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# The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond

By Tennessee Williams

- You up mighty early,  
Miss Willow.

- I haven't been to bed yet.

- Stay in there. Stay.

- Hey.

- I noticed your car  
was headed in.

- Yes, I'm still  
in my party dress.  
See?

- Let me out.

Ow!

- Come on out, Mr. Dobyne.  
Don't let him bully you  
that way.

- Come on out here, Dad.  
Fisher wants to see you.

- Okay, okay.

- Careful, careful.

- Good morning.

- Miss Willow,  
you know my father,  
Mr. James Dobyne.  
He's in charge  
of your father's commissary.  
Held the job  
nearly two weeks now,  
and that's a record for him.  
That's the longest  
he's held a job  
since the Spanish-American War.

- Well, here he is  
bright and early on a Monday.

- Yes, ma'am.

This here's my boy,  
a Mr. James Dobyne V.

- I know your son,  
Mr. Dobyne.

- That's good, Dad.  
Blow your stinkin' hooch breath  
in her face  
so she can give  
a complete description  
of your condition

**at 8:**

to her father,  
Mr. Alex Willow.

That'll fix everything up  
real good.

- Mr. Dobyne,  
I think your condition is fine.  
I wish my condition this morning  
was half as good.

- Jimmy, get in the car  
and drive up to the house  
with me.

I want you to do something  
for me.

Will you let him go,  
Mr. Dobyne?

I'll bring him back  
in one hour.

- Why, sure, sure, Fisher.  
Yeah, okay.

What I want tell you  
is that I think  
that I found out why  
small planters in this country  
don't like your daddy.

It's 'cause last spring,  
he blown up the south end  
of his levee  
so the rest wouldn't break,  
and consequently,  
all the planters south  
of his place were underwater.

Whew.

Your father's not popular  
with them.

In fact, they hold him  
personally responsible  
for the drowning  
of two white men  
and one old crippled white lady  
and five or six negroes.

- Mr. Dobyne,  
my father knows about that,

but he didn't dynamite  
that levee  
without a telephone warning  
to every place south of here.  
Jimmy, come on.  
Get in the car.  
- Oh, I can't go car riding now,  
Fisher.  
- Just up to the house.  
Will you, please?  
I've got to ask you something.  
Let's stop here.  
I can't smoke in the house.  
Apparently, my father's  
selfish action last spring  
with its...  
tragic consequences  
to a number of helpless persons  
south of here  
is very well known  
in Memphis.  
I wonder  
if their moral objections  
are as strong as mine.  
I barely speak  
to my father anymore.  
But they find it convenient  
to hold it against me, you see.  
Oh, I'm sure they also resent  
other things about me  
probably even more:  
my foreign education,  
my tendency  
to make sharp remarks  
about things that strike me  
as stupidly provincial.  
I'm considered sarcastic.  
I want to escape,  
but since I have now supposedly  
completed my education,  
Aunt Fisher's determined  
that I have this...  
debut,  
even though I am older than most

of the other debutantes,  
who would never dream  
of going to college.  
And I have to go through with it  
to please Aunt Fisher  
so she won't leave \$5 million  
to the Episcopal Church  
when she dies  
but to me.

- Don't you have  
enough money already?

- A person of my kind  
never has enough money.

- Well, you don't mean  
you're greedy, do you?

- No, I just know  
that I'll have to buy  
most everything that I want.

Why don't you look at me?

- I don't know what you want.

- You.

- Me?

- Yes.

- Why?

- To take me out in Memphis,  
to escort me  
to these agonizing parties.

- How can I take you  
to these agonizing parties  
and run the commissary  
and watch out for Dad?

- I just need you nights,  
two or three nights a week.  
The rest of the time,  
Aunt Fisher's lawyer will do.

- Well, surely he's not  
your only prospect, Fisher.

- Auntie Fisher  
would never permit me  
to be seriously involved  
with anyone outside  
her circle of acquaintances,  
either direct  
or by reputation,

Jimmy.

I could have married  
a titled Italian in Venice.

When I intimated  
my infatuation with him,

Aunt Fisher cabled me,  
"Come home at once. "

I started not to,  
but, um...

practical considerations  
seem to run in my blood  
as well as...

sensual.

I hope you've listened to me  
and understood me.

- Oh, yes.

I had a scholarship  
to Ole Miss.

- I know.

Now, drive us  
up to the house.

Jimmy.

Up here.

- Who's gonna measure me?

- I shall,  
with your assistance.

Hold your arms out  
for the tape.

Oh, take off  
that sloppy old shirt.

Of course,  
you're gonna need shirts,  
evening shirts.

And, Jimmy, don't hold your arms  
over your head

like this was a holdup.

Hold them straight out  
to your sides like a cross.

Only don't suffer on it  
so much.

- Fisher, there's one thing

I want you to know  
about my old man.

