stares gravely at it.

CLOSE-UP: The front cover of the pamphlet. We see the overall title: LITTLE DIRTY COMIC BOOKS. And beneath it: BLONDIE AND DAGWOOD. And beneath that, in smaller letters: "Mr. Dithers Comes to Dinner -- and How!" We see Buddy's hands in the shot, and he opens the pamphlet and we catch enough of a glimpse of the thing to know it is pretty awful -- a drawing maybe of "Blondie" stark naked with a finger in her mouth going, "Tee-Hee!"

ON Buddy, as he stares down with grave intentness at the Little Dirty Comic Book. Slyly now, he retraces his steps to the bureau and takes out a flashlight. He goes back to the bed, switches off the lamp, gets in the bed and turns on the flashlight and pulls the covers over his head. We hear a faint SOUND on the track and Buddy suddenly yanks back the covers, puts the flashlight on the table by the bed and throws the Little Dirty Comic Book under the bed. He lies on pillow and pretends he's asleep, and we hear the door of his room OPEN and a CREAKING on the floor.

ANOTHER ANGLE, on a weepy Rose in a very thin nightgown. The

shot is FROM BELOW as Buddy might see her as she stands over his bed. She looks very lonely and unhappy and is half crying.

ROSE

Buddy... are you asleep?

ANOTHER ANGLE, on both of them. Buddy stares at her in surprise. It is dim in the room, but we can see them in the moonlight.

BUDDY

No, I'm awake. What's the matter?

ROSE

Buddy, I am wandering in a wilderness, lost.

(sits glumly on edge of bed)

I just feel awful. Do you mind if I get in bed with you for a little while?

BUDDY

Well, all right.

ANOTHER ANGLE, on Rose and Buddy in the bed in the moonlight. It is all innocent enough, Buddy is a child and Rose obviously has no lewd intent in getting into his bed. She lies back on a pillow staring up at the ceiling and smoking a cigarette.

ROSE

I thought I'd go crazy back there in that room all by myself with nobody to talk to. As a child, I never had no room all to myself, we were awful poor. Buddy... I have got a confession to make.

BUDDY

What is it, Rose?

ROSE

It's so terrible I can't tell you. Oh, Buddy, you don't know how it hurts to have a broken heart, what a terrible feeling it is, and I've had a broken heart so many times. Men, I don't understand them, I can't figure them out and they

break my heart, that's all. I can't find Mr. Right, Buddy, I can't find him no matter how hard I look, all I find is a whole pile of Mr. Wrongs. But this is the worst ever because it wasn't his fault. It was my fault, oh yes, my fault, I was bad -- oh God, I was bad, you wouldn't believe how bad I was.

BUDDY

(a little smile)
What'd you do, Rose?

ROSE

Buddy, I was horrible. I can't tell you who it was, but do you know what I did? I sat on his lap and got ahold of him and wiggled and wiggled my ass on him and was worse'n you could know, a child like you. Why, I let one of my tits fall out deliberate on purpose and practically smack him in the face with it and I let my dern skirt come up so he could see my drawers...

(pauses, realizes this
isn't too dignified)

But to get back serious to what I was sayin', it is not only, Buddy, the loss of him but my own bad behavior what bothers me so...

BUDDY

You were pretty bad, huh?

ROSE

Why, it has just made me ill, Buddy. I'm sick. I don't want to eat nothin', I don't, and me I got a good appetite, that ain't nat'ral for me. I'm ill.

BUDDY

(slyly, pretends he
doesn't know)
But, Rose, what is the cause of it all?

ROSE

Promise not to tell Doll? -- or nobody? Buddy, it's your Daddy! I'm so much in love with him I am out of my mind!

BUDDY

But, Rose, how could such a thing as that happen?

ROSE

I fell madly in love with him when he called me Rosebud. You know that first day when I come and he said I looked graceful like a capital letter S and called me Rosebud? I fell madly in love with that man right then.

(sighs tragically)

But it's a lost love, Buddy. He's a good man and won't have nothin' to do with me.

ANOTHER ANGLE, on Rose and Buddy in the bed. Buddy has propped on an elbow and is staring down at her breasts in the moonlight -- we see the soft notch between her breasts in the open V of her thin nightgown. She is completely unself-conscious with him.

BUDDY

(casually)

Can I touch you here?

Before she can answer, he touches her breast with his finger through her nightgown.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Hmmm, it's soft. It's awful soft.

ROSE

(casually, doesn't object)

What did you expect?

BUDDY

Well, I thought they were more like a cantaloupe.

ROSE

Ha ha ha, that's some idea, a cantaloupe.

BUDDY

(touches her breast more
boldly, his hand outside
the nightgown)
There's some kind of gristle in it,
though.

ROSE
Buddy, quit that, you're just a
child, you're not supposed to be
interested in such things.

BUDDY
Actually, I am, though.

ROSE
(dreamily, thinking of
Daddy as she smokes
cigarette and stares up
at the ceiling)
You know, that Daddy of yours is
the funniest man, the things he
says, you never know what's going
to come out of his mouth next.

BUDDY
Can I put my hand inside your
nightgown, Rose?

ROSE
No, you can't. And I'll tell you
this -- he scares me. As kind as he
is, he scares me. You can't fool
around with him, not with that man.
And, boy, I sure better not try
nothin' like that with him again,
he'll fire me.

BUDDY
Rose, can't I see what the nipple
on it is like?

ROSE
(frowns)
Buddy, what's come over you? A
child like you, askin' such things.

BUDDY
But I'm curious, Rose.

Puts his hand in her nightgown.

ROSE

Buddy, get your hand offa me! Quit it, get you hand away...

Takes his wrist.

BUDDY

Just for a second. Please, Rose, what's the harm?

ROSE

(gently)

Buddy, you don't realize it but what you're doing isn't nice.

BUDDY

Aw, come on, Rose, I want to see what the nipple on it is like.

ROSE

You don't need to know that. It's none of your business.

BUDDY

Aw, be a good sport, Rose.

(sweetly, almost sugarily)

You like me, don't you? I like you a lot.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Mother's bedroom-study in the moonlight. We see Daddy lying wide-awake in a single bed staring broodingly out into space. Mother lies asleep in a big four poster in the background of the shot. Daddy sighs wearily to himself in the grip of "insomnia in reverse."

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT BACK to Buddy and Rose in bed. He has evidently sweet talked her into letting him fiddle with her; his hand is in her nightgown. There is no indication of lewd interest on Rose's part, a peeved and exasperated look is on her face. Buddy seems quite fascinated, however.

ROSE

Well, are you satisfied now? Can we just lie and talk, huh?

BUDDY

Hmmph. It has a nipple, all right.

ROSE

'Course it does.

BUDDY

First I couldn't feel it, but now I feel it easily, it's like a little acorn.

ROSE

(moistens her lips,
swallows; it is affecting
her; she frowns)

All right, that's enough.

(firmly pushes his hand
away)

You're just a child and wouldn't understand it, but that type of thing can stir a girl up. Now lie back and we'll talk.

BUDDY

That was very interesting. Thank you, Rose.

ROSE

(lighting cigarette)

Don't mention it.

BUDDY

(pensively, with the
solemn pedanticness of a
precocious child)

It was softer'n I thought, that was my main impression. You know, if you hit a girl there it would hurt her a lot.

ROSE

Who would want to do such a thing as that?

BUDDY

Well, some fiend might.

ROSE

(stares wonderingly at
him)

You know, Buddy, sometimes I can't figure you out at all. You can be very nice, but like your mother

said there's an evil streak in you.

BUDDY

There's an evil streak in everybody, Rose.

ROSE

There ain't none in your Daddy. You know, what happened has just made me love him all the more. I not only love him, I respect him, I admire him.

BUDDY

Rose, I have a serious favor to ask you.

ROSE

Most men wouldn't do what he done. If they can get a girl they go right ahead and get her -- I guess to hell they do, just like a dern rabbit. 'Course later they'll tell her she's no good when they done the same thing their selves. They're a bunch of monkeys. I like 'em, but they're a bunch of monkeys.

BUDDY

(trying to be casual)

Rose, since you're here in bed with me and everything and I've already touched your titty...

Can't quite say it; leans over and whispers in her ear and we don't hear what he says.

ROSE

(her eyes open wide as he whispers)

Why, Buddy, shut your mouth! What an awful thing to say, and where did you get any such idea as that, anyhow?

BUDDY

I'm curious to see what it's like. I'm very curious, Rose.

ROSE

Well, now that is just too bad!
Curiosity killed the cat.

BUDDY

Yeah, but satisfaction brought him
back. Can I?

ROSE

No! You ought to be ashamed of
yourself astin' such a nasty things
a child your age!

BUDDY

Can't I touch it a little, Rose --
not a lot, just a little?

ROSE

Of course you can't! I'm... I'm
shocked at you, Buddy, real
shocked! Now you be quiet or I'm
going back to my own bed!

BUDDY

Please, Rose. I'm curious, that's
all, I have a natural curiosity,
it's only human. You're my friend,
aren't you? Don't you like me?

(again sweetly, almost
sugarily)

I like you, Rose, a lot -- in fact,
I love you.

ROSE

(softens despite herself)

Well, you're sweet, but you don't
really love me.

BUDDY

Yes, I do. Please, Rose, be a good
sport.

ROSE

Buddy, you're just a child.

BUDDY

I'm thirteen. And I have a natural
curiosity. It's only nature, Rose,
that's all. Now what's wrong with
nature, huh?

ROSE

Well, nothin'.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy sitting on the edge of his bed in pajamas. He looks frowzle-haired and glum. The CAMERA FOLLOWS him as he wearily gets up and walks across the bedroom in the moonlight and takes a package of cigarettes from a bureau. He glances over his shoulder as we hear Mother.

MOTHER

What's the matter, hon? Is anything wrong?

DADDY

No, darlin'. Just that damnable insomnia in reverse. I sleep like a baby for an hour then I'm wide awake. You go back to sleep.

Daddy lights a cigarette and walks to the window and stares out at the moonlit night.

The CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER on his face and we see a weariness and strain he has not shown before.

DADDY

The Depression has got me. That miserable hotel, no money anywhere, strong men out of work, children hungry. It's a great life if you don't weaken.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A shot close on Rose and Buddy in bed. Evidently Rose has weakened and is allowing him to fiddle with her, but we can only surmise this, the shot is on their heads and shoulders and a cloud has crossed the moon, the light is more dim. A different look is on her face, a solemn expression as if she is listening to some far away sound that she finds strangely haunting. She moistens her lips, speaks in a slightly feeble voice.

ROSE

You better quit that.

BUDDY

But Rose...

ROSE

I must be outta my mind. Buddy,
quit it.

BUDDY

Am I hurting you?

ROSE

(pauses, stares off as if
listening, then in an
even feebler tone, a half
whisper)

No. No, you're not hurting me.
(moistens her lips,
swallows)
But I think you better quit it.

BUDDY

But why, if I'm not hurting you?

ROSE

You wouldn't understand.
(puts a hand on his
shoulder as if to push
him away, but can't; puts
her other hand over her
eyes)
Oh, God, I must be outta my mind.
What would your Momma think?

The hand falls limply from Rose's eyes and she turns her head to the side and closes her eyes. Helplessly, she lies there as the boy fiddles with her.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy walking down the downstairs hall in a bathrobe and slippers. He looks very frowzled and sleepy.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

ON Daddy as he walks into the kitchen, turns on the light. He goes to the ice box, an old-fashioned type made of wood that takes cakes of ice. He pours out a glass of milk.

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a very CLOSE SHOT on Rose's face. The light is dim but we see perspiration on her forehead. Her breathing is not normal. Her eyes are shut tight, her teeth are clenched.

CUT TO a shot CLOSE on Buddy. We do not see what he is doing, but evidently he is fiddling with her. He seems quite interested in the proceedings.

BUDDY

Rose, beyond a doubt this is the most fascinating experience of my life.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy in the kitchen as he sits rather gloomily at the kitchen table drinking the glass Of milk.

DADDY

(to himself)

Ehh-hh, Lord, man born of woman hath few days and they are full of trouble.

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot close on Rose ai Buddy in the bed. The shot is of their heads and shoulders.

She has an arm very tight around his shoulders and her eyes are shut tight. The moment of truth is at hand.

ROSE

Ohh-hh! Ohhh-hh!

(it's all over; she twists sideways, puts both arms around him)

Oh, Buddy, you're so sweet. I love you a lot.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy as he washes out the glass in the sink.

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Rose and Buddy in the bed. The extremity of her crime has dawned on Rose and she is sitting up in the bed with a look of horror on her face. Buddy is staring worriedly at her.

BUDDY

Rose, are you all right? Are you sick or something?

ROSE

(staring off in space,
lost in horror)

No. No, I'm all right.

(turns, stares at him,
puts a hand in woe on her
forehead)

Oh, God, what have I done? I have
robbed a cradle and fallen into
hell!

(fumbles desperately on
bed for cigarettes)

I must be crazy, a child like you.

Oh, God, oh, Lord. This is awful,
this is terrible, I gotta get outta
here!

ANOTHER ANGLE, on Rose and Buddy as Rose in a panic gets out
of the bed, pulls down her thin nightgown and tiptoes toward
the door. She stops and looks back as a chilling thought
occurs to her.

ROSE

Buddy, you wouldn't tell nobody,
would you?

BUDDY

(a trifle too piously)

Don't worry, Rose, I won't tell a
soul.

ROSE

I sure hope you don't.

(still in a panic)

I gotta get outta here, good night.

BUDDY

(sweetly)

Good night, Rose.

INT. HILLYER SOME - UPSTAIRS HALL AND DOWNSTAIRS HALL

CUT TO a shot of Daddy walking down the downstairs hall in
his bathrobe. The shot is down the staircase and Rose in the
upstairs hall tiptoes into the picture. A floorboard creaks
and he looks up and sees her.

DADDY

Rose, what are you doing up?

ROSE

Nothin', just goin' to the
bathroom.

DADDY

Is anything wrong?

ROSE

No, sir.

DADDY

Well, good night.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Rose in the upstairs hall. Fortunately for her the light is dim. Her knees are shaking beneath the nightgown, she looks as if she might faint.

ROSE

Good night.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS her as she goes on shaky legs down the hall.

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Rose as she enters her small bedroom. Feebly, as if totally exhausted, she shuts the door behind her then leans against a bureau and states into its mirror. The horror of her own criminality has overwhelmed her. With trembling hands, she takes a cigarette from her half empty pack and finds a wooden kitchen match on the bureau. Her hands tremble visibly as she strikes the match. She has not turned on the light in her room and her considerable charms are very apparent in the orange glow of the match. Burning match in her fingers, she stares at her own reflection in the bureau mirror, transfixed by a horrible realization.

INT. HILLYER HOME - DREAM - CELLAR

QUICK DISSOLVE TO BLURRED SCREEN: the border of the screen is blurred, we are obviously seeing a nightmare fantasy. The shot is of an eager, excited, diabolically mischievous Buddy and an astonished, awed DOLL. They are in some far dark recess of the cellar of the house and the scene is furtive, murky, cobwebby.

BUDDY

Wait till you hear what happened!
Now you wont believe this, Doll,
but Rose came in my room and got in

my bed last night...

ANOTHER ANGLE on Buddy from below with candlelight giving his child's face a sinister look. Now he has "Dracula" teeth and evil arched eyebrows.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

... and she sweated and snorted like a horse and had a horrible fit, her eyebrows were all scrunched up and she groaned like she was eying and foamed at the mouth!

