



Scripts.com

Pinky

By Philip Dunne

(Whistle Blowing)

(Birds Chirping)

(Dog Barking)

(Clucking)

Good morning, ma'am.

Sure is a fne day today, isn't it?

Getting this washing up.

Should've had it up long ago too.

If it's Aunt DiceyJohnson

you're lookin' for, ma'am, here I be.

Pinky?

- Pinky, child?

- Yes, Granny. It's... It's me.

Pinky. My Pinky.

Thank you, Lord,

for bringing my child back to me.

She'd be such a far piece

and long journey, and this

be the morning of her return.

- Amen.

- Granny.

No frettin', honey.

'Cause you're home safe and sound.

Come on in and let Granny

scare you up a mite of breakfast.

Come on.

Come on, sugar. Come on.

(Pots Clanking)

Oh, me. It sure do me good

to see you standin' there.

just think. My Pinky baby

all growed up and come home

to her old granny.

- How did you know I'd come back?

- That's why I sent you away,

sugar... so you'd come back.

Come back and help the sick,

the halt and the needy.

Remember what I say

the day I put you on the train?

I said, "Pinky, baby,

no matter how far you go...

"how much you learn, you

gotta bring it all back with you.

"That's why I'm sending you.
Because the Bible say...
A little leaven shall
leaven the whole lump."
Granny...
Granny, did you ever think
I might wanna stay up north?
There's some things
we gotta trust the Lord about, Pinky...
some things we can't do ourself.
- We gotta depend on him.
- (Object Clinking)
Everything just like you left it, sugar.
- What is it, Pinky?
- Oh, I wish you'd never sent me away.
You mean, you wish
you'd growed up ignorant,
no-account good-for-nothin'?
You wish you'd never
learned to read and write
and make your way in this world?
Oh, no, but don't you see?
Yes, Pinky, I do see.
Let me say something
once and for all and never again.
Why is it you write me
less and less as time go by?
Why is it after you go to
the hospital, I get no letter at all?
No. You don't need to say nothin'.
You think I don't know.
You think poor old ignorant woman
like me livin' in a shack like this...
don't know nothin',
but you're wrong, Pinky.
I do know. And I know what you done.
And you know I never told you
to pretend you is what you ain't.
I didn't mean to, Granny.
It just happened.
But that's a sin before God,
and you know it.
It was a conductor
on the train. He put me back

in another car... the white one.

- But he knowed who you was.

I put you where you belonged.

- No. No, no.

It was after that,

when they changed conductors.

- Then why you ain't

tell the new conductor?

- Granny, I don't know.

- I was only a child.

- Then what about school?

What about that?

Other children talk

about their kinfolks, don't they?

What you say when they

asked you about your'ns? You

tell 'em who your granny is?

Oh, shame... shame be on you, Pinky.

Denying yourself like Peter

denied the good Lord Jesus.

- Here. Get down. Get down.

- (Crying)

That's where you belong.

Now you tell the Lord what you done.

Ask his forgiveness

on your immortal soul.

Come on out and get

your breakfast. I don't wanna

hear another word from you...

- About what you done

again as long as you live.

- (Door Closes)

(Sobbing)

(Pinky's Voice)

Tom.

- Tom.

- Tom, please.

- Please, Tom.

- (Voice) Tom.

Tom.

- (Screams) Tom.!

- (Crickets Chirping Loudly)

(Chirping Continues)

(Chirping Quiets)

(Rooster Crowing)

- Good morning, honey. You up, I see.

- Yes, Granny.

You do this much every day?

Ain't missed a day

'cept the time I was down sick
with pneumonia three years ago.

- Here. I'll help you.

- I ain't sent you away for you to
come back and take in washing.

Granny, I was awful glad
when you stopped sending me money.

- What you mean?

- I didn't want you breaking
your back for me forever.

Stopped? I ain't never missed once.

I give Jake Waters that money...
just like I been doin' every week
since his pa died.

I gotta see Jake about that.

Kind of superstitious about him.

I'll go see Jake.

I'll get it back for you.

How much do you get
for a wash like this?

- Oh, they don't count,
far as money goes.

- You mean you're not paid for it?