He's a sincere,

honest person,  
a stinker, yeah,  
a real stinker,  
but what he told you  
about the local attitude  
towards your father was meant-  
it was meant good.  
- Jimmy, will you please help me  
measure your legs?  
Hold the end of the tape  
at the inside top  
of your thigh while I-  
- Yeah.  
Were you listening to me,  
Fisher, about my old man?  
- Yes.  
You said  
that he was a stinker.  
- Well,  
I said he was a stinker,  
but I said he was  
a sincere, honest man.  
Know what she done?  
Measured me for clothes  
to take her to Memphis parties.  
- Garden pilgrims.  
Garden pilgrims with dogs  
not admitted.  
No dogs can enter the gardens.  
- Excuse me.  
I am very sorry, madam,  
but Miss Cornelia Fisher  
cannot allow dogs  
to enter her gardens,  
because last fall,  
a dog was very, um...  
destructive.  
I'm so sorry.  
- Susie,  
will you please take  
this beast upstairs,  
and will you please bring me up  
a steaming-hot glass of milk  
and a hot water bottle

and tell Auntie Fisher  
I'm gonna sleep for hours  
and to get Miss Grace  
to cancel any engagements  
on my list for today?  
Say I'm dead  
or something else to amuse them.

- You've still got  
your party dress on.

- Fisher.

Was that Fisher?

Fisher.

- Hello, Mama.

How are they treating you?

I need to talk to you.

It's about a girl.

She made this proposition,  
and I just wanted to know  
what you would think.

Mama, it's Jimmy.

- A young man  
just arrived in a truck,  
says he's expected by you.

- Fisher.

- In here, Jimmy.

I nearly despaired  
of your arrival.

The party's been on  
for an hour.

Look, all of your dress clothes  
are laid out on the bed.

Please, get into them  
lickety-split.

Jimmy, you look dazed.

Is something wrong?

- I visited mother today.

She didn't know who I was.

- Jimmy,  
she'll soon be out.

- Mama was committed.

- There are better places.

Arrangements can be made.

It's just a question of time.

Get out of those wet things.



Susie, bring Jimmy a brandy,  
or would you like champagne?

You've had a shock.

Make it champagne  
laced with brandy.

- I'm undressing  
right in front of you  
as if you weren't a girl.

- Propriety is a waste of time.

We don't have time to waste.

Get right into the tuxedo.

- This thing looks complicated.

- Oh, Susie will help you,  
or would you accept help  
from me?

- Susie, please.

- I see.

Well, Susie,  
make sure he comes down  
to be presented to Aunt Cornelia  
impeccably dressed  
in the contents of that box.  
This is going to be the first  
debut party of the season  
at which I will shine  
with pride.

- Fisher,

Mr. Van Hooven's waiting.

- What?

Oh, my goodness.

Did I forget to tell him  
that my escort tonight  
is James Dobyne V?

- What?

- What?

- Oh, Van, don't get up.

- You're relieved  
of duty tonight.

I have another escort.

So you and Aunt Cornelia  
can spend the evening together  
discussing old times.

- I don't understand this  
at all.

- I don't understand.

- The explanation  
is about to enter.

Mr. James Dobyne,  
Aunt Cornelia Fisher  
and her attorney,  
Craig Van Hooven.

Well...

- Dobyne?

- Dobyne?

- Oh, Aunt Cornelia,  
surely you remember  
Governor Dobyne.

- Governor Dobyne.

- And this young man is-

- His grandson.

Good night, Auntie.

We're terribly late.

Have fun together.

Play cards

or discuss litigations

or consummate

the long romance between you.

Aunt Cornelia,

may I wear the teardrop  
diamond earrings tonight?

- Those earrings

are worth \$10,000, Fisher,  
and the clasps

are getting loose,

and you're so careless

with things.

- It's such a special occasion.

Please, Auntie?

- Oh.

Jimmy,

fasten them for me?

My fingers are shaky tonight,  
too much black coffee.

The receiving line's  
breaking up.

- What do I do?

- Wait till the lady  
extends her hand.

Then just take it and smile.

Why, Caroline.

Why, you've got that band  
that played so divinely  
at Jessie Strutt's.

I bet when I walk in,  
they'll strike up  
my favorite number.

- Which is what?

- One moment.

Let me appear.

Fats!

Fats, my song.

Come on, let's dance.

- She tips that band leader \$50  
for every dance  
he plays for her.

- I wonder what she tips  
the governor's grandson.

- Shall I inquire?

- I dare you.

- Accepted.

Mr. Dobyne,

I've been released  
for the waltz.

- I'm sorry, Miss...

- Caroline.

- But I'm not employed by you.

Excuse me.

- Thank you.

Jimmy.

Where on Earth were you?

What were you doing?

- I promised Dad I'd call him  
about Mama's condition.

- Did you?

- It was a promise.

I said I found her fine.

- Your instincts  
are infallible.

And you're the cynosure  
of all female eyes at the party.

Let's, uh...

- Yes?

- Cool off on the terrace.  
- Whatever you say.  
- Fisher.  
- Yes?  
- What lovely earrings.  
- Thank you,  
my teardrop diamonds.  
- Your ears  
are weeping diamonds.  
- Where'd you get them?  
- Naturally, from Woolworths.  
Will you let us get through?  
This room is suffocating.  
How cool,  
the river wind.  
- Music is so much nicer  
from a distance.  
See the boat  
go round the bend  
Good-bye, my lover,  
good-bye  
All loaded down  
with boys and men  
Good-bye, my lover,  
good-bye  
Bye, oh, my baby  
Bye  
Jimmy?  
- Jimmy!  
- Murderer's daughter.  
- Shut up.  
Are you hurt, Fisher?  
- Where'd you go?  
- If I said, "To pee,"  
would it be embarrassing to you?  
Oh, Lord, Jimmy.  
I'm not sure if embarrassment  
is still an emotion  
I could feel.  
- Let's go.  
Come on, Dad.  
Let's go.  
Come on.  
- Lead the way.