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Rose standing horrified before the mirror. The match is still burning in her fingers.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM/STUDY

A shot of Mother in her study, a worried Doll stands before her. The border of the screen is blurred, it is another flash of fantasy.

MOTHER

Yes, dear, what is it?

DOLL

Mother, Buddy says Rose got in his bed last night and he fiddled with her and she snorted and had a fit -- and he says I would too if I was grown-up. Is it true, Mother -- would I sweat and snort and froth at the mouth and have a horrible fit like he says?

Mother stares in consternation at Doll.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

A shot of Daddy and Rose on the front porch of the house. The scene is murky, dark, gloomy night and the weather is bad. Daddy has his arm rigidly thrust outward as he points down the driveway. A weeping, slumped Rose sadly walks down the steps carrying her cardboard suitcase. Fantasy.

DADDY

Out! Out, you viper in the grass!
Out! Never darken our doorstep, you
immoral, terrible girl!

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT BACK to Rose standing before the mirror, sick with
horror. A feeble whimper-like groan comes from her.

ROSE

Ohh-hh, ohhh-hh...
(match burns her fingers,
she shakes it out)
Ouch! Oh-hh... ohh...

ANOTHER ANGLE on Rose as she turns from the bureau and stares
off into space, a very badly frightened girl. Half-crying,
she speaks to herself.

ROSE (CONT'D)

He'll tell 'em for sure, he will.
Oh, Lord, what can I do?

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy half asleep in bed. The light of the
lamp by his bed goes on and he sleepily opens his eyes. The
CAMERA COMES BACK and we see Rose in her nightgown standing
by his bedside. She is very pale and tears are on her cheeks.

ROSE

I hate to turn on this light, you
Daddy's awake downstairs, but I
have to take the chance.
(sits by him on bed)
Buddy, please don't tell on me.

BUDDY

(rather coolly)
I said I wouldn't.

ROSE

(her lip trembles)
Buddy, I have to ask you, as bad as
I've been please have pity on me
and don't ruin me by telling them
what I did. I know it was bad, it
was bad and dumb. But mostly it was
dumb, I didn't mean you no harm,

I'd never want to hurt a hair on your head and that's the truth. I love you. But they'd think I did, they'd think I was awful, they'd despise me and hate me...

Rose bows her head and begins crying into her hands.

CUT TO a CLOSE SHOT of Buddy. We hear the soft sound of Rose weeping over the shot. Buddy is affected, his flinty child's heart has been touched, but he is not quite ready to admit it yet. He is struggling with himself, trying to remain "cool" and not show his emotion. He frowns, moistens his lips, swallows. With seeming coolness, very much as in the scene with Doll in which he deprecated Daddy's stand at Thermopylae, he shrugs.

BUDDY

Well, I don't know what you're worried about. It was my idea, I was the one who thought of it, not you.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK to include Rose. She is staring at the boy with hopeless despair.

ROSE

You don't understand. They'd blame me, not you. And they'd think I was awful, a disgustin' girl, which I am, but Buddy, please don't tell them. Please don't. Ill have to go and I love it here, I love your whole fam'ly, your Daddy, your Mother...

(pauses, then makes her final and ultimate plea in a shaking voice as tears run down)

Buddy, I know I'm no good, I'm a bad girl but I can't help it, please have pity on me and don't tell! Please don't, please...

Too much for Buddy, he loses his "cool." He swallows and blinks as if he might cry, then sits erect in the bed and squares his shoulders and assumes a stern expression Daddy style.

BUDDY

(very solemnly)

Rose, they could stick splinters under my fingernails, and I will never say a word! I will never tell them, because... I love you!

ROSE

(sees that he means it, smiles in relief and throws her arms around him)

Oh, Buddy, you do love me! I knew you did, knew it all the time...

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy, lying in bed and staring up sleeplessly at the ceiling. Insomnia in reverse has got him.

DADDY

(a half whisper to himself)

Ehh-hh, Lord... great life if you don't weaken.

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Rose and Buddy. Rose is sitting on the bed beside him and she has dried her tears and got herself in hand.

ROSE

Well, Ill tell you this. I have learned a lesson tonight. I wasn't gonna run around, but when I start botherin' your Daddy and worse robbin' a cradle, I gotta face the facts of life.

(pauses, then with firm resolution)

Tomorrow mornin', I'm gonna get myself up and go out.

BUDDY

(a wee mite puzzled)

You're going to get yourself up and go out?

ROSE

Buddy, Mr. Right is out there somewhere and I'm gonna find him!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

A shot of a coolly angry Mother in the kitchen. It is late morning. As she talks the CAMERA PULLS BACK to show a sheepish Buddy standing "on the carpet before her. The other children, Doll and Waski, are seated at the kitchen table having hamburgers for lunch. They are happily smiling with schadenfreude amusement at their brother's discomfiture.

MOTHER

Brother, when I have to wake you up at eleven o'clock in the morning you're either sick or you were up very late last night.

(points a finger at him)

And you weren't reading Huckleberry Finn. I looked and its not in your room. Now what were you doing?

BUDDY

(sheepish)

Mother, I have to tell the truth. I wasn't reading Huckleberry Finn, I was reading one of those Little Dirty Comic Books.

MOTHER

(sadly)

Oh, Brother, I am so disappointed in you. You mustn't look at those horrible things, they degrade the human image.

BROTHER

(hangs head)

They're filthy, Mother.

MOTHER

Sex isn't ugly, sex is one of the most beautiful things in life, the creative power of the universe is behind it.

BROTHER

I know, Mother.

MOTHER

But we must respect that power, we must be in awe of it.

BROTHER

I am in awe of it, Mother.

MOTHER

I don't think you are sufficiently in awe of it. Get the castor oil.

BROTHER

(winces, as Doll and Waski happily smile)

Oh, Mother, not the castor oil.

MOTHER

This isn't punishment, I don't believe in punishment. It's for your health. Obviously you're sick if you can act like that.

As she talks, Buddy reluctantly gets a bottle of castor oil and a tablespoon from a shelf and brings it to her. A smiling Doll comes forward and hands Buddy half of an orange. He makes a face at her. Mother takes the bottle and pours out a tablespoon of castor oil.

BUDDY

(wanly)

Mother, cant you make it calomel instead of castor oil?

MOTHER

This is for your own good. When you look at negative, destructive things like those little filthy comic books, you are sick. Here, take this.

BUDDY

(he is resigned, there's no way out; he makes a face, swallows the castor oil)

Geccch, yehh, guhhhh!

MOTHER

Stop gagging like that and putting on a show, and swallow it.

BUDDY

Uhhh, gahdam stuff!

MOTHER

What did you say, Brother?

BUDDY

I said ahhh-dam stuff.

MOTHER

No, you didn't say that, Brother.

BUDDY

Yes, I did, mother. Your hearing aid isn't working right. I said ahhh-dam stuff.

DOLL

No, Mother, he's lying...

BUDDY

Shut up, Doll. I'll cut your guts

WASKI

(happily excited,
stammering)

He did lie, and... and... and
Mother, yesterday he stole money
out of your pocketbook!

BUDDY

Quiet, you little muddy-eyed brat,
or Ill kill you!

MOTHER

Children, children! Be quiet, all
of you!

(the children at once
simmer down)

The vibrations in this house are
strange today. Where's Rose,
anyhow?

BUDDY

She's getting herself up to go out.

MOTHER

(frowns, adjusts hearing
aid)

What'd you say, Brother?

BUDDY

She's getting herself up to go out.
I think she's coming down the hall

now.

MOTHER

Oh, yes, it's Thursday.

(glances around at sound
of an opening door)

Hello, Rose, dear...

(her eyes open wide as she
stares at Rose,
disconcerted; now weakly)

... my, you're... looking pretty...

CUT TO a shot of Rose in the doorway of the kitchen. She is quite an apparition. She wears bright red lipstick, pink rouge on her cheeks, mascara and her hair is coiffed up in some outlandish manner, but her clothes are the most remarkable thing of all.

The skirt is of strange, pink, semi-shiny and very thin material and has about a dozen tiny little flowers that could be rosebuds sewed on it. It fits extremely snugly to say the least. The blouse seems a composite: it has frilly white sleeves that are opaque and otherwise is made of filmy white material that is hardly opaque at all. She has no bra and her breasts are half visible, the nipples denting the material. It is pretty wild for 1935. She seems to have on no underwear of any kind; the skirt, which clings to her like a bathing suit, shows no panty seams. She is carrying a shiny black patent leather pocketbook and has on high heel black patent leather shoes and no stockings. An ingenuous little smile is on her face.

ROSE

How do you like my outfit? I made
most of it myself.

Rose walks in, "modeling" the outfit and the CAMERA PICKS UP Mother.

MOTHER

(smiling, slightly aghast)
Well, it's... very gay.

We hear the SOUND of the Model A on the driveway.

BUDDY

Here comes Daddy.

ROSE

(staring down admiringly
at the outfit)

I have a knack for designing clothes. But I had to buy the shoes and the pocketbook.

MOTHER

(makes up her mind to defend Rose)

Well, I think it's charming, Rose.

(tactfully)

But don't you think... ah, the skirt is a little tight?

ROSE

Oh, no, that's the style. It's meant to be clinging.

We hear the PORCH DOOR SLAM. Smiling, happy, Rose glances around. We hear the SOUND of the kitchen door opening.

CUT TO a POV SHOT of Daddy in the kitchen doorway. As usual, he has a rolled-up Glenville Tribune in his hand and a Straw hat on the back of his head. His hands are on his hips and he is hunched forward as if he cannot believe what he sees.

DADDY

Ye gods and little fishes. What have you done to yourself, Rose?

ON THEM ALL. Rose is smiling, happy to be the center of attention.

ROSE

Nothin'. I got myself up, that's all.

DADDY

Got yourself up?

ROSE

Yeah. I'm goin' out.

Daddy walks slowly into the kitchen shaking his head. Sits at table.

DADDY

Um-hmm. Well, that is the damndest outfit I ever saw in my life. You walk down the street like that and they'll put you in jail, Rose.

MOTHER

Why, they won't either. She looks pretty. And I wish you wouldn't pick on the poor girl all the time. Don't listen to him, Rose, you look pretty, even beautiful.

ROSE

(smiles affectionately at Mother)

You're so sweet.

DADDY

If you've got time before you go "out," get me a half-a-cup of coffee, Rose. Not a whole cup, a half-a-cup.

ROSE

Why, sure, always got time to get you a half-a-cup, and one of these days I'm gonna get you a whole cup and see what happens.

DADDY

(a growl, doesn't like jokes about his foibles)

Um-hmmuhh. I never drink a whole cup, my nerves can't stand the caffeine. Ehh-hh, Lord awful insomnia in reverse last night. Lay there and sweated blood for hours.

DOLL

(sweetly)

Daddy, Buddy was up late last night reading little dirty comic books. Mother gave him a dose of castor oil and he cursed it, he took the Lords name in vain, then claimed he hadn't said it. He lied, Daddy.

MOTHER

You mustn't be a tattletale, dear. You mustn't be Delilah-ish and Jezebel-ish toward your brother, dear.

DOLL

I'm only trying to help him, Mother.

BUDDY

Heh, what a hypocrite.

MOTHER

(to Daddy)

I do wish you'd speak to Brother.
It's true he's been looking at
those horrible little books again.

DADDY

(stares sternly at Buddy)

Lay off of that stuff, son. It
upsets your mother.

MOTHER

(genuinely worried)

I'm serious. We forget he's just a
child. I wish you'd speak to him.

DADDY

I'll take him with me downtown.

(glances at Rose as she
comes with coffee)

And you, too, Rose, if you want a
ride.

ROSE

Sure, love one. Here's your half-a
cup of coffee.

Daddy is staring with a very dubious frown at Rose's skirt.
He slowly shakes his head.

DADDY

That's a pretty stylish skirt,
Rose. The only thing I don't
understand is how did you ever get
it on.

ROSE

(happy, pleased by his
interest)

Well, it has buttons.

Points to little buttons on right side of the skirt.

DADDY

How can the buttons stand the
pressure?

ROSE

There are more on the other side.

Points to buttons on left side.

DADDY

Turn around, darlin'.

Happy to oblige, Rose turns around. Her plump, round, feminine behind is only too plainly revealed through the thin material. Daddy slowly shakes his head.

DADDY (CONT'D)

They'll put her in jail. The damn little fool might as well be naked.

MOTHER

(a wee mite worried)

Well, it is a little tight. But it isn't as bad as all that. No one will notice unless they have such thoughts in the first place.

DADDY

Who doesn't have such thoughts?

(glances at wristwatch)

We'd better get going.

MOTHER

You're not having lunch?

DADDY

Just half-a-cup of coffee. I never eat, darlin', you know that. Not eating and reverse insomnia are my curses. Let's go, Rose, you and Brother, let's hit the road.

MOTHER

Rose, you and Brother wait in the car. I want to speak for a moment to Mr. Hillyer.

ROSE

Yes, Ma'am.

MOTHER

Doll, you and Waski run on, too.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Rose and Buddy as they walk out onto the

patio of the house. Rose walks down the steps to the flower garden and Buddy follows.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Rose and Buddy as Rose picks a red rose and puts it in her hair.'

ROSE

Did your Momma really give you
castor oil?

BUDDY

Yeah.

ROSE

(puts an arm around his
shoulders)
You're my sweetheart.

INT. HILLYER HOME KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO Mother and Daddy at the kitchen table.

MOTHER

(earnestly)

I wish you wouldn't pick on Rose
and tease her like that. Of course
her clothes are silly, but she's
ignorant, naive, she doesn't know
any better.

DADDY

The girl worries me. If she walks
down the street like that, an army
will be following her.

MOTHER

Well, I admit that outfit isn't
very modest. But she doesn't mean
any harm, she just wants to
attract, attention.

DADDY

She will succeed.

MOTHER

I don't think you understand her.
It isn't sex she wants, it's love
she wants and this is the only way
she knows how to get it.

DADDY

(musingly)

That farmer in Gadsden was awful eager to get rid of her, and I'm beginning to see why.

MOTHER

He and his wife both said she had a fine moral character and was wonderful with children.

DADDY

Well, she loves children, all right.

(adds dryly)

She loves everybody.

MOTHER

But that's a wonderful quality, not a bad quality.

(takes his hand)

Have a little patience with her. She's such a good-hearted little thing and tries so hard.

DADDY

(stares pensively at her)

You are the one who's good-hearted.

(rises)

As for Rose, let's hope for the best.

MOTHER

(rises, again takes his hand)

Be kind to her. She loves you so much.

(Daddy stiffens slightly, and she adds)

In a perfectly proper way, of course.

DADDY

Yes, of course.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Rose and Buddy waiting in a Model A. Rose is smiling, happy to be going out. The red rose is prominent in her hair, Daddy walks INTO THE SHOT, gets into the driver's seat of the car, He glances in a wry manner at the flower in her hair.

DADDY

What have you got in your hair,
girl?

ROSE

My rose. It's kind of like a motto.
People will say, there comes Rose
with her rose.

Daddy gives her another wry stare and starts the Model A.

CUT TO a shot of the Model A going down the driveway.

EXT. MODEL A IN TOWN - DAY

ANOTHER SHOT or two of the Model A on the quiet summer
streets of a sleepy little town in the Depression South of
years ago.

INT./EXT. MODEL A - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy, Rose and Buddy in the car. Buddy is
in the middle. Daddy is staring expressionlessly straight
ahead. His tone is sternly neutral as he speaks.

DADDY

You were up late last night,
Brother.

BUDDY

Well, a little.

DADDY

Reading dirty comic books.
(glances shrewdly at him)
And you admitted it?

BUDDY

(a trifle uncomfortable)
Well, yeah.

Both Rose and Buddy begin to look increasingly tense.
Hawkshaw the Detective is on the scent. Daddy stares ahead.

DADDY

You were up late last night, too,
Rose.

ROSE

(meekly)

Yes, sir. I had to go to the bathroom.

A long pause, as Daddy stares ahead. His expression is inscrutable.

DADDY

(finally, "casually")

Sometimes I think I was born to be a detective. I get a feeling about things. I'm not always right, but often I am.

EXT. MODEL A BY LIGHT - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the Model A as it stops for a red light.

INT./EXT. MODEL A - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy, Rose and Buddy in the car. Daddy turns and stares sternly at Buddy.

DADDY

Son, was Rose in your room last night?

BUDDY

(scared, but a good liar)

No. Why should Rose be in my room?

Daddy sternly scans them both. They stare back "innocently" at him. Finally he seems to accept it.

DADDY

I can't imagine why. It was just a thought.

Daddy shifts gears and faces front. Buddy glances upward in relief, as if to say, "Wow, that was close."

DADDY (CONT'D)

Where do you want me to let you out, Rose?

ROSE

Oh, anywhere downtown.

DADDY

You don't know where you're going?

ROSE

Oh, I'll just mosey around here and there.

EXT. MODEL A - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the Model A as it stops off the main street of a small sleepy Southern town.

INT./EXT. MODEL A - DAY

CUT TO a shot through the side window on Rose, Buddy and Daddy.

DADDY

Is this ill right?

ROSE

It'll do just fine.

(gets out of car)

Bye-bye, see you later.

Rose waves goodbye and walks off down the sidewalk, swinging her hips and her pocketbook,

INT./EXT. MODEL A - DAY

CUT TO a front shot of Daddy and Buddy in the car as they stare after Rose.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO a shot of POV Daddy and Buddy of Rose walking along.
MUSIC.

INT./EXT. MODEL A

CUT TO Daddy and Buddy. Daddy slowly shakes his head, shifts gears..

EXT. MODEL A - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the Model A as it rolls along the main street.

EXT. MODEL A - DAY

ANOTHER SHOT of the Model A as it abruptly turns a corner.

EXT. MODEL A - DAY

ON the Model A as it abruptly turns around corner. Evidently

it is circling the block.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Rose as she walks along, swinging her hips and her pocketbook and smiling at whoever she sees. She passes a few people and she smiles cheerfully at them -- the men stare with a flat interest at her and the women frown, but she smiles at one and all.

EXT. MODEL A

CUT TO a shot of the Model A as it creeps along.

INT./EXT. MODEL A - DAY

On Daddy and Buddy in the car.

DADDY

They might arrest her. I doubt it, but they might.

EXT. STREET - BUS STOP - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Rose as she walks up to a bus stop. A fairly WELL-DRESSED MAN with a door-to-door salesman kit is standing there. Rose glances at him then sidles up alongside him as if she's waiting for a bus. He glances at her for a moment with interest, but doesn't want to stare, looks away. We see the Model A stop in the background of the SHOT.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy and Buddy in the car, watching Rose.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Rose and the Young Salesman. Rose glances at the man, glances at him again, then sighs and speaks.

ROSE

My feet sure do hurt.

YOUNG SALESMAN

(turns to her with a slow smile)

Oh, yeah?

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy and Buddy in the car, watching.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO a LONG POV SHOT of Rose and the Young Salesman. They are talking amiably. Both are smiling.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy and Buddy.

DADDY

She has made contact.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO ANOTHER POV SHOT of Rose and the Young Salesman. It is another LONG SHOT. MUSIC ON TRACK. They are smiling, talking. The Young Salesman seems to ask Rose a question. She nods and takes his arm and they walk off.

EXT. STREET - DAY

CUT TO Daddy and Buddy. Daddy is staring pensively at the scene.

DADDY

I never saw anything like it. How did she pick him up so fast?

BUDDY

I don't know.

DADDY

The girl strikes like a cobra.

Slowly shaking his head, Daddy starts the car.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A shot of Rose and the Young Salesman as they walk along. She is holding his arm and they are smiling and talking as if the best of friends. We hear MUSIC ON THE TRACK. The MUSIC continues over the following MONTAGE OF SHOTS.

INT. HONKY TONK - VARIOUS SHOTS

ON Rose in a beer "honky tonk" with the Young Salesman in a booth. He is drinking beer, she is drinking Coca Cola from a bottle.

ON Rose in the booth, ANOTHER ANGLE. A second man has joined

them, a big beefy man -- he is BUSTER.

EXT. STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

ON Rose as she walks down a sidewalk in late afternoon with Buster and still another man, a tall fellow in a Coca-Cola Delivery Man's uniform or shirt. Rose seems to be innocently happy, but the men appear to be having a mild dispute.

ON Rose getting into Busters car as Buster holds the door for her, smiling. The COCA-COLA DELIVERY MAN is left on the sidewalk, disappointed.

INT./EXT. BUSTER'S CAR - DUSK

CUT TO a shot of Rose in the car eating barbecue with Buster. She is talking animatedly and he seems enchanted with her. It is dusk.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of a car pulling up in the driveway of the Hillyer house. Rose gets out, waves goodbye to Buster. It is night. End MUSIC.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy in pajamas peering out of the bedroom window.

DADDY

Well, she's back.

MOTHER (O.S.)

What time is it?

DADDY

Quarter of twelve.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Is she all right?

DADDY

I don't see any bruises or broken bones.

CUT TO a shot of Mother in bed in the four poster.

MOTHER

Bruises and broken bones, what kind of thing is that to say?

Daddy walks INTO THE SHOT, sits on the edge of the bed.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Why shouldn't she go out and have
boyfriends?

DADDY

No reason at all, darlin'.

MOTHER

Well, I wish you'd stop criticizing
and picking on her.

DADDY

Forgive my crudity, darlin'. All
I'm saying is that a girl who would
wear clothes like that is going to
get in trouble sooner or later.

MOTHER

(doubtfully)

Well, time will tell, won't it?

DADDY

Yes, darlin', time will tell.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

A SHOT of Mother on the patio studying. It is a sunny
afternoon. Mother looks up idly, looks back down at her
notebook, then looks up again with a frown.

CUT TO A POV SHOT of a SCRUFFY-LOOKING KAN as he darts behind
one tree to another. The Scruffy-looking Man does not seem
sinister, but he definitely is scruffy.

ON Mother. Frowning, she puts down her notebook and rises,
walks toward the door of the kitchen.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Rose washing dishes in the kitchen. As
usual, she is in a cheerful good humor. We see Buddy at the
kitchen table building a model airplane. Mother comes INTO
THE SHOT, worried, frowning.

MOTHER

Rose, that scruffy-looking man is

out in the yard again.

ROSE

(her smile fades)

Mrs. Hillyer, I don't know who he is, I really don't.

MOTHER

I had better call Daddy.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy behind the desk of a slightly run-down small hotel of the Depression era. He is handing a key to a guest.

DADDY

Glad to have you with us, Mr. Watson. Make yourself at home. Shadrach, take Mr. Watson's bag.

A black bellboy takes the guest's bag as Daddy turns to answer a BUZZING switchboard.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Mother talking on a phone.

MOTHER

Hello, honey? That scruffy-looking man is out in the yard again.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy at the switchboard. He is grim.

DADDY

Luckily, Johnson just walked in to relieve me. I'll be right out there!

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Rose in the kitchen.

BUDDY

Rose, you must know who the fellow is.

ROSE

(innocently)

Well, he might be that man who followed me home from the store the other day. But I don't know who he is, Buddy, I really don't.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - YARD

CUT TO a shot of the Scruffy-looking Man. He is half-crouched behind a big oak, peering at the Hillyer house. We hear the approach of a car and the man looks over his shoulder.

CUT TO a shot of Daddy in the Model A. The TIRES SCREECH as he puts on the brakes.

CUT TO a shot of the Scruffy-looking Man as he turns and runs.

On Daddy as he jumps out of the car.

DADDY

Come back here, sir! Come back here, you!

Daddy runs after the man.

CUT TO a shot of Daddy running after him.

CUT TO A FINAL SHOT of the Scruffy-looking Man as he leaps a hedge in full stride.

EXT. HILLYER HOUSE - FRONT PORCH

CUT TO a shot of a worried-looking Mother on the front porch of the house. Buddy and a meek-looking Rose are in the background in the doorway. A weary, out-of-breath Daddy comes INTO THE SHOT and walks up the steps, straw hat in hand.

DADDY

I couldn't catch him. He ran like a deer.

Daddy fixes a stern glance on Rose. As he does so, Mother and Buddy also turn and look at her. Rose smiles wanly.

ROSE

I don't know him.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

A SHOT of Mrs. Hillyer in her bedroom study. She is drinking a Coca-Cola and smoking a cigarette held by a bobbie pin. We hear the SOUND of an old-fashioned doorbell. She ignores it.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT PORCH - DAY

CUT TO a shot of a sullen-looking young boy on the front porch. He is poorly dressed. He rings the doorbell. This is BILLY.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Mother. Frowning, she gets up.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT PORCH

ON Mother as she opens the front door. A sullen Billy stares at her.

MOTHER

Yes?

BILLY

Is Rose here?

MOTHER

She must have gone out for a walk with the children.

BILLY

(sullenly)

Well, I got to see her.

MOTHER

She isn't here. And I'm sorry, but Mr. Hillyer doesn't want her to have callers during working hours.

BILLY

(sullenly)

Where is she?

MOTHER

I said she isn't here. NOW you go home. Be a nice boy and go home.

Gently but firmly, Mother shuts the door in Billy's face.

A SHOT of Billy frustrated on the front porch. Sadly, reluctantly, he turns and walks off the porch down the steps.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - DAY

ON mother, peering worriedly through the curtains of the front door.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A SHOT of the family at dinner at night. Daddy, Mother, Rose, Buddy, Doll and Waski. The SHOT FAVORS Mother.

MOTHER

That sulky boy was here again this afternoon. I was almost scared, he wouldn't go away.

DADDY

(throws his napkin on table)

Rose, my patience is wearing thin. First a scruffy man who runs like a deer and now a sulky boy who wont go away. This is getting to be a regular monkey and dog show.

ROSE

I swear to God I don't know who in the world he is. Really, I don't, I don't know no boy like that, I don't.

Slowly, his face grim, Daddy returns his napkin to his lap and resumes eating. The children are very silent and look a trifle scared.

MOTHER

(finally, in a small voice)

Well, it isn't Rose's fault boys and men like her. You cant blame her for that, hon.

DADDY

Rose, I realize you don't know this boy, but if you know anybody who does know him, if you have even a faint clue as to who he might be, then convey to him that he had better stay away from my house and stop scaring my wife... and I don't

mean maybe.

INT. HILLYER SOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy in his room at night. He is dressed and at a study table listening with cheap earphones to a homemade crystal radio set. Enter a rather somber-faced Doll in her nightgown.

BUDDY

(listening)

Chattanooga. I had St. Louis,
Missouri.

DOLL

Buddy, I'm worried about Rose.

BUDDY

So am I.

DOLL

She hasn't got any sense. In some
ways, she's awful dumb.

BUDDY

(takes off earphones,
gives it a moment of
grave consideration, then
his opinion)

It isn't that she hasn't got any
sense, Doll. Her basic intelligence
is probably above average, maybe
quite a bit above average.

DOLL

Then why does she act so dumb?

BUDDY

Dumbness doesn't concern her, Doll.
And neither does smartness. You see
--

Buddy is interrupted by the SOUND of the distant angry shout of a man's voice, evidently from somewhere outside in the woods because Buddy and Doll turn at once toward the window. In shock they listen.

FIRST MAN'S VOICE

You son of a bitch, what are you
doing here?!

SECOND MAN'S VOICE

I'd like to ask you the same question, you bastard!

FIRST MAN'S VOICE

I told you to stay away from her, goddamn you!

SECOND MAN'S VOICE

You got no right to tell me to stay away from her, I knew her before you did!

BUDDY

Oh, boy. Oh, boy, oh boy. Daddy isn't going to like this.

FIRST MAN'S VOICE

She told you to leave her alone, didn't she?

SECOND MAN'S VOICE

Like hell she did! You're the one she wants to get shed of!

BUDDY

Come on!

He and Doll hurry from the room.

INT. HILLYER HOME - UPSTAIRS HALL AND STAIRS - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll running down the upstairs hall and down the stairs. The CAM M FOLLOWS them down the stairs.

INT. HILLYER HOME - BACK HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll as they slow down and creep cautiously down the back hall to the back porch. We hear the men yelling somewhere out in the dark bushes.

FIRST MAN'S VOICE

You'll swallow teeth yourself if you don't leave her alone, you ugly bastard! Go on, throw one, throw one!

SECOND MAN'S VOICE

I'll throw one, you son of a bitch!

We hear a great CRASHING in the bushes, a SMACK of a fist, a GROAN of shock, an OATH, a SHOUT, more CRASHING.

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot from the POV of the children, on Daddy on the back porch as the lights blaze on. He wears his bathrobe and has a big shotgun in his hands. Now he speaks in a loud, clear and very angry voice.

DADDY

All right, I have got a Parker shotgun here and it is loaded and the trigger is cocked and wherever you birds are and whatever you are doing you had better get the hell out of here goddamned quick!

A sudden total silence ensues, then a sudden CRASHING in the bushes as the "birds" take off.

DADDY (CONT'D)

And do not come back, you sons of bitches! Stay away from my house and home and my wife and children or I'll blow your goddamned heads off!

INT. HILLYER HOME - BACK HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll as they cower in awe in the downstairs hall. Daddy walks up to them carrying the shotgun. He is grim and furious, but his voice is surprisingly calm.

DADDY

You children go to bed. And Brother, stay away from Rose, I'll speak to her in the morning.

INT. HILLYER HOME - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll in the upstairs hall. Doll meekly goes to her room. Buddy hesitates, looks at Rose's door, glances nervously back at the stairs, then goes to Rose's door, knocks softly, opens it.

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Rose as he stands in the doorway of her room. Rose is sitting on the edge of her bed in her

nightgown, a damp cloth held against her jaw which seems a little swollen. A look of fear and guilt is on her face.

ROSE

(rather feebly, as if it explains something)

I got an awful toothache.

BUDDY

(quietly)

Rose, if you don't keep your boyfriends away from the house, Daddy is going to fire you.

ROSE

(innocently)

But I don't know who they are.

Buddy makes an exasperated grimace and exits, shutting door. The CAMERA REMAINS on Rose as she rolls her eyes upward in dismay.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

A shot of the family at breakfast in the dining room. The silence is deafening. Everyone looks depressed except Daddy, who is aloofly calm. Rose's head is bowed meekly over her plate as we hear the CLATTER of silverware. Finally, Daddy speaks in an almost pleasant tone.

DADDY

Well, Rose, my sleep was a little disturbed last night, and so was Mrs. Hillyer's, and so was the children's. How about you? Was your sleep disturbed, too?

ROSE

(solemnly)

Yes, Mr. Hillyer, it was. I... I heard strange voices in the night.

DADDY

(softly strumming fingers, finally)

Strange voices, Rose?

ROSE

(innocent as an angel)

Yes, sir.

DADDY

(still aloofly polite)

Now Rose, stop behaving as if you're Bo Peep. Those men had a flight last night because of some female in this house, and it wasn't Dolly or Mrs. Hillyer.

MOTHER

(very tense)

I don't think we ought to discuss this in front of the children.