- I got you.  
- Is this my mail?  
- Go through it  
right after breakfast.  
- I have to go through this  
right now.  
Another, please.  
- Fisher,  
you shouldn't begin the day  
with two cups of black coffee.  
- What should I begin it with,  
Auntie?  
I must have missed it.  
This is the latest  
that it could have arrived  
if it was ever going to.  
- What are you referring to,  
Fisher?  
- My invitation  
to Susie Bracken's party,  
the most important  
coming-out party of the season.  
- Let me go through  
the mail for you.  
- You wouldn't find it either.  
She ignored me completely  
last night,  
so I'm not surprised.  
- I am.  
- It's not the end  
of the world.  
- Nor the beginning.  
- Who knows?  
I have  
an excellent alternative,  
an invitation  
to a Halloween party  
at Julie Fenstermaker's place  
next month.  
- Where is her place?  
- North of Father's, of course,  
and so less affected  
by the incidents surrounding  
last spring's floods.

- Thank you, dears,  
for coming today  
to support  
the Memphis Park Commission.  
I have invited a precious group  
of Memphis youths to my garden  
to perform one of their  
darling little pageants.  
And this one, I believe,  
is entitled  
The End of Summer.

- I'm sorry, Mr. Dobyne,  
but your mother says  
she does not wish to see you  
this afternoon.  
Come back some other time.  
I'm sure she'll be feeling...  
differently soon.

Oh!

- Son.

- Yeah, Dad?

- If your mother  
don't recognize you anymore,  
wouldn't it be better  
not to visit her anymore?  
Your mother got pride,  
you know?

And I think maybe  
it might be a relief to her  
if you stopped  
going out there...  
like I did.

She don't want to be seen  
by her son  
in her present,  
awful condition.

- Somebody's got to check  
on her present, awful condition  
to see that it doesn't  
get worse.

- How could it get any worse?

- There are very few conditions  
in life that can't get worse  
if nothing's done

to at least try to...

check 'em.

Dad, you know

what I could do?

I could serve Fisher Willow

as more than an escort

to parties.

She's hinted repeatedly

that she'd like...

intimacy with me.

- Well...

I just...

- The intimacy would have

to end up in marriage,

maybe not soon

but eventually.

Here comes the Pierce-Arrow.

- Well,

I'll just step inside.

I'll just step inside.

- Take your bottle, Dad.

- Light a cigarette for me,

will you, please?

Am I crowding you?

- No.

No.

- What?

Camels?

- Yeah.

- Good.

I'm gonna test your powers

of observation.

Describe to me

the scene on the package.

Tell me what's all in the

picture on the camel package.

- A camel, man on a camel,

palm tree,

pyramid in the background...

That's all I can remember.

- Most people forget

the figure behind the camel,

the man on foot

behind the camel rider.

- I hadn't noticed him either.

It's so lovely,

so peaceful here.

I almost never feel

really peaceful, you know?

When I accepted

Julie's invitation

to this Halloween party,

I was killing two birds

with one stone.

- Which two birds do you mean?

- Julie was really

my only good friend

at All Saints' College before

I went to the Sorbonne in Paris.

The other bird, well...

I've missed you,

Jimmy,

my only attractive escort

to Memphis parties.

Don't.

Don't go yet.

Why are you so anxious

to leave?

- I'm not anxious.

- Fisher,

you're shivering.

You must be chilly.

- People don't always shiver

because they're chilly.

And how could I be chilly

in my leopard-skin coat?

Really, you are silly, Jimmy.

Isn't that why I like you?

- Hey,

why'd you do that?

- What?

- Jumped out

before the car stopped.

You could have got hurt.

Hurt? Me?

Never, but thanks

for your solicitude.

Oh, Lord.



Do you know what's happened?

One of my teardrop diamonds  
has fallen off.

I mustn't move.

Oh, I-I think it fell off  
right here where I'm standing.

Look in the car.

It must have come loose  
in the car.

I'll stand here  
where I stopped.

It may be under the gravel  
that you kicked around.

- Who's there?

- It's me.

- Fishy.

- It's us, I mean.

- They seem to be looking  
for something?

- It might be a good idea  
to turn the car lights on,  
don't you think,

Jimmy?

- Did you lose something,  
Fisher?

- Nothing less than a \$5,000  
teardrop diamond, honey.

- My Lord. Where?

- Somewhere between the car  
and where I'm standing.

- You see it on the drive,  
Fisher?

- No.

Do you see it in the car?

- Looking,  
still looking.

- Is that Jim Dobyne  
in the car?

- Yes, but that's scarcely  
my concern at the moment.

- It's nowhere  
in the front of the car.

- I had it on  
when I got in the car.

And I didn't get out of the car  
anywhere on the way here, did I?

- You're out of the car now,  
Fisher.

- Well, look around  
where I'm standing.

- Fisher, you walked  
halfway to the house  
before you discovered  
you lost it.