ROSE

(weeping, a hand over her eyes)

Oh... oh... oh! I think... maybe... one of 'em... was Foster... but I don't hardly know him!

DADDY

Oh, shut up, Rose. Shut your mouth and quit crying!

MOTHER

(draws herself up)

I will not sit here and listen to you be brutal to this poor girl.

DADDY

I am not being brutal to her!

MOTHER

You certainly are! She has an awful toothache, look at her jaw, it's all swollen.

DADDY

(trying to restrain himself, aloofly polite to the utmost)

Darlin', it is not my fault if the girl has epizootics --

-- The word means "an animal epidemic," and it's a pet word of Daddy's; he pronounces it epi-zoo-tics, not epi-zoo-ot tics, and uses it to mean any outrageous human malady --

DADDY (CONT'D)

-- I am not responsible for her epizootics and I did not bring about her epizootics. Now listen to me. When I have to get up in the middle of the night and defend my home with a shotgun against a couple of damned scoundrels fistfighting in the bushes --

MOTHER

Scoundrels? They weren't scoundrels, they were just boys.

DADDY

Boys? You say to me boys?

MOTHER

Yes! Yes, I say that to you, they were boys! Boy friends of Rose, chat's what they were, and why shouldn't she have boy friends? Do you want her to be unnatural? Don't you think she's human the same way you are yourself? It's the South, that's what it is, the South with its horrible traditions, of slavery and crime and the oppression of women, who are just as good as men and just as human!

DADDY

(his eyes are a trifle glazed)

Now darlin', what has the South got to do with this?

MOTHER

(in a real snit, afraid he will fire Rose)

And when I try to talk to you seriously, when I try to explain to you the unlimited creative power of life, how beautiful it would be if we gave up this hopeless struggle and simply loved each other from our hearts, what do you do -- you mock me!

DADDY

(mildly, his eyes are even more glazed)

I don't intend to mock you, dear. I respect your philosophy. It's beyond my comprehension, but I respect it.

ROSE

(head bowed, weeping in a little handkerchief)
Ohhh-hh, ohhh...

DADDY

(exasperated)
Oh, shut up, Rose, eat your cornflakes!

ROSE

(piteously)
I'm not hungry.

The word is hongry, not hungry.

DADDY

Now you listen to me, Rose --

MOTHER

(with fire in her eyes)
Just a moment! You are not going to fire this girl for an innocent thing like having boy friends, not while there is breath in my body!

DADDY

I don't intend to fire her, darlin'.

MOTHER

It isn't her fault if she's popular... what?

DADDY

I said I don't intend to fire her. I just want to ask her to keep her boy friends away from my home and hearth, that's all.

MOTHER

(simmers down at once, now calmly)
Well, that's very reasonable. Howe I hate to bring it up, but she's got an awful toothache, we've got

to carry her to the dentist.

ROSE

I don't want to go to the dentist.

MOTHER

Be quiet, Rose.

DADDY

Darlin', I'll take a taxi to the hotel. You and Brother can handle the girl's epizootics. I'll just say one more thing.

(turns to Rose and, in a grave tone)

Rose, I told you you had a friend in Mrs. Hillyer, didn't I, that she would fight for you like a tiger?

ROSE

(meekly)

Yes, sir.

DADDY

All right, thanks to her, and thanks to this case of epizootics, you are getting another chance.

(points a finger at her, and sternly)

But don't try my patience again. We have growing children in this house. Do you understand me?

ROSE

Yes, sir.

INT. DENTIST'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Mother, Rose and Buddy in a dentist's waiting room. Rose is holding a rubber ice bag to her jaw, which is quite swollen. She is groaning and half weeping in pain.

MOTHER

Poor thing. Does the ice help, Rose?

ROSE

Ohh-hh, a little. Oh-h, I ain't never been to no dentist before. He's gonna kill me, I just know it.

MOTHER

No, Rose, he'll help you.

ANOTHER ANGLE, Rose shrinks in fear as, enter the dentist in a white coat, DR. WINTON, a kindly-looking, gray-haired man. We see a nurse behind him. He smiles in a reassuring manner.

DR. WINTON

Nurse says we have a nervous patient. Now, young lady, be calm. First of all, let me tell you, I am not going to hurt you.

ROSE

Yes, you are.

DR. WINTON

No, I am not.

ROSE

Look, you can't kid me.

MOTHER

(rises, takes her by the hand)

Now, come on, Rose. Stop being so childish, come on.

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - DAY

ANOTHER ANGLE, on Rose and Mother and Dr. Winton, as they guide and lead Rose into the dentist's operating room.- She plants her feet and her eyes open wide with horror as she sees the chair and other equipment.

ROSE

I'm not goin' in there, I don't like the looks of it!

MOTHER

(annoyed)

Rose, sit down in that chair and be quiet! We're trying to help you, you silly creature, sit in that chair!

ROSE

(very reluctantly sits in chair)

Oh-hh, ohh-hh, Lord, he's gonna

kill me.

DR. WINTON
You and the boy wait outside.

INT. DENTIST'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Mother and Buddy in the waiting room. Enter Dr. Winton with a little frown.

DR. WINTON
Well, she finally let me look in her mouth. Is it true she's never been to a dentist?

MOTHER
She was raised on a poor dirt farm. I'm sure she's never seen a dentist or hardly even a doctor.

DR. WINTON
Well, she has one mouth in ten thousand, I don't see teeth like that once in ten years. Her trouble is an impacted wisdom tooth, but there isn't a cavity in her head, not a single one. She has perfect teeth.

MOTHER
But the wisdom tooth will have to be pulled?

DR. WINTON
Yes, and it's very bad. It probably should be done at the hospital under general anesthesia.

MOTHER
That would scare her to death. She's terrified of hospitals. To her, a hospital is where you go to die.

DR. WINTON
I think you're right, it would be harder on her. But you'd better call Mr. Hillyer, she's going to need help to get home.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A shot of Daddy behind the wheel of the model-A. Rose lies pale and exhausted on Mother's shoulder on the front seat. A trace of bloody gauze can be seen in her mouth and her eyes are closed. Buddy is on the back seat.

ROSE

(a whisper, muffled by the
bloody gauze)

Never again, never again...

MOTHER

(with pity, gently)

I know it was bad, honey. I'm
sorry...

ROSE

No more dentists, no more
dentists...

MOTHER

It'll get better now.

EXT. HILLYER DRIVEWAY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the Model-A in the driveway of the Hillyer home. Mother helps Rose out of the car, but Rose can't stand on her feet. Daddy has to catch her from falling. Daddy picks her up in his arms and carries her up the steps as Buddy runs ahead to open the front door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLYER PATIO - DAY

A shot of Mother and Daddy and Buddy on the patio. It is a beautiful sunny morning. Mother and Daddy are seated at an outdoor table about to have coffee. Daddy is opening mail and Buddy, in the b.g., is gluing up a kite. Enter a smiling and healthy Rose with orange juice, toast, cups and coffee on a tray.

DADDY

Good morning, Rose. And how do you
feel today?

ROSE

Wonderful. Except I can touch the
place back there with my tongue, I

wouldn't even know I had that tooth pulled.

DADDY

(dryly, as he looks at mail)

Well, I know it, I just got the bill for it.

ROSE

Boy, for four or five days there I didn't think I'd live. But I'm my old self again!

DADDY

Umm. Well. Yes. But no more strange voices in the night, Rose.

ROSE

Oh, no, sir.

MOTHER

Rose has learned her lesson, haven't you, Rose?

ROSE

Yes, ma'am.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL - MEZZANINE - DAY

A shot of Daddy peering down at an old pool table in the mezzanine of the family hotel. Buddy stands by with a pool stick in hand. In the b.g., we see a black bellboy, SHADRACH, approaching.

DADDY

I see my mother-in-law's face, son. Read 'em and weep, boy, I am playing a spectacular combination, a triple. The nine ball in the corner!

(takes his stance with cue as Shadrach walks up)

Read 'em and weep, boy, that's all she wrote.

SHADRACH

Mistah Hillyer, the Chief of Police wants you on the telephone.

DADDY

(about to make his shot,
looks around)

The Chief of Police?

SHADRACH

Yassuh.

Daddy straightens up, sets his jaw, leans the cue against the table and marches toward the elevator as Buddy stares after him. The CAMERA STAYS on Buddy.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Buddy going down the hotel stairs. He holds onto the banister, sliding with his hands far ahead in order to take four and even five steps at a time -- it is a childish trick, the point of the game is to touch as few stairs as possible.

ANOTHER ANGLE, on Buddy as he jumps down the last remaining five steps and walks into the lobby. Daddy comes from behind the desk, grim.

DADDY

Rose is in jail. She bit a
policeman's thumb. Come on, son,
Shadrach can run the hotel.

EXT. MODEL-A - STREET - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy and Buddy in the Model-A. Daddy stares grimly ahead. Buddy steals a worried glance at him.

INT. LOCAL JAIL - DAY

CUT TO a shot in the local jail. The shot is on Daddy as he stands before jail bars staring sternly into a cell. His hands are on his hips, his straw hat is on the back of his head and a bit to one side. Buddy stands beside him, a little bit behind, a worried look on his face. The CHIEF OF POLICE, a fat man, is on the other side of Daddy.

CUT TO a POV shot of Rose in the cell. Her hair is mussed, her dress is torn. A little innocent, frightened smile is on her face. The CAMERA PANS to include Daddy and the Chief of Police.

CHIEF OF POLICE

That was a awful brawl down at the

Busy Beaver, Mr. Hillyer. You know that fat Horton, the bootlegger?

DADDY

Yes, I know the son of a bitch.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Son of a bitch is right, he dern near killed a man. And this girl was the cause of it all. What's more, she bit a police officer's thumb right to the bone.

DADDY

Well, Rose, what have you got to say for yourself?

ROSE

(coughs, then feebly)
I got an awful bad cold.

DADDY

(nods slowly, then with aloof politeness)
That's all you've got to say, you've got a bad cold?

ROSE

(coughs again)
Well, I don't know what happened. They were arguin' about baseball, then all of 'em started fightin'. As for that policeman, I didn't bite him, I don't think I bit him.

In dour silence, Daddy and the Chief of Police stare at Rose. She gives them a little smile, as if to say, "See how innocent I am?" The Chief turns to Daddy and asks with dry irony:

CHIEF OF POLICE

Well, she's your girl, Mr. Hillyer. You want me to release her in your custody?

DADDY

No, not really. But I guess we'll have to do that, John. Let her out. Let the crazy creature out and I'll take her home.

INT./EXT. MODEL-A - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy, Rose and Buddy in the Model A. Daddy stares grimly ahead, silent. Buddy looks solemn. Rose is badly frightened and still coughing. Finally she ventures a little smile and speaks to Daddy.

ROSE

I got an awful cold, I think I'm sick.

Daddy is silent, his eyes fixed ahead.

EXT. HILLYER DRIVEWAY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the Model A as it turns onto the Hillyer driveway.

INT./EXT. MODEL A

CUT TO a shot of Daddy, Rose and Buddy in the car. She tries again.

ROSE

I didn't mean to bite him. He was hitting Horton with a blackjack in the meanest way and... and I bit him accidental.

DADDY

(stops the car, turns to Rose)

I have to go back to the hotel. I'm on duty at the desk and who knows a quest might arrive. I will see you at suppertime, Rose.

ROSE

(a feeble smile)

I didn't mean to bite him, I really didn't.

DADDY

I will see you at suppertime, Rose.

ROSE

(feebly)

Yes, air.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT STEPS - DAY

CUT TO a shot of a shaky, slumped Rose going up the steps with Buddy as the Model A drives away. Rose is coughing, looks miserable.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A SHOT of Buddy and Doll in the living room of the Hillyer home at night. Doll is half-heartedly practicing scales on the piano and Buddy is pacing the floor, hands clasped behind him in something like the style of his father. As the CAMERA FOLLOWS Buddy in his pacing we see Waski playing with marbles on the floor.

DOLL

(turns around on piano stool, to Buddy)

What is Rose going to do? Where can she go?

BUDDY

They've been in there the longest kind of time. I can't stand it, I gotta find out what's going on.

DOLL

You better not snoop, Daddy'll kill you!

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy coming with great furtiveness from the living room out into the front hall. Very cautiously, he tiptoes across the hall and bows down and listens at the door of his mother's bedroom-study. He crouches down, peeps through the keyhole.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM/STUDY - NIGHT

CUT TO a "keyhole shot" of Daddy and Mother in the bedroom. Mother sits in her study chair, a handkerchief to her eyes. Daddy sits in a chair nearby. He looks depressed.

DADDY

I'm sorry, darlin', I hate it as much as you do.

MOTHER

(wanly)

Well, she does seem to cause a lot

of trouble, I admit. But she doesn't mean any harm and it'll break the children's hearts, they all love her.

DADDY

It's because of the children she's got to go. I don't want to be holier-than-thou, but the girl doesn't have the same outlook we do. Morals don't mean a thing to her, not a thing, and we can't have a girl like that in this house.

MOTHER

Who is to say our morals are better than hers?

(frowns, sighs)

But maybe you're right. She could... influence Dolly...

DADDY

That is exactly what I'm afraid of.

(pauses, and firmly)

The girl has got to go, darlin'.

MOTHER

But morals come from the heart, not from rigid rules and empty laws. And in her heart Rose has never hurt anyone and she never would. Therefore, she's not immoral. Not really.

DADDY

Now look, darlin', this is no time to go off into the fourth dimension.

MOTHER

But what I said is the simple truth. And now I see something else, I see more deeply into it...

Mother has a slightly "other-worldly" look on her face. Daddy glances at the door of the bedroom, he suspects something.

DADDY

Just a moment, darlin'.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy crouched at the keyhole. With great alacrity, he jumps up and hurries across the hall and shuts the living room door just as Daddy whisks open the bedroom door. Daddy grimaces.

DADDY

Could of sworn that boy was out here.

Daddy shuts the door and at once almost like the movement of a ballet Buddy opens the living room door and tiptoes back to the keyhole.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a Shot of Daddy and Mother. It is another "keyhole shot."

MOTHER

How could Rose really be a bad influence on Dolly? She has a loving nature, you ought to want someone like that around your children. Why do you think those boys and men like her?

DADDY

Well, I have a pretty good idea.

MOTHER

If you mean sex, you couldn't be more wrong. Rose likes those boys and men, she has love in her heart, and that is what they want. It's the most rare and beautiful thing in life and that is why they follow her.

DADDY

They follow her because she's a --
(he is about to say "piece of tail," but interrupts himself)
-- no, I won't say that.

MOTHER

What she doesn't understand is that her behavior is disturbing to other people. She's young, she's got to learn to restrain the life force

that's in her. Its creative, but in her case it's too creative.

DADDY

Darlin', Rose has got to go!

MOTHER

(rises)

I'll talk to her, I'll reason with her.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy in the hall. He jumps up and hurries across the hall into the living room. Again, as the living room door shuts the bedroom door opens. Mother starts up the stairs, her mouth determined.

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Doll and Waski in the living room.

DOLL

What's happening?

BUDDY

Mother is struggling desperately. In fact she's fighting like a tiger. But I don't know, it's close, it's mighty close.

DOLL

(pauses, then in a low tone, slightly wide-eyed)
Buddy... does Rose really... "do it" with all those boys and men?

BUDDY

(aloofly, like Daddy)
Doll, don't ask childish questions.

WASKI

(indignantly, to Doll)
Of course not!

BUDDY

Oh, Waski, you don't even know what we're talking about.

INT. HILLYER HOME - UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Mother going down the upstairs hall. She knocks on Roses door and enters.

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Mother as she walks over and stares down in shock at Rose on the bed. Rose is lying back on a pillow and staring groggily at her, obviously not quite all there. Frowning with worry, Mother sits beside her and puts a hand on her forehead.

MOTHER

Rose, you're very sick. You're burning up. Rose, can you hear me? Rose?

ROSE

(semi-delirious)
What? Wha-at? Mrs. Hillyer?

EXT. HILLYER HOME - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of an ambulance pulling up outside the Hillyer house. Attendants get out of it carrying a stretcher.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy, Doll and Waski in the front hall. They are badly frightened, even terrified. The CAMERA PANS to show the ambulance attendants carrying Rose strapped in a stretcher down the stairs, as Mother helps and Daddy follows, both of them very worried. Rose is conscious now and her eyes roll with terror toward the children.

ROSE

Buddy! Dolly! They're takin' me to the hospital! Don't let 'em, don't let 'em!

The CAMERA STAYS on the frightened silent children as they stare after Rose on the stretcher.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A shot of Mother, Daddy, Buddy, Doll and Waski in the corridor of a hospital. All look very solemn. A nurse leads them to a door and opens it.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of a hospital room. A very pale, sick-looking Rose lies in a hospital bed. The nurse, mother, Daddy, Buddy, Doll and Waski enter, all of them looking very grave.

ANOTHER ANGLE, CLOSE ON Rose as she weakly turns her head on the pillow. Her eyes well with tears as she recognizes the children.

ROSE

(a feeble whisper)

Pray for me...

ANOTHER ANGLE, on the nurse as she speaks in a whisper we don't hear to Mother and Daddy, obviously telling them they'd better go. Daddy beckons to the children and they start to leave, all looking depressed.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of DR. F. ROBERT MARTINSON, a rather unpleasant man with a spade beard. He has a superior, patronizing way of talking and very little Southern accent if any. The scene is his office and he is in a swivel chair behind his desk.

As he speaks the CAMERA PULLS BACK to show Daddy, Mother and the Hillyer children.

DR. MARTINSON

Well, Mrs. Hillyer, the girl is strong as an ox and that is what is keeping her alive. But not many people walk away from double pneumonia, Madam, not many.

MOTHER

She looks terrible, just awful.

DR. MARTINSON

Of course she does and I must say I'm puzzled by your delay in getting her to the hospital. I should think ordinary powers of observation would have suggested to you that she was seriously ill.

MOTHER

She hid it from us, Doctor. She's afraid of the hospital.

DR. MARTINSON

(a thin superior smile)

Afraid of the hospital?

MOTHER

Deathly afraid of it. Her people were poor tenant farmers and she doesn't know anything about doctors or medicine or hospitals.

DR. MARTINSON

(frowns in open disbelief)

A tenant farm? Are you trying to tell me that girl is a product of the hookworm and pellagra belt?

MOTHER

Well, her people were very poor. She says she was often hungry as a child, and I'm sure the food she ate was pretty awful, not a balanced diet at all.

DR. MARTINSON

Exactly, and that's why she couldn't possibly have come from such a farm.

DADDY

(icily polite)

Excuse me, sir, are you calling my wife a liar?

MOTHER

(embarrassed)

Honey, please...

DR. MARTINSON

(a thin unpleasant smile)

It's simply that I find it incredible, Mr. Hillyer. Aside from the girl's illness at the moment, she is very strong, a very healthy specimen of a young human female -- and a comely one, too. She must have gotten protein somewhere as a young child, if only sporadically.

MOTHER

It is kind of amazing. The dentist says she has perfect teeth, there

isn't a cavity in her mouth.

MR. MARTINSON

(tries to make a
supercilious joke)

Her entire mouth is a cavity,
Madam, ha ha ha.

DADDY

(dryly, doesn't like the
man a bit)

Ha ha ha ha.

Mother frowns at Daddy and Dr. Martinson gives him an aloof
glance.

DR. MARTINSON

(with spurious dignity)

The point is you don't grow up like
that on a diet of sorghum and
hominy grits. She got protein
somewhere, she's a very strong girl
and I think she'll live... despite
the delay in medical treatment.

DADDY

That's all I want to know.

(rises)

Lets get out of here before I get
the epizootics myself. Thank you,
Doctor, for your discourse, it was
fascinating, no doubt.

MOTHER

Yes, thank you, Doctor.

DR. MARTINSON

(as they leave)

I beg your pardon, epi-zoo-tics? Do
you mean "epi-zoo-ot-tics," an
animal epidemic?

DADDY

(icily polite, from the
door)

No, I mean epizootics.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Mother, Daddy, Buddy, Doll and Waski as
Daddy comes out of the Doctor's office and shuts the door.

DADDY

I can't stand that polecat. They ought to hang him.

MOTHER

You don't like him because he's a Yankee. He's a brilliant doctor.

DADDY

He's a polecat, dear.

INT. HOSPITAL ELEVATOR - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy, Mother and the Hillyer children in a hospital elevator as a black elevator operator runs them down. Daddy has his hat politely removed and is staring pensively ahead.

DADDY

Rosebud looked pretty pitiful in that bed.

(sighs, shakes his head)

I hope she'll be all right, but I still think we ought to fire her.

MOTHER

I don't see how you can even think of it now.

Daddy purses his lips but says nothing. It is obvious the "epizootics" have saved Rose, at least for the time being.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A SHOT of Rose in bed in her own bedroom. She is propped up on pillows and wearing a rather attractive pink silk housecoat of Mother's.

A tray is on her lap and she is eating her supper as Buddy sits on the edge of the bed talking with her, or rather listening to her. It is obvious she is well on the road back to health.

ROSE

Oh, he's so kind, so gentle inside, and so unhappy with that rich wife who doesn't understand him, her being a Southerner and everything, and what a bedside manner he has

got -- so gentle and kind beneath
the professor way he acts!

BUDDY

Rose, you are too uncritical of
people.

ROSE

You don't know the bedside manner
that man has got. Why, it does me
good just to see him sit there all
solemn and go pokin' in his bag
like he's gonna cure me, which he
did of course. And even more
important he loves me, like a
patient I mean, the other day he
got tears in his eyes just
listenin' to my heart beat.

BUDDY

He did?

ROSE

Yeah, he tried to hide it but I saw
'em, and a little bit he says to
me, "You know, you are beautiful."
Now wasn't that a nice thing for a
doctor to say to a patient, wasn't
it? What could cheer a girl up
more?

BUDDY

Rose, I have got doubts about that
doctor and so does Daddy.

ROSE

He's got doubts about hisself and
that's the saddest thing of all.
Would you believe that poor man
thinks nobody likes him?

BUDDY

Yeah, I'd believe it.

ROSE

Well, I like him. I used to be
afraid of doctors but not any more.
Why, he could operate on me any old
time and I wouldn't even be scared.

BUDDY

Rose, you are just entirely too uncritical of people.

ROSE

I ain't neither. Listen here, Buddy, besides all his vast medical knowledge, he has the most kindest heart beneath the professor way he acts -- he wants justice in the world and he's got some real interestin' ideas.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Mother opening the front door. Dr. Martinson is there-with his black bag, an icy polite look on his face.;

MOTHER

Oh, good evening, Doctor. Rose is a lot better, I just gave her her supper. She's almost all well now.

DR. MARTINSON

Let me be the judge of that, Madam.

MOTHER

Yes. Well. She's upstairs.

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAY/NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Rose in Rose's bedroom.

ROSE

Justice, that's what he wants, justice for everybody and especially for niggers. And I think that's real nice of him because black people don't have a very good life, you got to admit that, to be a nigger is sometimes practic'ly fatal, but the wife don't understand all of that, she thinks niggers are just so much dirt, which anybody ought to know better if they been on their ass their ownelves -- and that is the cause of his profound unhappiness, Buddy, that no-good-mean wife with all her Southern prejudice against niggers and everything!

It is a very long speech and delivered with a non-stop vitality that leaves Buddy a trifle groggy. Slowly, he shakes his head, as enter Mother.

MOTHER

The Doctor is here. And Brother,
supper is ready.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A SHOT of the Hillyer family minus Rose eating dinner in the dining room. The meal is almost finished, Daddy cutting apple pie.

DADDY

Is that Doctor still up there,
Brother.

BUDDY

Yeah, he's still up there.

DADDY

What's taking the rascal so long?

MOTHER

Honey, Dr. Martinson isn't a
rascal, he's one of the finest
physicians in Glenville. He studied
at Johns Hopkins University.

DADDY

I don't care where the polecat
studied.

MOTHER

Sometimes the negativism and
cynicism in you makes me want to
vomit.

(shakes her head sadly as

Buddy surreptitiously

puts his napkin on table)

Your real trouble is that you're
anti-intellectual. The irony is
women are supposed to be emotional,
but I never saw anybody who
depended more on emotion and
prejudice than you do.

BUDDY

(a half audible murmur)
Excuse me, gotta go to bathroom.

MOTHER

Now I have a plan about Rose, an educational plan. She's getting better and we don't want any more trouble --

(notices Buddy slipping out)

Brother, you ought to hear this.

BUDDY

I'll be right back.

The CAMERA FOLLOWS Buddy as he slips out during following speech.

MOTHER

First, those clothes she wears. They're too provocative. I've talked to her a lot about it and I think she understands...

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy as he goes down the hall, eyes narrowed.

ON Buddy posted in the doorway of the living room. He has his hands on his hips Daddy-style and is staring sternly up the stairs.

CUT TO A POV SHOT of Dr. Martinson with his black bag in hand and shoulders hunched coming down the stairs. The man is slinking, has guilt written all over him. As he goes down the stairs he glances to one side, sees Buddy and frowns. The man gives a sudden nervous start of fright as we hear Daddy's voice loud on the TRACK.

DADDY (O.S.)

Everything all right, Doctor?

CUT TO A POV shot of Daddy at the rear of the downstairs hall, napkin in hand and hands on hips. He is staring sternly at the doctor.

CUT BACK TO the Doctor. He glances nervously again toward Buddy.

ANOTHER POV SHOT of Buddy. Looks just like Daddy, hands on

hips.

ON Dr. Martinson, as he looks back at Daddy.

DR. MARTINSON

Oh, yes. Yes. Just fine. A few more days... a little more rest... she'll be perfectly healthy.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Daddy as he walks forward down the hall toward Buddy. The CAMERA PICKS UP Buddy and both of them grimly stare after the fleeing doctor.

DADDY

(in a low, conspiratorial tone)

What do you think, Brother?

BUDDY

I don't know. But you better watch him like a hawk, if he comes back again.

DADDY

He's not coming back again. We scared the rascal off, son.

(puts a hand on Buddy's shoulder)

Come on back to supper. Your mother has a theory about how to educate Rose.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

A SHOT of Mother and Rose and the children in the kitchen. We see a sewing machine and evidences of dressmaking. Rose has on a new and modest little dress that Mother evidently has made for her.

MOTHER

You see, Rose? Now that's the kind of dress you ought to wear.

ROSE

(less than enthusiastic)
Yeah, it's kinda nice.

MOTHER

You look very pretty in it, Rose.

Really, you do.

ROSE

(smiles at Mother)

Well, you're real sweet to make it for me.

(puts an arm around

Mother's shoulder)

There never was nobody like you. And you don't need to worry, I ain't goin' out no more.

MOTHER

Well, there's no reason you shouldn't go out, Rose... in moderation.

ROSE

(a little shrug)

I don't want to. When I was lyin' there in that hospital bed at death's door I says to myself, I ain't goin' out no more. If I ever get outta this, I'll just stay home.

Rose casually pulls the dress over her head and stands there in panties and bra, oblivious of Buddy and the children. She has about as much modesty as a small child herself.

ROSE (CONT'D)

(rather sadly)

Besides, there ain't no Mr. Right out there. Or if there is I can't find him, all I find is a pile of Mr. Wrongs. I ain't goin' out no more.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A SHOT of Daddy, Mother, Rose, and the children all in their Sunday best going up the steps of a church. Rose looks virginal in the modest dress Mother made for her.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A SHOT of Rose, Mother, Daddy and the children on a bench in church. We hear singing. Rose looks innocent, virginal as she sings. Mother gives her an approving look, exchanges glances

with Daddy.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the Hillyer family coming out of church. We see them shaking hands with the Minister. Rose smiles sweetly, modestly.

EXT. HILLYER DRIVEWAY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the Model A driving up in the driveway of the Hillyer house.

ANOTHER ANGLE on them all as they get out of the car. Rose takes Doll's hand with one hand and Waski's hand with the other.

ROSE

All right, we'll play monopoly then.

Mother, Daddy and Buddy watch Rose go up the steps with Doll and Waski.

MOTHER

She's like a different person. Being so sick made a big impression on her. I really think she's learned a lesson.

DADDY

Um-hmm.

(waits as Mother goes on up steps, then turns to Buddy and in a low tone)

Come with me, Brother. I want to show you something.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE GARDEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy and Buddy in a rose garden below the windows of the house.

It is Hawkshaw the Detective and his Unwilling Assistant. Daddy solemnly points to dim marks in the flower bed.

DADDY

See that, son? Now this is a heel, see, and there, that's the ball of a foot. Someone has been walking here.

BUDDY

(reluctantly)

Well, it's not very plain.

DADDY

That is because it rained recently, the rain has obscured the evidence. But you could still take plaster casts of these footprints, then match up the plaster casts with whosever shoes they are, and that way you could catch him -- understand?

BUDDY

But how would you find him?

DADDY

Well. Well, what I mean is, you could prove it was his shoes if you did catch him. But look this, Brother, it is even more interesting. Look at this mark here, and that mark over there. Now wouldn't you say those marks are the marks of a ladder?

BUDDY

Well, I don't know.

(trying to sound like a fellow detective, but doesn't want Rose to get caught)

No, I don't know, Daddy, I think the rain has obscured it.

DADDY

True, but if you look sharply you can see that those marks are the marks of a ladder. Now let's go back to the garage and see if the ladder has been tampered with.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy and Buddy back in the garage. They are scrutinizing a wooden ladder that hangs on pegs alongside the garage. All Daddy needs is a cap and a pipe to be a dead ringer for Sherlock Holmes. He is in dead earnest about this, it is no Joke and he does not dream of being funny.

DADDY

(points to ladder, eyes
narrowed)

See, son? The paint is flaked off here, freshly. Look at it, Brother, there is no question about it. Some person or persons unknown have very recently tampered with this ladder.

BUDDY

Well... maybe...

DADDY

And there's only one reason anybody would want this ladder -- to get up into Rose's bedroom in the dark of night! I am going to chain up this ladder and padlock it! -- and that is not all I am going to do!

Buddy stares at him in apprehension.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A shot of the whole family at dinner including Rose. Daddy puts down his napkin.

DADDY

That was a delicious repast, Rose, as usual. Now I have something of grave import to say to you and to Mrs. Hillyer.

(pauses, points at Buddy)

And I don't want you children snooping, do you hear me, Brother? Go up to your rooms.

INT. HILLYER HOME - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy, Doll and Waski in the upstairs. They tiptoe along furtively.

INT. HILLYER HOME - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of the children going down backstairs.

INT. HILLYER HOME - CELLAR - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy leading Doll and Waski down the steps of the cellar. The CAMERA follows as they walk past an ancient coal-burning furnace and...

INT. HILLYER HOME - CRAWL SPACE - NIGHT

climb up into 'a crawl space beneath the front of the house.