- I guess I know how far  
from the car I walked.  
Will you please borrow  
a flashlight from the house?  
Is that too much to ask of you?

- Fisher,  
don't get hysterical.

I'll bring you a flashlight.

- Who is that common-looking  
tramp talking to my escort?

- Vinnie, my cousin.

Now, excuse me.

I'll go get you  
that flashlight.

- I've never been  
to Julie's before.

- You look good.  
I've never seen you  
in a suit before.

- Fisher, I thought you said  
you were gonna stay  
where you thought  
you dropped it.

- I'm retracing my steps  
to the car.

- Never expected  
to see you again in my life.

- God, I'm glad  
you're here, Vin.

- I don't want to interrupt  
your reunion.

Old friends, are you, Jimmy?

- I'm Julie's cousin,  
Lavinia McCorkle.

- How do you do?  
Julie's gone for a flashlight.  
Obviously...

- What?  
- The earring dropped off  
before I got out of the car.  
- Well, now,  
just where was that?  
You were out before we stopped  
like a jumping flea.  
- A charming simile.  
So you are Julie's cousin?  
- Didn't I say so?  
- Sometimes  
there's no resemblance  
between relations.  
- I'm gonna go back up the car  
since you did jump out  
before we stopped.  
- I did not.  
- You did.  
- Don't move the car.  
I'll go look for it.  
- Oh, she's very cross  
with you, Jimmy.  
I hope she doesn't think  
you're responsible for the loss.  
- I'm gonna go back up  
that goddamn car.  
She did jump out  
before it stopped.  
Mad at me.  
Yeah, mad as hops,  
and I think I know why.  
- Flashlight.  
- I doubt somehow  
that it's gonna be recovered.  
You did back up the car.  
- You did jump out  
before I stopped.  
- Are you calling me a liar?  
- I saw her jump  
out of the car too.  
- How about you, Julie?

- Oh, it's so terribly dark,  
I just saw the car lights  
as you entered the drive.

- This young lady  
who says she's your cousin  
must have exceptional vision.

- Jimmy, I think I know  
what happened.  
It fell in a pocket  
of your jacket.

- You think I got it on me?

- Jimmy.  
Where do you think you're going,  
Jimmy Dobyne?

- Well,  
if your accusation is right,  
to the county jail.

- What accusation?  
I made no accusation.

- Here's my jacket.  
Search the pockets.  
I will do no such thing.  
You misunderstood me.  
I only meant  
it could have dropped  
in your pocket by accident.  
You know it.  
Don't you remember?  
I...  
I leaned my head  
on your shoulder on the levee.  
That's probably when...  
oh, this is absurd.  
I'm ruining my slippers  
on this gravel drive.

- Well, you go back  
and enjoy the party.  
I couldn't go now.

- I can't go back  
without a date.

- Well, wouldn't it be better  
than going back  
with a suspected thief?

- You've got to go back

with me.

Think of the talk

if you don't.

- Look through the pockets  
of the jacket.

- If you insist.

- Of course, I ought to be  
searched to the skin.

That's what I'll demand

if I go back there with you.

- You don't understand me yet,  
Jimmy.

- Does anybody?

- Nobody I know of,  
to tell you the truth.

I'm an only child

and the heiress of two fortunes.

- Do you always talk so much  
about your financial prospects  
depending on death?

- In Memphis,  
it's not necessary.

It's too well known.

- And has it made you  
popular there?

- With some kinds of people,  
yes.

- The kind of people you like?

- I don't like people,  
but sometimes I like one person.

- And do I have the honor  
of being the one you liked  
till you lost  
your teardrop diamond?

- Why else would I be here  
with you?

Come on.

Please.

- Haven't I seen you before?

- Not that I recall.

- Oh, I know.

It was just a photo of you  
as debutante of the season  
in Memphis.

- Julie.

- We came out last season,  
still go to the important  
parties in Memphis,  
such as Susie Bracken's.

- Yes, her debut's tonight.  
We were invited,  
of course, but we-

- Didn't want  
to disappoint Julie.

- You seem to be alone here.  
Did you come here alone?

- I don't see  
how that concerns you.

- We just thought  
if you're here alone,  
we'd gladly introduce you  
to some of the-

- Guests, yes.

- Since I'm a close friend  
of Julie's,  
I'm sure she'll introduce me  
to anyone present  
that I care to know.  
Excuse me.

- Now, you turn  
these damn pockets out  
and put everything you find  
in it on this table.  
Come down here  
from a social debut in Memphis  
and accuse me  
of stealing a diamond.  
I liked that girl,  
Fisher Willow.  
I really did.

- Drink your drink, son.

- I tell you,  
that damn girl  
thinks I stole a diamond  
off her,  
and that's why I got  
to be searched.  
Now, I'm gonna take off

all my clothes,  
and I want you fellows to go  
through every single pocket,  
any place on me  
that I could hide a diamond.

- Now, now, son,  
everybody knows  
you never stole anything,  
nobody that knows the Dobyne's,  
and I had the honor  
of knowing your granddaddy  
as well as I knew  
my own father.

Why, nobody  
with a grain of sense  
would possibly imagine  
Mr. Dobyne-

- No, Mr. Fenstermaker,  
you don't understand.  
My father was accused  
by the Hobsons of stealing  
when he worked for them.