A shot of Buddy, Doll and Waski crawling along on dirt in the crawl space under the house. They come to a floor heat ventillator grill and stop. Buddy holds his fingers to his lips and listens intently.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy, Mother and Rose in Mother's bedroom study. We see the grillwork of the heat ventillator in the floor. Daddy is at the climax of his speech.

DADDY

We all love you, Rose. Even more now, since you've bravely surmounted all these epizootics. We admire you, we esteem you, we hold your hand with love and affection, we have an investment in you -- and I don't mean money, although God knows we have that, too, considering those godawful hospital bills...

INT. HILLYER HOME - CRAWL SPACE - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot CLOSE on Buddy, Doll and Waski in the crawl space. Buddy is smiling in relief. He whispers to Doll and Waski.

BUDDY

He's not going to fire her.

INT. HILLYER HOME - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

CUT BACK TO Daddy, Mother and Rose in the bedroom-study.

DADDY

I mean a human investment, Rose, we care about you, you matter to us. But we have innocent and unformed children in this house and the monkey and dog show has got to stop. Do you hear me?

ROSE

(meekly)

Yes, sir.

MOTHER

(a bit overwhelmed by

Daddy)

She hasn't actually done anything...

DADDY

(very firmly)

Just a moment, dear.

(turns to Rose and almost sadly)

We can't have it, Rose. Can you behave yourself -- or not? That is the question, to behave or not to behave, to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous chastity and keep your skirt down or to hoist it in the light of the moon and make whoopee -- that is the coil shuffling question.

(a dramatic pause, then points at her)

If you can't behave I am going to fire you and I say it in front of you and Mrs. Hillyer and I mean it. I point my rigid finger right at your nose, Rose, and I stare unwaveringly into your big blue eyes and I tell you... this is a final warning. Do you hear me?

ROSE

(very meekly)

Yes, sir.

INT. HILLYER HOME - CELLAR - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy, Doll and Waski as they climb from the crawl space down into the cellar by the furnace.

DOLL

Well, if she's got any sense at all, she'll listen to that.

BUDDY

Sense doesn't mean anything to

Rose. But I think we're on safe ground now. Daddy chained up the ladder, whoever it is can't get in the house.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - BUDDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A shot of Buddy sound asleep in his bed in the early gray dawn. As we DISSOLVE IN on the shot, we hear a loud BANGING and DADDY'S VOICE.

DADDY (O.S.)

Open that door! Open it up, open it this instant! Do you hear me open that door!

Buddy sits quickly up in bed, at once pushes back the covers and gets out of the bed, hurriedly reaches for his khaki pants.

INT. HILLYER HOME - UPSTAIRS HALL - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy in the upstairs hall. He is fully dressed and is banging angrily on Rose's door.

DADDY

Rose! Rose! Open this goddamn door!
Open it or I'll break it down!

ANOTHER ANGLE on Buddy as he hurries down the hall up to Daddy, in khaki pants and pulling a shirt over his head.

DADDY (CONT'D)

Open that door, damn you!

BUDDY

Daddy, what's the matter?

DADDY

(glances around at him)
She's got somebody in there,
Brother! His shoes are on the back porch -- there they were, naked and smiling at me!

(bangs on door)

Rose, open this door immediately!

ANOTHER ANGLE on Daddy as he bangs on the door. We see a frightened Doll in her nightgown in the b.g. down the hall, a

hand to her mouth. Daddy commences kicking at the door.

ANOTHER ANGLE, CLOSE ON Daddy.

DADDY (CONT'D)
Open up, Rose! Procrastination
won't help you!

Finally, the CLICK of a bolt and slowly the door opens. We see a wide-eyed, terrified Rose. She has a sheet around her and evidently nothing more.

DADDY (CONT'D)
(he pushes past her)
All right, where is he? Where's the
culprit?

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy in the bedroom. He yanks open the closet door, looks under the bed as he talks.

DADDY
Where is he? I know he's in here,
where is he, Rose? His shoes were
on the back porch I smiling at met
Where are you, you son of a bitch?

In her distress and dismay, the sheet has come down over Rose's shoulder and one of her breasts is exposed.

ROSE
(feebly, she is terrified)
There ain't nobody here, Mr.
Hillyer! Honest, there ain't!

DADDY
Where is he? Where have you got him
hid?
(notices curtain blowing
in wide open window)
Ah, ha!

The CAMERA follows Daddy as he strides angrily toward the window and leans out of it and stares down. Rose makes a little whimpering sound.

EXT. HILLYER SOME - GARDEN - DAWN

CUT TO a POV shot of the garden below as seen by Daddy from the window. We see lying on the ground BILLY, the Sulky Boy

who scared Mother. He wears only undershorts and is groaning, holding his leg, which evidently he has injured in jumping from the window.

INT. HILLYER HOME - ROSE'S BEDROOM - DAWN

On Daddy, as he turns from the window to Rose.

DADDY

And who, Rose, may I ask, is that?

ROSE

Well, it's Billy.

DADDY

And what, may I ask, was Billy doing here?

ROSE

(a straight answer)

Well, Mr. Hillyer, Billy's very poor, he don't have no money and there wasn't no place else to go.

DADDY

Well, it was a silly question.

ROSE

He's a nice boy, you'd like him. He wants to be a fireman.

DADDY

Ye gods and little fishes, a fireman. Put on some clothes, Rose, you're naked as a jay bird. When you're dressed, come on downstairs. I'm afraid your friend Billy is injured, where are his clothes?

ROSE

(begins weeping, both

breasts now are exposed)

Under the mattress. I hid 'em so you wouldn't be mad. He wants to marry me, he loves me. I can't marry him, he's too young and hasn't got no job, but he loves me... now you wouldn't hurt him, would you?

Daddy gently pulls the sheet around her to cover her breasts.

DADDY

I won't hurt him, honey.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

A shot of Daddy, Mother and Rose at the kitchen table drinking coffee in the early morning. Daddy looks grave, Mother looks sad, and Rose is crying into a handkerchief.

ROSE

Mr. Hillyer, I know it was bad and I hadn't ought to of done it. But I'm only a human girl and I... I ain't always perfect. I promise I won't let him in the house no more, I promise. Won't you and Mrs. Hillyer forgive me?

DADDY

Rose, darlin', you break my heart. But I am only a human man myself of the father variety. Rose, pack your bag, baby, as of this moment you are hired, mired and fired.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

A shot of the family at breakfast in the dining room. The dissolve suggests that some time has gone by. Daddy looks a bit grim, Rose has a wan and depressed expression. Mother looks worried.

DADDY

(politely)

Well, Rose, going out to look for a job today?

ROSE

(eyes down)

What's the use, there ain't none.

DADDY

Mmm. Would you get me another half a-cup of coffee, dear?

Rose rises and he watches her leave, then turns to Mother.

DADDY (CONT'D)

It has been three weeks since I "fired" her. Is there no way to get rid of this girl? Are we stuck with her for life?

MOTHER

She can't get a job, it's a depression. And we can't just throw her out on the street.

DADDY

The hell we can't.

Rose returns with coffee and pours it out for Daddy.

MOTHER

Rose, you don't look well and you haven't eaten a bit of breakfast.

ROSE

I'm not hungry. I can't eat nothin', I haven't been able to eat since I got fired. I think maybe I'm sick.

DADDY

God forbid. You're not sick, Rose, forget it. Don't get any notions in your head, you're not sick.

ROSE

Yes, sir.

MOTHER

She does look a little peaky.

DADDY

No, she doesn't, she's fine, fine. She's perfectly healthy, don't give her ideas.

ROSE

Well, I'll do the dishes, then I'm goin' to lie down a minute and rest. My stomach hurts.

Daddy watches Rose exit to the kitchen, then leans forward and speaks to Mother, his expression a bit sly.

DADDY

Her plan is obvious, plain as day.
She's going on a hunger strike. The
question is, how do we foil her?

MOTHER

She's just nervous and worried. And
you would be, too, if you had no
job and no place to go.

DADDY

(thinking hard)
Something has got to be done or
Rose is going to be in this house
forever.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILLYER HOME - DRIVEWAY AND PATIO - DAY

A shot of the Model A coming up the driveway of the Hillyer
House. It is late afternoon.

CUT TO a shot of Daddy getting out of the car. He has a
triumphant little smile on his face.

A shot of Daddy as he walks onto the patio, a rolled-up copy
of the Glenville Tribune in his hand and his straw hat on the
back of his head. He definitely has a triumphant expression.
Buddy on the patio notices it.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the kitchen on Mother and Rose. Mother is
helping a rather wan Rose prepare dinner. Enter Daddy.

DADDY

(as if everyone will be
pleased)
Well, I have got news! I called
long distance and spoke to Cousin
Hop and you'll be glad to know,
Rose, I have found you a job!

ROSE

Tennessee?

DADDY

Yes, Tennessee, a lovely state!

ROSE

Well. What kinda job is it?

DADDY

Ahh-hh, you'll like it. It's a fine, outdoor-type job.

ROSE

You mean a farm?

DADDY

No, no, not exactly. It isn't a farm in the sense that it's a farm. Not at all. It's a... dairy establishment. You'll like it! I'm sure you'll like it because it's so... peaceful!

Rose bows her head and begins crying.

MOTHER

Honey, Rose was born on a farm and has terrible memories of farm life. Now I don't think --

DADDY

Just a minute, Rose, you don't understand. This isn't a dirt farm like the one you were born on, it's nice. A neighbor of Cousin Hop's, I talked to him on the phone, a fine man... it's not a farm, damn it, it's a beautiful dairy establishment! Stop crying, Rose! Do you hear me? Stop crying, it's ideal!

MOTHER

I don't know how you can call it ideal -- don't you know what the word "farm" means to her?

DADDY

I don't give a hoot in hell's hollow what it means to her! She can't stay in this house forever! I fired her, damn it!

MOTHER

It sounds like a farm to me. Calling it a dairy establishment, that's just trickery and flummery.

DADDY

Trickery and flummery or not, she's going there tomorrow on the bus! It's settled! And I must say we've been more than fair to you, Rose, it's pretty selfish and mean hearted of you to sit there and cry like that!

Rose sits head bowed at the kitchen table.

ROSE

I'm not cryin' because of me, I'm cryin' because of somebody else.

DADDY

(stops in mid-air, so to speak)

What?

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Buddy outside on the patio, listening intently at the window. He leans forward with a keen interest, eyes wide.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN

CUT TO a shot CLOSE on Daddy. He is peering intently at Rose.

DADDY

What did you say, Rose?

CLOSE ON Rose, as she turns, weeping.

ROSE

Well, I was born on a farm myself... and I hate to think of the baby being born on one.

On them all. Daddy and Mother stare in shock at Rose.

DADDY

What baby? What baby? What baby are you speaking about?

ROSE

Mine.

DADDY

Your baby?

ROSE

Yes, mine. I'm going to have one.

DADDY

(he is "poleaxed,"
staggered)

Good God almighty. This is a
catastrophe, they won't hire her.

MOTHER

(looks up, sees Buddy in
patio window)

Brother, get out of that window!

Buddy ducks down out of eight instantly. Both Mother and
Daddy, however, are too preoccupied and upset to be concerned
with him.

DADDY

(stares off groggily into
space)

This is a total catastrastroke. As
of this moment I am stumped, I
admit, I am stumped and treed both,
the hound dogs have me surrounded.

MOTHER

(as Rose begins crying)

Poor thing, don't cry, Rose. I know
you feel awful, but don't cry,
honey, nobody's perfect. Who's the
father, dear?

ROSE

Well, I... I... I don't know...
maybe it was... but no, you can't
be sure about a thing like that. It
wasn't Billy, I didn't know him.

MOTHER

(gently)

I know it's embarrassing... but who
were you exposed to, dear?

ROSE

Well, now, Mrs. Hillyer, I... ah-h,
that's kinda hard to say.

DADDY

You're not going to get anywhere

with that line of questioning. The problem is, what are we going to do?

MOTHER

That's why I'm asking her who the father is. It's the most vital question of all. Who's the father, dear?

DADDY

(offhand; he is thinking hard about what to do)
She already told you, she doesn't know.

MOTHER

(naively)
But she must know... unless... unless... Rose, was there more than one person?

ROSE

(weeping in handkerchief)
Oh-h, Mrs. Hillyer, I... I can't think. I... I'm not really sure.

MOTHER

(gently, a tiny frown, a bit shocked)
Rose, really, you shouldn't act like that.

ROSE

(weeping)
Oh, I know. But I didn't, really. Honestly, I didn't. There was only one, but he's out of town and leave no forwardin' address.

DADDY

(a brilliant idea)
Ah, ha! Hold the phone! No forwarding address, huh?
(turns to Mother)
In the shock of this brilliant move, I forgot something.

MOTHER

What did you forget?

DADDY

I forgot that Rose will lie like a child. She's no more pregnant than I am, she just doesn't want to go to that farm!

ROSE

Yes, I am.

DADDY

No, you're not.

ROSE

Yes, Mr. Hillyer, I am.

DADDY

(triumphant, sure he's right)

All right, tell us, Rose, what makes you think you're pregnant?

ROSE

(simply)

I haven't had my period for three months and my stomach is getting big.

DADDY

(again "poleaxed" for a moment, but pulls himself together)

I don't believe it.

ROSE

It's so, Mr. Hillyer.

DADDY

All right, damn it. We've seen you with your clothes off around here, stand up and pull up your dress and let's take a look!

MOTHER

Honey!

DADDY

She doesn't have to take her panties off, we can see her stomach with 'em on. All she has to do is pull up her dress and let us see her belly.

ROSE

Well, all right, if you just won't believe me.

Rose stands up.

MOTHER

Rose, you don't have to.

ROSE

I don't mind.

DADDY

Now, you will see, she's lying like she always does -- that belly will be flat as a pancake!

Rose lifts her dress and Daddy leans forward eagerly to confirm his belief. Rose stands there with her skirt lifted. She has on a pair of skimpy white panties. An unmistakable, definite protrusion can be seen in the area below her navel just above the line of her panties. A stupefied look is on Daddy's face.

MOTHER

I'd say about three months. Are you satisfied?

DADDY

I am poleaxed and in a non compos mentis condition. I wash my hands or the whole thing.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Doll walking up onto the patio with schoolbooks. The CAMERA follows her as she walks over to Buddy, who is crouched down eavesdropping at another window. She whispers to him.

DOLL

What's goin' on?

BUDDY

Rose says she's goin' to have a baby and she sure looks it, but I don't think so.

DOLL

A baby... and she isn't even

married.

BUDDY

That's the least of her troubles. Rose had a rare tropic disease and the little tubes in her that babies swim down are all stopped up, she told me all about it.

DOLL

If it isn't a baby... what is it?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DR. MARTINSON'S HOME OFFICE WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

A shot of Buddy and Rose in a rather elegant Doctor's waiting room. It is night and they are alone on a small sofa. Buddy has a very solemn and worried look. Rose lies weeping in terror on his shoulder.

ROSE

Oh, Buddy, they're gonna cut me all up! They're gonna cut my stummick all open, I'll die!

BUDDY

(trying to be brave)
You won't die, Rose.

ROSE

Buddy, I'm scared, I'm scared!

INT. DR. MARTINSON'S SOME OFFICE - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Dr. Martinson's private office in his home, quite a bit more luxurious than his office at the hospital. A sober-looking Mother and Daddy sit talking to him. He almost seems to relish the situation.

DR. MARTINSON

I'm not surprised you thought she was pregnant. An ovarian cyst can look very much like pregnancy. But it was pure wishful thinking on her part. The girl can never have children, she had gonorrhoea at fifteen and it was untreated.

MOTHER

(shocked, rather feebly)

Gonorrhoea?

DR. MARTINSON

Don't worry, Madam, she can't infect your dear little kiddies. She long ago fully recovered, but the disease did irreparable damage. The girl is permanently barren.

MOTHER

Well, that's pathetic. Poor Rose, what a life she has had.

DR. MARTINSON

We make our own lives, Madam. As for malignancy, I don't think so, it's very unlikely. I probably shouldn't have even mentioned that possibility to her.

MOTHER

(rather coldly, seems disenchanted with him)
No, you shouldn't have, it was needlessly cruel. She thinks she has cancer and is going to die.

DR. MARTINSON

She's an adult, Mrs. Hillyer, I was merely giving her the facts.

DADDY

Well, it's a disaster. I don't know what to say, Doctor, I am floored. How dangerous is the operation?

DR. MARTINSON

Any major operation is dangerous. However, as we know from her previous illness, she's a very strong girl.

DADDY

Well, if it isn't malignant and she can get through the operation all right, it might be better than her really being pregnant. She doesn't even know who the father might have been.

DR. MARTINSON

Oh, it's definitely better, beyond question. A fatherless child, an ignorant girl with no job, no money, no home. It's fortunate, a blessing really, and a stroke of good luck for another reason I want to mention to you.

MOTHER

(totally disenchanted with the Doctor)

This conversation is making me a little sick.

DADDY

Honey, that's no way to talk to the Doctor, he's merely doing his job, dear.

Oddly enough, in the stress of the situation, Daddy now seems almost friendly to Dr. Martinson, whom previously he considered a polecat.

INT. DR. MARTINSON'S HOME OFFICE WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Buddy and Rose in the waiting room. He is helping her lie on the couch on pillows as she weeps, a hand over her face.

BUDDY

I gotta find out what they're saying. You lie back and rest, Rose, and I'll give you a report on it.

ROSE

I don't want to know...

INT. DR. MARTINSON'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

CUT TO a CLOSE shot of Dr. Martinson. An expression of distaste is on his face. The CAMERA pulls back as he talks to Mother and Daddy.

DR. MARTINSON

I'm sorry the truth nauseates you, Mrs. Hillyer, because before you leave there's a bit more of it I'd like to put to you. This operation provides a therapeutic opportunity that I feel is quite important in

regard to this particular girl, who suffers not only from an ovarian cyst but from a certain psychoneurotic condition as well.

MOTHER

What do you mean, what kind of gobbledygook talk is that?

DADDY

Go ahead, Doctor, I think I am following you.

DR. MARTINSON

(gives Mother an aloof glance, then to Daddy)

First, about the girl's history. Evidently she's been very promiscuous since early childhood, she has no control over her sexual impulses. Furthermore, she is permanently barren, she can't have children.

DADDY

Go on, Doctor.

MOTHER

(quietly)

Yes, go on.

DR. MARTINSON

I am thinking particularly of the other ovary. As a rule I don't believe in removing it. The woman's hormonal system is profoundly disturbed, she is subject to possibly serious depression, she loses many of her secondary sexual characteristics for example, her breasts might shrink and become flabby, facial hair might appear along with a coarsening of the features, and of course her sexual drive is greatly diminished, especially in a girl or young woman. For these reasons I am opposed to removing the other ovary, as a rule. Do you follow me?

DADDY

I am ahead of you.

DR. MARTINSON

Then... may I speak quite frankly with you, Mr. Hillyer?

DADDY

Please do.

DR. MARTINSON

I have of course observed the girl in treating her.

DADDY

Of course.

DR. MARTINSON

I think we both know her.

DADDY

Yes, we know her.

MOTHER

What are you talking about? I don't understand all this mumbo jumbo and the funny looks on your faces.

DR. MARTINSON

Mrs. Hillyer, this girl is sick in more ways than one. She is an extreme psychoneurotic with uncontrollable sexual impulses. It would be a mercy to spare her the suffering she causes herself and others. Therefore I recommend as a therapeutic measure the removal of her second ovary. It is ethically and medically the only proper decision in this case and I suspect your husband agrees with me.

DADDY

Reluctantly, I do. It would be a blessing to her and everyone else. The girl is oversexed and I say -- spay her!

MOTHER

(slowly rises to her feet
and in a trembling voice)
Over... my... dead... body!

A long, frozen pause as both Daddy and Dr. Martinson stare at Mother in surprise. She stares at the Doctor with fire in her eyes. He seems already to shrink a little. Finally she speaks with a calm fury.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Are you human beings or are you some kind of male monsters? Is there no limit to which you won't go to keep your illusions about yourselves?

DR. MARTINSON

(shrinking a little)

Illusions, Madam?

MOTHER

You'd go so far as to mutilate a helpless girl who has no means to defend herself, you'd go that far? Don't you think I know what you've just said and don't you think I understand the dreadful and revolting crime you've just conspired to commit?

Dr. Martinson stares at her in fear and shock, intimidated by the calm fury and ice-cold moral indignation.

He opens his mouth as if to speak, but no sound comes out. Mother turns to Daddy.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I thought I knew you. I thought I knew you better, I thought in your heart you were a good and kind man. Well, I can't believe what I've just heard in this room. A defenseless girl depending on you for protection, and you propose to mutilate and destroy her. How could you listen even for a moment to that sadistic man?

DADDY

(slightly shattered)

Well, now, darlin'... give me a chance to defend myself.

MOTHER

I can't believe you really meant it, if I did I'd want to die. You aren't a male monster, that man is but you aren't. Look me in the eye and tell me, do you really want to take Rose's womanhood away from her when it's all she has got?

DADDY

Well, I... I hadn't thought about it that much. I was thinking... well, it's an idea, the girl is oversexed, and...

MOTHER

Rose isn't oversexed, that's ridiculous. If you're going to talk nonsense, I don't want to talk to you at all. Rose is exactly the same as the rest of us, except more so.

DADDY

Well, I know, more so. That's why I was thinking... maybe she'd be better off.

MOTHER

(with a quiet fury)

Better off? How could she ever find love and happiness, if you did what you're talking about? Are you insane?

DR. MARTINSON

(rather feebly)

Now, may I say, I am against that particular procedure, as a general rule. But in a case of near nymphomania, it doesn't seem monstrous to me at all, but medically advisable.

Both Mother and Daddy totally ignore him. Mother's eyes are fixed on Daddy and he is struggling with himself, staring down at the floor.

DADDY

Well, now, I admit... in Rose's case, it would be cruel. If Rose wasn't attractive and pretty...

well, it would probably be bad for almost any young woman. I don't know exactly what I was thinking about, the doctor said it and it sounded reasonable.

Daddy finally looks up at Mother and admits his error like a man.

DADDY (CONT'D)

But you're right, darlin', you're absolutely dead right, it would be an awful and horrible thing to do. I'm sorry, honey, forgive me, I didn't mean it.

Mother turns from Daddy and walks up to the desk and stares down at Dr. Martinson as if he is a loathesome bug upon which she intends to step.

MOTHER

I will not cry like a woman. If I'm upset it's because of what my husband said, not because of you. You can't make me cry like a woman, a woman has got just as much intelligence and self-control as a man. And you get this in your head. If you hurt that girl, I'll hire lawyers and sue you for malpractice for every penny you have got, I'll do my level best to ruin you. Do you understand me?

DR. MARTINSON

(a sickly smile, he is licked totally)
Yes, I understand you, but you have misunderstood me completely.

MOTHER

(icy cold)
I understand you perfectly. You leave that girl alone, you wretched man, or you will be sorry.

DR. MARTINSON

(a foolish smile, as if Mother has paid him some kind of compliment)
Actually of course I won't operate,

I don't do major surgery. Dr. Hardy will operate and of course he'll be guided by your wishes in this respect.

MOTHER

Let him be guided not by my wishes and not by Rose's wishes, although I am sure they are identical. Let him be guided by the wishes of the creative power of life itself, because that is what has spoken through me tonight.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET BY HOSPITAL - DAY

A shot of the Model A parked on the street outside a hospital in a small Southern town. We see Daddy slowly pacing back and forth in front of the hospital entrance, his head bowed and his hands clasped behind him.

ANOTHER ANGLE, CLOSER on the Model A. Buddy sits in the middle on the front seat, Mother is at the window. Doll and Waski are on the back seat. They all are staring with pale worry at the pacing Daddy fifty feet away. All are frightened, Mother is very pale. Doll has a tiny handkerchief to her eyes and is half crying. Even Waski is very scared.

WASKI

(seems on verge of tears)
Mother... is Rose going to die?

MOTHER

(in a trembly voice)
No, Waski, she won't die, because we are praying for her.

CUT TO a shot of Daddy from the POV of the car. He looks at his wristwatch, frowns and walks into the entrance of the hospital.

ANOTHER ANGLE, on them all in the car. They wait, pale and silent. Doll snuffles in her handkerchief.

DOLL

Why is it taking so long?

BUDDY

Here comes Daddy.

CUT TO a POV shot of Daddy as he slowly walks up to the car, his straw hat in his hand.

CUT TO a shot of Mother CLOSE on her face as she stares at her husband as if trying to read the news on his face. A tiny frown comes on her forehead as icy fear comes in her eyes.

ANOTHER ANGLE, CLOSE on Daddy as he walks up to the window of the car, hat in hand. A trace of tears can be seen in his eyes, but when he speaks his voice is calm.

DADDY

(philosophically)

Well, I thought I'd seen the limit,
but these are the most great, gaga
epizootics she's ever had.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Daddy and them all. In pale fear, mother stares at him, uncertain what has happened.

MOTHER

How is she?

DADDY

Fine.

As mother sighs in heartfelt relief...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

A shot of Daddy sitting with mother at the kitchen table.

Bright cheerful sunshine comes in the window that opens on the patio. Rose comes into the SHOT carrying a coffee pot, a sunny smile on her face.

DADDY

You're looking very chipper this
morning, Rose. Sow do you feel?

ROSE

Perfect, wonderful, good as I ever
felt! Except for a big old scar on
my stummick, I wouldn't even know I
been in the hospital.

DADDY

(with mild irony, as she

pours him coffee)
Well, we know you were there. The bill that hospital sent was absolutely horrendous.

ROSE
(her smile fades a trifle)
Well, I'll pay you that back sometime, Mr. Hillyer.

MOTHER
Don't worry about it, honey.

Daddy pauses, seems to be struggling with himself, he is frowning.

DADDY
Rose... I hate to be mean, but...
(another pause, then a little shrug)
Oh, nevermind, forget it.

ROSE
(in a little sad voice)
What was it, Mr. Hillyer?

DADDY
(rises)
Nothing, Rose.

Daddy stops beside her, puts an arm around her shoulders and with weary irony.

DADDY (CONT'D)
We all love you, darlin'.

Daddy wearily picks up his straw hat from the kitchen counter and walks out of the kitchen on the patio, as the CAMERA stays on Rose and mother.

MOTHER
Don't worry, honey, you'll find something.

ROSE
I was offered that job as a waitress.

MOTHER
Forget about it, I don't want you working in one of those honky

tonks.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Buddy on the patio. He has eight or nine gourds on an outdoor table and is cutting round holes in them and emptying out the seed. He glances up as Rose walks up to him, pocketbook in hand. She seems a little sad. But she smiles at him.

ROSE

Hi, Buddy.

(puts an arm around his
shoulders)

How's my sweetheart who never told
on me when I was bad?

BUDDY

Okay.

ROSE

(picks up a hollowed out
gourd)

Makin' homes for purple martins,
huh? We had 'em on the farm.
They're the prettiest things.
That's what I wish I was, a bird.
Just fly around catch bugs and have
a lot of fun.

BUDDY

What are you going to do, Rose?

ROSE

Take a little walk with me, huh?

EXT. HILLYER HOME - GARDEN

CUT TO a shot of Rose and Buddy on a beautiful summer day walking in the garden behind the Hillyer house. They walk up to an empty rabbit hutch. The hutch is made of rough lumber and chicken wire and has cubicles for about a dozen rabbits.

ROSE

(as she stares at the
empty hutch)

I guess I'll work as a waitress,
Buddy. I done that before and it
got me in worse trouble than you
could know, but I can't stay here
no more. Why did you get rid of

your rabbits, Buddy?

BUDDY

They're dumb things. I got tired of them.

ROSE

(smiles, touches chicken wire)

Did you know when I was a child we had pretty near five hundred rabbits?

BUDDY

Five hundred rabbits?

ROSE

Yep, we had 'em in orange crates all over. It was Daddy's dream. He was goin' to get rich raisin' rabbits. It was what killed Daddy. He didn't drown hisself till a long time later after Momma and Lunette died of typhoid, but it was them rabbits what killed him.

BUDDY

How did the rabbits kill him?

ROSE

He thought he could sell 'em, but nobody but country folks eat rabbits, Buddy, and they ain't got no money. We had to eat them dern rabbits our own selves. Every dern one, and it took about four years to eat 'em all up.

BUDDY

(a little smile)

Well, that doctor said you got protein somewhere and I guess he was right.

ROSE

Boy did I get sick of rabbit. But later on after Momma died and Daddy wasn't doin' nothin' but drinkin', I sure would of been glad for a little rabbit stew. You know, I oughtn't to of told you about what

Daddy done when I was a child.
Until them rabbits ruined him, he
was a real good man, Buddy.

BUDDY

What was your mother like?

ROSE

A saint just like your own mother.
She's up in heaven right now, her
and Lunette, there ain't no doubt
about it.

ANOTHER ANGLE as Buddy and Rose walk away hand in hand away
from the rabbit hutch.

BUDDY

Maybe it was eating all those
rabbits that made you sexy, Rose.

ROSE

Buddy, sex don't mean a thing to
me. It ain't nothin' but a mosquito
bite.

(stops, smiles, puts an
arm around his shoulders)

I'll tell you a secret. Girls don't
want sex, Buddy, girls want love.

DISSOLVE TO:

HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM NIGHT

A shot of Mother and Daddy in the Hillyer living room late at
night. Mother sits with a worried expression on a chair, a
kimono around her shoulders. Daddy is pacing worriedly in
pajamas and a bathrobe. He looks at his wristwatch.

DADDY

It's twenty after one.

MOTHER

I don't understand it. Even in the
wild days she was never as late as
this.

DADDY

I'm afraid it's my fault. I made
her feel guilty this morning --
(glances around, sees
something in doorway)

Brother, what are you doing up?

ANOTHER ANGLE on Buddy in pajamas as he enters the living room.

BUDDY

I heard you talking. Hasn't Rose come in?

DADDY

No, she hasn't.

(frowns, looks around)

I think I hear a car.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - DRIVEWAY

CUT TO a shot of a 1930's automobile in the Hillyer driveway at night as it drives up and stops before the front steps.

ANOTHER ANGLE, CLOSE on Rose and Dave Wilkie in the car. Here DAVE is much YOUNGER, of course, and a rather handsome man in a stolid way. Even though he is younger than when we saw him on the plane, he is quite a bit older than Rose. Rose's eyes are opened wide, she is a bit breathless, obviously something important has happened. Dave stares at her as if fascinated, almost as if awed.

DAVE

(rather stiffly)

I want to thank you for a wonderful afternoon and evenin'. Can I see you in the mornin'?

ROSE

(a bit breathless)

Yes. Year you can, you sure can.

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Daddy peering out of the window of the living room.

DADDY

Why, that looks like Dave Wilkie,

MOTHER

Who?

DADDY

You know Dave, his wife used to do dressmaking for you before she

died.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT STEPS - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of Rose on the steps. Happy as a clam, she turns and waves at Dave in the car, then goes on up the steps.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - NIGHT

CUT TO a shot of the front hall as Rose comes through the front door. She is very excited, happy.