- Keep your clothes on, son.  
Just set down  
and have a drink with me, huh?  
You got yourself  
all worked up over nothing,  
nothing.

- Mr. Fenstermaker,  
I am asking you  
to go through the pockets  
of this tuxedo.  
In insist on being searched.

- Julie?

Julie?

- Miss Willow.

- What?

- Julie's aunt  
wants to see you.

- Oh, please make  
some excuse for me.

- Fisher,  
Fisher Willow.

- Oh, Lord.

- Just for a moment,  
Miss Willow.  
She's determined to see you.

- Why?  
- I don't know why,  
Miss Willow,  
but she positively refuses  
to go to sleep  
till she's seen you.

- Fisher.  
- Hello.  
How are you,  
Miss Addie?  
- Thank you for coming in.  
I know how unpleasant it is  
to enter  
this chamber of horrors.

- Why do you call it a chamber  
of horrors, Miss Addie?  
- 'Cause that's  
just what it is.  
Would you please  
close this door?  
Would you please lock it?  
I want to have a completely  
private talk with you.  
Now come over here  
so I don't have  
to raise my voice.  
I have the use of my voice.  
My heart and my lungs  
and the other internal organs  
that one can't control  
remorselessly continue.  
As for the rest of me,  
it's stone dead, Fisher.  
Are you in a hurry  
to get back down to the party?

- No.  
- We met only once before.  
Your Aunt Cornelia and I  
had had a brief  
but memorable encounter  
in Hong Kong.



Two years ago when I was here  
for a short visit,  
she brought you along  
when she paid me a call at my-  
- Of course, I remember.  
You had a little-  
- Yeah, cottage  
on Sand Island.  
- She said  
you wrote travel books.  
- My base was Hong Kong.  
There's much tolerance there.  
And here?  
- I would say none at all.  
- Yes.  
So I elected to spend my life  
in the tolerant Orient.  
But things that one elects  
are often circumvented  
by others.  
I think you know about that.  
Yes.  
I know about that.  
- I had a stroke in China.  
It was a slight one,  
but I knew-I was told-  
there'd be others.  
And unfortunately...  
Fisher?  
- Oh, you're being called  
back downstairs.  
I have to get on  
with this quickly.  
I had to stay in China  
because I'd become addicted  
to something  
that I could only have there.  
- What to?  
To what, Miss Addie?  
- To a drug  
that made it bearable  
for me to live  
when living  
became unbearable for me.

You see,  
I'd quit my travels  
and settled down  
in one place  
and, needing something so badly  
to make life bearable,  
I found something:  
the poppy,  
the smoke  
of the burning poppy.  
And then early last summer,  
the terrible thing  
that was coming,  
that the drug made me forget  
was coming,  
happened.  
I had the strokes that caused  
my present condition.  
My brother Jack was told,  
and I was brought back here  
by force,  
as I am kept living in agony  
by force.  
And then I was...  
withdrawn from my...  
my comfort.  
- Miss Addie, why are you  
telling me this story?  
- Because I remember  
the last time I saw you,  
the impression you made on me.  
There was something  
hard and honest about you.  
I thought you could  
do something for me,  
the only thing that can  
be done for me now.  
You see, I see nobody  
but people that can't imagine.  
You can.  
You can imagine, Fisher.  
Oh, they give me something,  
but it's not enough.  
You see that bottle

over there on the mantel?  
You could get it for me,  
and I could resume  
my travels.

Do you know what I mean?  
Have I made myself  
perfectly clear?

Nobody could possibly guess  
that you gave it to me.  
They'd think I just had  
my last stroke...  
in my sleep.

- How many?

- All.

All.

Well, that's not all,  
Fisher.

- Fisher, open this door.

- I'll come back later.

- You promise?

- Swear on my word of honor.

- Fisher.

- I'll come back up  
for this other diamond earring  
and my leopard-skin coat.

- Fisher, Jimmy was searched  
to the skin before witnesses,  
and all he had on him  
was three sticks  
of peppermint gum,  
a few cigarettes,  
\$3.47,  
and...

- "And"?

And what?

- And something  
in a small unopened package  
almost completely flat  
and the keys  
to your car.

- What is this all about?

- It's all about

Fisher Willow's attempt  
to buy an escort for her

debut parties in Memphis,  
provide him with clothes,  
and now accuse him  
of stealing a diamond from her.  
Why?

Not easy to guess.

- Oh, have you guessed,  
Miss McCorkle?

What have you guessed?

- He hasn't responded to your  
courtship as you'd expected.

- I must be getting drowsy.

I don't understand  
all of this.

Julie, take your  
loud-voiced cousin out of here,  
would you, please,  
so I can finish my talk  
with Fisher?

You know excitement  
is not allowed in sickrooms.

- Fisher, you will say  
that the earring  
fell down your dress.

- I will say whatever I can  
without lying.

I'm not a liar, Julie.

- Julie, will you  
please take yourself  
and this other girl  
out of here?

Good night, Miss Addie.

- You know, I really did lose  
the other one  
of this pair  
of teardrop diamonds.

- Well, I know you lost it,  
Fisher,

but you have handled  
the situation  
in a terrible way.

You must have done it  
in a way  
that made that boy

feel like you  
were accusing him  
of stealing it.  
- How could he think  
such a thing?  
He's been acting so peculiar  
ever since we left  
the levee tonight.  
I asked him to drive me up  
on the levee  
to see the mist  
rising off the river.  
Because I love to see  
the river mist rising,  
because I like nothing better.  
Nothing's more beautiful  
to me.  
Of course, that's peculiar  
of me too, I suppose.  
- What happened  
on the levee?  
- Nothing at all,  
to speak of.  
We stopped there awhile.  
I laid my head  
on his shoulder for a moment.  
- He didn't kiss you  
when you parked on the levee  
to see the river mist rising?  
- Now, Miss Addie.  
Do you suppose I have  
to beg for kisses?  
- Of course you're attractive.  
That's not the issue, is it?  
- Hear that?  
I've made up my mind  
about something.  
I won't go back to Memphis  
to continue  
this ridiculous pretense  
of being interested  
in the society of that city  
when it bores me to blazes.  
I'm gonna catch the very next

boat back to Europe.  
And I think  
that Aunt Cornelia  
will be glad to see me set sail  
from these shores.  
I disgraced her in Memphis.  
Oh, well.  
I'm out of my element here.  
Yes.  
I'm gonna catch the very next  
boat back to Europe  
and take an apartment  
on the Rive Gauche in Paris  
and establish a salon...  
Like Gertrude Stein's.  
I'll commission Pablo Picasso  
to do a portrait of me  
all in blue.  
I'm not gonna lose my mind,  
not crack up again.  
I'm going to develop  
my interest in the arts.  
I must be with people  
who do things,  
paint, write,  
compose music,  
and so forth.  
- Well, you do have character.  
Maybe even talent.  
But I do shudder for you.  
- Why do you shudder for me?  
- Because you want somebody  
to love you that you love,  
and you don't know  
how to arrange that.  
And not all the teardrop  
diamonds of this world,  
lost or found,  
can arrange that for you.  
Now, you go on back downstairs  
and make an announcement.  
You say that the teardrop  
diamond has been found.  
- Why should I

discard my honesty,  
all that I've got, really?  
- Oh, nonsense.  
Strong people with character  
like you, Fisher Willow,  
don't care about losing  
a teardrop diamond.  
They have  
more important problems.  
Now, go.  
Just remember your promise  
to come back.  
- Yes.  
Soon, Miss Addie.  
- Are you gonna make  
the announcement?  
- You will make  
the announcement.  
I will not contradict it.  
- Are your slippers dry now,  
Fisher?  
- Uh, yes,  
uh, sufficiently, thank you.  
- Hey, everybody.  
Listen.  
Isn't it wonderful?  
Fisher found her diamond.  
- Where'd you find it, Fisher?  
- She found it  
inside her dress.  
It had just slipped  
down the front of her dress.  
- That dress?  
- Must have been one those  
tiny little chip diamonds.  
Jimmy?  
May I speak to you a minute?  
Will you excuse him,  
Miss McCorkle?  
Did you really have yourself  
searched in the kitchen, Jimmy?  
Don't turn your back on me.  
- Excuse me.  
- You told them

I bought you clothes.  
I want to know why you told them  
I bought clothes for you.  
- Well, why did you, Fisher?  
- Because I...  
I felt sorry for you.  
- Oh?  
- And because  
you're a gentleman,  
grandson of a governor  
of this state.  
And you dress like a-  
like a field hand.  
- Well, not so much  
of a gentleman  
that you wouldn't suspect me  
of stealing.  
Stand up.  
Or are you too drunk too?  
- I had some liquor  
in the kitchen  
when they were searching  
my clothes  
for your teardrop diamond.  
- Are you gonna drink  
like your father?  
Jimmy, don't-don't walk away  
when I'm talking to you.  
- What do you want, Fisher?  
You say you found your diamond.  
- I did not say  
that I found it.  
Julie said that I did.  
I agreed to let her say it  
so there'd be no more talk.  
- Hey!  
Turn off that Victrola!  
I have an important announcement  
to make,  
a very important announcement.  
Fisher Willow did not find  
her diamond,  
never said she found it,  
had Julie say it for her.



Jimmy, you misunderstood.  
I was there when she found it.  
- Under the circumstances,  
I think I'd like to go home.  
I- I don't feel well.  
I- I don't want to stay  
and spoil the party.  
- Fisher, stay.  
Look, it's all forgotten now.  
I'm gonna get Mama to bed  
so we can play Post Office.  
- Play what?  
- Your mama is guarding  
that punch bowl like a hawk.  
Nobody's had a chance  
to spike it,  
so the boys are drinking  
straight moonshine in the yard.  
- I'll get Eddie Peacock  
to dance your mama  
away from the bowl.  
- Tommy, will you dance  
with Fisher?  
She's decorating the wall.  
- She'll decorate walls  
all her life.  
- Not the walls  
at this party.  
- Walls in Memphis?  
- No, much, much further  
than Memphis.  
- Aw.  
- Oh, Fisher.  
- I dare you  
to go up and ask her  
if she'd like a good lay.  
- All right.  
- Pull her back  
in the bushes.  
- Mama's gone upstairs.  
- Oh, well, good for Mama.  
I'll get the cards.  
Are they gonna play  
some kind of kids' game?