INT. HILLYER HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The CAMERA follows her as she goes into the living room with her big news.

ROSE

You'll never guess what happened!

(pauses, then
dramatically)

I have met Mr. Right! I been with him all day and he loves me, I know he does, he loves me and he's going to marry me. He's practi'cly ast me already!

MOTHER

Well... well, that's wonderful, Rose.

ROSE

And who do you suppose he is? That policeman who arrested me, the one I bit! He is Mr. Right!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

VARIOUS SHOTS of a wedding in a tiny country church. We see shots of Rose in a white wedding dress, smiling, happy. Dave is stiff and solemn in his best suit. Daddy gravely gives Rose away. We hear no dialogue here, MUSIC on track. We see Mother, Buddy, Doll and Waski in the front row, all in Sunday best and very solemn. We see a CLOSE SHOT of Rose's knees trembling beneath her white wedding dress as a country minister marries them. VARIOUS SHOTS of a rather idyllic country wedding in a very plain, unpretentious country church, and...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A shot of Rose, Dave, Buddy, Doll and Waski at a picnic celebration outside the church by a running brook.

The scene should be beautiful in summertime. We see a barbecue pit, homemade ice cream in the metal can, other picnic things. A happy Rose is kissing first Buddy, then Doll, then Waski. Dave smiles fondly, but rather stiffly at her.

ROSE

And now Waski, are you and Buddy and Dolly ready for some ice cream, huh? Do you like picnics or don't you?

WASKI

We like 'em! We love 'em!

DAVE

Well, it isn't a picnic, honey. It's a barbecue.

ROSE

(a little smile)
Okay.

DAVE

A picnic doesn't involve roast meat, hon. At a barbecue you have a lot of roast meat.

CUT TO a shot CLOSE on Buddy as he stares pensively at Dave. The CAMERA stays on him as we hear VOICES OVER. Rose is happy, Dave phlegmatic.

ROSE (V.O.)

Well, all I know is there's ice cream. And I'm gonna have me a plate right now!

DAVE (V.O.)

Better wait, hon. It'll spoil your appetite. Have some barbecue first.

The CAMERA stays on Buddy, as he stares pensively at Dave. He has no expression on his face at all.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A shot of Rose and Dave bidding goodbye to the Hillyers. Daddy, Mother, Buddy, Doll and Waski are in the model A. Rose is obviously on the verge of tears as Dave speaks solemnly to Daddy.

DAVE

Well, we are off to Savannah, Mr. Hillyer. No more police work, I'm getting in the construction field.

DADDY

Good luck, Dave. And good luck to you, too, Rosebud.

ROSE

(begins crying)

Oh, Mr. Hillyer! I just can't stand to say goodbye!

Daddy starts the Model A.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I love you all! Goodbye, Buddy!
Goodbye, Dolly! Goodbye, Waski!

ANOTHER ANGLE on Rose as she weeps and waves the handkerchief.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Goodbye! Goodbye!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT./EXT. MODEL A - STREET - DAY

A shot of Daddy and Mother in the Model A as Daddy drives. We see Doll and Waski solemn on the back seat, but Buddy is not visible.

DADDY

Well, thank God we are rid of her at last. And the best thing of all is that she's happy. The little nut is happy, she found Mr. Right in the nick of time!

MOTHER

Well, yes, she's happy. Of course Dave doesn't have her life force, not at all. There isn't much furniture in his house, just a table and one or two chairs, whereas Rose has furniture coming out of the windows.

DADDY

Honey, he is Mr. Right.

MOTHER

(slowly nods)

Yes, I think so. He adores her, it's almost pitiful the way he worships her. I just hope she isn't too much for him.

Mother pauses, frowning, she has her doubts, looks over her shoulder.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

What do you think, Brother?

Mother frowns in surprise.

CUT TO a POV shot of Buddy on the back seat of the car. Now it is clear why we couldn't see him in the other shot. He is lying down on the seat of the car with his Sunday coat pulled over his head.

ANOTHER ANGLE on Mother and Buddy, Doll, Waski. Buddy lies on the seat, motionless with his coat over his head.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

What's the matter with him?

DOLL

(seems awed, staring down at Buddy)

I don't know. I think he's cryin'!

CUT TO ANOTHER ANGLE on Mother, from the front as she slowly turns back and stares thoughtfully ahead. The shot is also on Daddy. They both stare ahead in pensive silence. Finally Mother speaks.

MOTHER

(rather sadly)

Maybe Brother is right. Maybe so.

DISSOLVE TO:

END OF FLASHBACK

INT./EXT. HERTZ CAR ON INTERSTATE - DAY

ON Willcox Hillyer behind the wheel of the Hertz car. He is staring pensively ahead, a faint trace of tears in his eyes. It is a very faint trace, a look of mild irony and amusement is on his face.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(dryly, to himself)

Mr. Right. Dave Wilkie.

Willcox slowly shakes his head.

EXT. HERTZ CAR - INTERSTATE EXIT - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the red Ford as it takes a turn-off from an Interstate.

EXT. HERTZ CAR - BUSTLING CITY - DAY

CUT TO a shot of the red Ford as it drives into a rather bustling little Southern city that does not look at all like the "Glenville" we have seen. A lot of traffic, new roads, filling stations, prosperity. It could be Rome, Georgia as it is today.

EXT. CAR PAST HOLIDAY INN - DAY

ANOTHER SHOT of the red Ford going past a modern Holiday Inn in the city.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

ON the red Ford as it turns into a familiar driveway, that of the old Hillyer home.

But insofar as possible it looks different now, like a relic from the past.

Maybe the house needs painting, the garden is in weeds -- the place is not exactly dilapidated, but it is marked by time.

A SHOT of Willcox Hillyer as he gets out of the red Ford and walks up the familiar steps of the front porch, travel bag in hand.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT PORCH - DAY

ON Willcox Hillyer at the front door. He tries the knob, opens the door and goes inside.

INT. HILLYER HOME - FRONT HALL - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Willcox Hillyer as he glances into the living room. The room looks the same but different -it is musty, dim.

Willcox Hillyer stares at it as if haunted a bit, turns and the CAMERA follows him as he crosses the hall and looks into Mother's old bedroom-study. This room is quite different. The four poster is gone. The room is dusty, musty, dark. Magazines are on the floor in a ring around Mother's old study chair. We see "male" things. It is apparent Daddy lives alone in this room.

A SHOT of Willcox Hillyer as he walks down the familiar hall back to the kitchen.

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

He looks around. No one is there. He glances at a modern refrigerator that is in pretty poor shape, glances with a frown at dishes in the sink unwashed. He goes on out to the patio.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Daddy putting out seed for birds on a table on the patio. Daddy now is a very old man, but his personality and style are the same as ever. He looks up with a stern frown as Willcox Hillyer comes out on the patio.

DADDY

Well, you rascal, where'd you come from?

WILLCOX HILLYER

Hello, Daddy. How are you?

DADDY

About as good as can be expected with one foot in the grave. Good to see you, son.

(they shake hands)

Did you bring any of that Yankee whisky with you?

WILLCOX HILLYER

It isn't Yankee whisky, Daddy, it's Scotch.

DADDY

It's Yankee whisky to me.

Daddy takes him by the arm, leads him back into the kitchen.

DADDY (CONT'D)

How do you stand it up there, boy, in all that ice and snow? What are you, a polar bear?

INT. HILLYER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Willcox Hillyer and Daddy as they enter the kitchen. The former opens his travel bag and takes out a bottle of Teacher's.

WILLCOX HILLYER

I can use a drink after the plane ride I had.

DADDY

Your wife and children are back in New Hampshire in the snow?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(a little smile; it is summer, there couldn't be snow in New Hampshire)
Yeah, they're in the snow.

Willcox opens whisky, looks for glasses in the dusty familiar cupboard.

DADDY

Are they polar bears, too?

WILLCOX HILLYER

(frowns at cupboard)
Good God, the way you live here. This place hasn't been dusted since Mother died. Look at that goddamned refrigerator.

DADDY

Got another twenty years in it, boy.
(something seems to be bothering him)

By the way, son, do you recall Rose, that pretty blonde girl who came to our house way back in 1935 or 1936 and caused such a damnable commotion.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(frowns, turns and stares at him)

Of course I recall Rose. In fact I've been thinking of no one else for the last hour and a half.

DADDY

How could that be, son?

WILLCOX HILLYER

Dave Wilkie of all people was sitting by me on the plane -- her first husband. It's funny you would mention Rose. Did you hear from her?

Willcox pours out whisky.

DADDY

(casually)

Well, yes, in a manner of speaking. You'll have the back bedroom, son, Mother's old art room. Just be careful going down the stairs you don't break your Yankee neck.

EXT. HILLYER HOME - PATIO - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Willcox Hillyer and Daddy as they walk with their drinks out to the patio.

WILLCOX HILLYER

What's all this about Rose? What do you mean, you heard from her in a manner of speaking?

DADDY

Oh, I heard from her, I got a letter from her, she's fine. But there is some sad news.

WILLCOX HILLYER

What sad news? Did her cancer come back?

DADDY

Oh, no, no, she got all over that.
Rose is fine. Let's sit down, son.

WILLCOX HILLYER

Is her husband sick or something?

DADDY

No, it's another thing. I was going
to write you about it, but since
you were coming down anyway I
thought I'd wait till you got here.
What did Dave Wilkie have to say?

ANOTHER ANGLE on Willcox Hillyer and the aged Daddy as they
sit on the patio sipping whisky. Willcox Hillyer is not
disturbed or worried about Rose, Daddy has been very casual
and offhand about it and he has no inkling of what the news
really is.

WILLCOX HILLYER

The pitiful son of a bitch said
Rose was a nymphomaniac.

DADDY

Um-hmm, and I suppose that incensed
you?

WILLCOX HILLYER

You're damn right it incensed me,
the miserable bastard. He also said
the kikes and the niggers have
taken over Washington. D.C.

DADDY

(nods somberly)
Yeah, I know, he was up here. It's
pitiful like you say. When he lost
Rose it ruined the man, it
destroyed him totally when he lost
Rose.

WILLCOX HILLYER

He didn't lose her, he threw her
away.

DADDY

Yes, I guess he did. He threw her
away and it was the mistake of his
life.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(staring off pensively
into space)

You know, I don't know this town
any more. All this traffic, new
buildings, prosperity...

(pauses, almost as if in
pain)

Where have the years gone, Daddy?
Where is the little town I knew as
a boy?

DADDY

At rest in the creative universe
with Mother, son.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(a little smile)

That's what she would say herself.

DADDY

(simply, he is not
emoting)

A wonderful woman, boy.

WILLCOX HILLYER

It always gives me a funny feeling
to come home. Dear old Southland.
Gone. It's all gone, Daddy --

(a fond little smile)

-- except you, you're still here.

DADDY

(matter-of-factly)

Not for long, boy. I've overstayed
my welcome already.

WILLCOX HILLYER

It's funny you would mention Rose,
I was thinking about her all the
way up in the car.

(gives him a glance)

Or maybe it isn't so funny.

DADDY

(as if in previous
thought)

I'm older than hell, boy. But this
Yankee whisky is mighty fine, I'll
say that.

WILLCOX HILLYER

All right, Daddy. We have our drink, we're out on the patio, you have prepared me for it. Rose's cancer has come back, hasn't it?

DADDY

(simply, quietly)

No, son, she is dead.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(numb with shock, for a moment can't speak or think)

Dead, Rose is dead? You mean... she died?

DADDY

I am afraid so, son. About a week ago. Her husband phoned me, she had asked him to call me if anything happened.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(in awful shock)

But... but how? She was young! Rose wasn't old!

DADDY

She was fifty-six, son. Of course she didn't look it, nowhere near it. The cancer came back, I'm afraid I fibbed about that. But it was very quick, son. She was in the hospital only two weeks, and the last week she didn't know anything.

WILLCOX HILLYER

(in distress, a slightly choked voice)

Excuse me, I'll be right back.

Willcox Hillyer rises with his drink in hand and walks across the patio to the kitchen door.

INT. HILLYER HOME KITCHEN - DAY

CUT TO a shot of Willcox Hillyer as he goes into the kitchen. He picks up the whisky bottle and pours himself a very large drink.

ANOTHER ANGLE, CLOSE on Willcox Hillyer as he stares across the kitchen lost in thought.

DISSOLVE TO:

BLUR-BORDERED SHOT OF ROSE

in the kitchen, a sunny smile on her face as she pours coffee for Daddy. A very quick moment, only a few seconds.

DISSOLVE TO:

A CLOSE SHOT OF WILLCOX HILLYER

in the kitchen, drink in hand, a look of grief on his face. He struggles to control himself, puts a hand over his eyes, then pulls himself together, turns from the kitchen.

SHOT OF THE PATIO

ON Willcox Hillyer and Daddy as the former walks up with his refreshed drink and sits down. He is in control now, his face is expressionless and he is seemingly calm.

WILLCOX HILLYER

Well, you have knocked me for a hell of a loop, old man. A hell of a loop.

DADDY

(simply)

I know. You loved her. So did I. It was an awful shock to me, too. An awful shock. Rose was so alive it's hard to believe.

WILLCOX HILLYER

I can't believe it, Daddy. I know it must be true, but I can't believe it.

DADDY

It's true, son. The girl with the cornflower eyes is dead, she is no more,

Daddy pauses, in trouble emotionally, but gets a grip on himself and in an almost dispassionate manner; but powerful feeling is behind his words.

DADDY (CONT'D)

She got cancer of the breast, was operated on and had a seven-year recovery, then after a brief illness passed on in her sleep, as the man with whom she'd lived in beautiful love and harmony for twenty-five years held her hand. That is what happened, son, and God rest her lovely soul!

CUT TO a CLOSE SHOT of Willcox Hillyer. Despite his efforts to control himself, tears are in his eyes. He clenches his teeth, takes a big swallow of his drink.

ANOTHER ANGLE on them both as Daddy rises.

DADDY (CONT'D)

And now, if you are through with that Yankee whisky, we'll go to the Holiday Inn and get some dinner.

SHOT OF WILLCOX HILLYER AND DADDY

as they walk toward the red rental Ford. Daddy uses a cane. He is a very old man. Willcox Hillyer looks in pain, he grimaces as they walk along.

WILLCOX HILLYER

Why Rose? Why Rose, Daddy?

DADDY

Nobody lives forever, boy. Who'd want to?

WILLCOX HILLYER

That's a hell of a thing to say. Why, Rose?

DADDY

(stops and firmly)
Now look, boy, get a grip on yourself. Rose had a good life. She found her. Right, didn't she? She triumphed over everything, what are you blubbering about?

WILLCOX HILLYER

I'm not blubbering.

CUT TO a shot of the red Ford going down the familiar

driveway.

SHOT ON DADDY AND WILLCOX HILLYER

in the car. Daddy is staring fiercely ahead, Willcox Hillyer stares ahead in gloom.

SHOT OF THE RED FORD

as it pulls up in front of the Holiday Inn we have already seen.

SHOT ON DADDY AND WILLCOX HILLYER

in the car. Willcox Hillyer sits there staring off into space in deep gloom. Daddy eyes him and now relents. We see sympathy in his face.

DADDY

(gently)

Rose isn't dead, son. Not really.
Some of us die, but some of us
don't. Rose lives. As long as some
little girl somewhere gets herself
up and goes out, Rose lives.

CUT TO a shot of Daddy and Buddy, now middle-aged Willcox Hillyer, as they walk toward the entrance of the Holiday Inn.
MUSIC.

THE END