- Haven't you ever played  
Post Office?

- Why, no.

- It's a kissing game.

- Oh.

You mean we're all gonna kiss  
each other like-  
like New Year's Eve?

- No, it's more private.

- I don't understand  
this game.

- Just watch.

You'll catch on.

- Hey.

- Julie, I don't know  
what's going on.

- Oh, we're dealing the cards  
for Post Office.

Here, take this.

And keep it out of sight.

It's the ace of spades.

It's the highest card  
in the deck,

which means that you  
are the postman  
and you are gonna send Jimmy  
a letter.

- Julie, really,  
isn't this sort of silly?

- Well, no more than life is.

Turn that record off.

Mama might catch on.

- Whoops.

- What record was that  
you broke, Hank Ellis, you fool?

- Eh, it's just some old one.  
Blues.

- Oh, the Basin Street Blues?

That is a classic.

- Julie, a classic  
is something by Beethoven  
or Brahms-

- Naturally,  
I meant a modern classic.

And I do not retract  
my statement  
that you are a fool.  
Now, has everybody got cards?

- We don't have any cards,  
Julie.

- Take 'em.

Draw a card each.

Whoever turned that lamp off  
better turn it back on.

- Shine on

Shine on, harvest moon

Up in the sky

I ain't had no lovin'

Since January, February

June and July

Snow time

Ain't no time to stay

**"Warning:**

a small amount of opium

"and could be habit-forming.

One or two teaspoons

at bedtime. "

- Almost forgot the costumes.

My heavens, Fisher, what are you  
doing with that bottle?

- Oh, I-I noticed it in the-

What is it?

- It's one of Aunt Addie's  
fake remedies with opium in it.

- It had rather  
a nice bitter taste.

- Oh, Fisher,  
you took some of it?

Let me put some ice  
on your forehead at once.

You stay right here.

- Well, Fisher...

We thought you'd be gone.

- I hope you'll all excuse  
my fit of nerves.

I've spent some time  
in a mental clinic in Zurich.

And you never completely...  
return.

- Oh, there you are, Fisher.  
Mama has finally  
gone to sleep.

So who has the highest card?

- Jimmy has an ace.

- Of what, spades?

- No, hearts.

- Well, that can only be beaten  
by the ace of spades.

Has anybody got  
the ace of spades?

Anybody?

Well, Jimmy,  
you're the postman.

Go out to the post office  
on the veranda  
and deliver someone a letter.

Remember, the time limit  
is three minutes.

Be smart.

Whoa!

- Will you hush  
so I can hear  
who the letter  
is gonna be delivered to?

- I have a letter  
for miss Vinnie McCorkle.

- For me?

- Remember, three minutes.

That is the strict time limit.

Who's got a watch?

- May I supply the music  
on the piano?

- Your eyelashes,  
I feel them on my cheek.

- We've only got  
three minutes.

- According  
to Julie's kissing game.  
Kissing is where I start.

Follow me.

Hurry.

- Many men.

Of course, some were  
just kids with pimples,  
but others who were  
responsible men with positions  
have said to me,

"I love you, Vinnie. "

But only one has ever said,  
"Will you marry me, Vinnie?"

- And you turned down  
the proposal  
from the responsible man?

- Yes.

He had a position,  
a good one,  
as an officer  
of the Delta Planters Bank.

- You turned him down?

- It was just-

Well, I couldn't  
consider marriage  
with a man

I wasn't attracted to...  
physically, Jimmy.

Like-like back  
in the car there,  
it took my breath away.  
It did.

Didn't you hear me  
gasping for breath?

- Yeah, so was I.

- Not as loud as me.

I don't want to keep  
any secrets from you, Jimmy.

None.

I have a-

Mm.

Something happened tonight.  
And I want to tell you  
about it.

I want to show it to you.

Follow me, quick.

- Jimmy! Vinnie!

- Don't answer those calls.

- What you digging for,  
Vinnie?  
Oh, my God.  
I wonder if it was here.  
I counted down five bushes.  
This is-  
oh, oh, this the fourth.  
It's the next one.  
Here  
Here it is.  
- What?  
- Release. Release.  
Release.  
- God, is that the-  
- Shh, don't say it.  
This is our secret now.  
- Vinnie, you can't be serious,  
are you?  
- Of course I'm serious.  
That's worth \$5,000.  
- And I know  
where the other one is.  
I saw Fisher take it off  
in Aunt Addie's bedroom  
and put it beside the clock  
on the mantel.  
I'm going up there  
and get it too.  
\$10,000.  
It's a fortune.  
Why, a pretty girl  
with a fortune  
is more than just  
sexually desirable.  
She's someone even a Dobyne V  
might accept as a wife.  
- You must have gone crazy.  
- To love you.  
To want you.  
To run away with you anywhere  
for life.  
- Vinnie.  
This is all wrong.  
This is a terrible mistake.

You got to think about pride,  
think about honesty.

- A girl who works  
at the cosmetic counter  
of Liggett's Drug Store  
on a side street in Memphis  
does not think about pride  
and honesty  
standing between her  
and release,  
to life and-  
and to love.

- All I can say is...  
give it back to her.

- Not on your life, boy.  
Finders are keepers  
and losers are weepers,  
if she's human enough to weep.  
Go back in the parlor.  
I'm gonna go upstairs  
and get the other one.

- Vinnie-no, Vinnie,  
I'm poor.

You're poor.  
And that's hard,  
especially for a beautiful girl.  
But you got a moral decision  
to make.

- Don't talk to me  
like a preacher.  
Why, just a minute ago,  
you were having me,  
and we were gasping  
for breath.

- That's not the point.  
That's-

- Common.  
In your opinion.  
All right.  
I'm common as dirt.

But I'm gonna  
wash myself clean.

- By giving that diamond back.  
- Oh, no.

This teardrop diamond  
will wash me clean  
as the sharecroppers  
her father drowned last spring  
when he blasted  
the south end of his levee.

- Vinnie.

Vinnie, is that you  
and Jimmy out there?

- Yes.

- My heavens.

You two have been gone  
half an hour at least.

- Julie, will you call Fisher  
out here?

- For what?

- Vinnie has something  
she wants to give her,  
something she just now  
accidentally found.

- Uh, what are you  
talking about?

- Fisher!

Fisher!

- Jimmy,  
call her.

- Fisher!

Fisher Willow!

Hey.

Why didn't you answer me?

Didn't you hear me shouting?

- Call that shouting?

It sounded to me like a scared  
little boy in the dark.

Well, what shall we do?

Go now?

I'm ready to go if you are.

It's an awfully dull party.

- I'd like to stay  
a little while longer.

- Why?

- I like the people at it.

- Especially one of the people?

Julia's little cousin



who works in a drugstore?

- Now, what's that  
against her?

- Nothing.

Not a thing in the world.

You want me

to leave you with her.

- Now, you know that if you go,  
I got to go with you, don't you?  
Don't be so conventional.

It doesn't suit you  
or me.

I swallowed my pride.

- Fisher, I don't think you have  
ever had to swallow your pride.

- Oh, no?

You really don't think so?

- Pride is something that  
poor people have to swallow.

- How naive you are.

I don't think anyone's ever  
had to swallow their pride  
or choke on it  
as often as I have.

For instance...

it wasn't easy for me  
to come back downstairs  
to that party  
after you insisted  
on being searched  
in the kitchen.

- That wasn't easy for me.

- Well, that's over.

That's over.

Shall we forget about it?

Get in the car.

- Let's go back to the party.

- I'm not going back  
to the party.

Get in the car.

- I'm going back to the party.

- Are you?

- Yes. I have to.

- You mean you'd go back

to the party  
when I asked you not to?  
- You're coming too.  
- Are you telling me  
what I'm gonna do,  
Jimmy Dobyne?  
- Yep.  
Get out of your car.  
- I believe you're serious.  
- Come on.  
Get out of your car.  
- Make me.  
- Come on.  
Get out of your car.  
- Let go of my arm,  
or you'll get kicked.  
- Get out of your car.  
- Fisher.  
Fisher.  
I, uh-I found  
your diamond earring.  
- What did you say?  
- I said I found  
the teardrop diamond  
that you lost.  
- Oh?  
Where'd you find it?  
- On the veranda.  
- How could you find it  
on the veranda  
when I discovered I'd lost it  
before I got to the veranda?  
- Well, maybe it fell out  
of your dress or something.  
Will you please take it back?  
It's burning my hand  
like a hot coal.  
- You won't take a reward?  
- I just want to forget it.  
- That's very...  
magnanimous of you  
or something.  
I'm not sure what.  
- Now, will you shut up

about it?

You got it back!

Get in the car.

- Without my coat?

I- I left it upstairs.

- I'll get it for you.

- Never mind.

Tell Miss McCorkle

good night.

- Thank you for doing that,  
Vinnie.

- Did I have any choice?

Since I'm gonna marry  
that officer in the bank,  
I don't suppose we'll ever  
see each other again.

Will we?

Good-bye, Jimmy.

- Good-bye, Vinnie.

- Miss Addie?

- I knew you'd come back.

- I promised I would.

- Lock the door,  
until you've fulfilled  
the promise completely.

You know what I mean?

- All?

- All.

You are honest and brave.

Put the bottle back  
where it was.

Collect your things.

Now, go quick,  
with God.

- With Jimmy Dobyne.

- Well, isn't he?

- Yes.

The same to me.

- Turn up the road  
to the levee.

- Again?

- It's so lovely up there,  
with the moon  
on the river.

- Fisher, the moon  
is not on the river.  
The moon is in the sky.  
- Which is reflected  
on the river.  
Turn out the lights  
so we can see the moon better.  
Jimmy?  
Did you know  
that I'm the postman  
and have a letter  
for someone?  
The letter is for you.  
- Fisher, I think  
you can do better than me.  
- I don't agree,  
since it's only you  
that I want.  
- But you don't belong here.  
- I can't keep running away.  
I've got to stay here...  
and somehow make amends  
for what my...  
father has done  
and let this river flow  
where it wants to.  
Jimmy, your mother...  
could be removed  
from that dreadful place.  
And your father...  
he could remain  
in charge of the commissary  
as long as he lives,  
no matter how drunk.  
And as for me, well...  
no one will ever love me.  
But you could  
get used to me, Jimmy.