- Course not. They're Miss Em's.

- Yeah. I can see it's Miss Em's.

- You mean to say she
doesn't pay you for it?

- Not in cash money.

Miss Em ain't got no cash money.

Besides, she's old now... old and sick.

- She has a house full of
valuable antiques, hasn't she?

- But they're family things.
Can't sell them.

Besides, why are you
so set agin Miss Em?

- She ain't never hurt you.

- Look at her house.

Slave-built, slave-run

and run-down ever since.
I went through that gate
in her garden once, just once,
when I was a little girl.
She ordered me out,
and I'll never forget it.
Oh, Miss Em ain't never liked
children traipsin' around in her garden.
Why, when she had that boarding school,
she made them girls play...
on the other side of the house.
Guess I'll look in on her now like I do
every morning to see if she's all right.
(Train Whistle Blows, Distant)
(Pinky's Voice)
Tom. Tom.
I'll send him a telegram. Western Union.
I want to send a telegram.
Yes. Straight wire.
"Dr. Thomas Adams.
"St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Boston.
"Darling. All a terrible mistake.
"Returning by the fiirst train.
"Meet me at the station, please.
I love you, love you,
love you, love you. "
(Man) Get up there.
Come on, you lazy devil. Come on.
- (Kids Chattering)
- Can you tell me
whereJake Waters lives?
- (Boy) Right down on the corner.
- Thank you.
- Hi, Tommy.
- Hi.
- This whereJake Waters lives?
- Uh-uh.
- You'reJake Waters, aren't you?
- Uh, yes, ma'am, I am.
- This is my house here.
- I'm Patricia Johnson.
- Who?
- You know Mrs. DiceyJohnson,
don't you? I'm her grandchild.

Pinky?

Well, what do you know?

Come right in, Miss Pinky.

I'm mighty glad to see you.

Mighty glad. Yes.

- I've come to get the money my grandmother gave you to send me.

- Oh, the money! Come on in.

I've been tryin' to get over to see your granny, but every time I start over there... something happens to stop me.

Yes, sir.

Mighty busy these days. Mighty busy.

This won't take long.

I shan't ask you...

why you held back the money so long as you return it.

Oh, sure, sure.

Don't worry about it. Sit down.

Oh. (Chuckles) You know, you've been away a long time.

- What about the money?

- You'll get it. You'll get it.

Every cent of it.

Sit down.

Why'd you come back, Miss Pinky?

Never figured that you would.

- Why shouldn't I? This is my home.

- Don't give me that, Miss Pinky.

jake's smart. He sees things.

Man most likely, huh?

White man? Couldn't tell him and couldn't not tell him, huh?

- Look, Jake, I haven't got all...

- Of course. Didn't mean to be nosy, Miss Pinky.

jake's your friend.

He only wants to help you.

Help me by giving me back my grandmother's money.

Oh, yes. The money. Well, I never keep much cash money on me.

- Keep it all in the bank, Miss Pinky.

- Is it far to the bank?

Bank's closed today. Saturday.

Very well. You can give me

whatever you have on hand...

and I'll tell my grandmother

you'll pay her the rest on Monday.

- Of course, I never keep

much money around the house.

- Mind giving me what you have?

just a minute. I'll look around.

(Jake) This every bit of money I got

in the house. A ten and a five makes \$ 1 5.

(Pinky) I'll tell my grandmother

you'll give her the rest on Monday.

- (Jake) Monday. Sure.

- You be sure and come by Monday.

- I'll be there, all right.

- Jake, what's she doin' with my money?

- Rozelia, you know I didn't...

- What you doin' with my money?

- Rozelia, you know

who that is? Miss Pinky.

- I don't care.

- Miss Pinky,

that happens to be my money.

- Let go of me!

Come high, don't you? Drop that.

Why, you... I'll split you open

if you don't give me my money.

(Officer)

Hey there. What's up?

- What's goin' on here?

- Nothin' at all, Captain.

- Everything's all right now.

- They been botherin' you, ma'am?

Pull your dress up, girl.

- Got a knife, Chief.

- (Chief) Okay. Get it.

Well, I reckon it's just as well

we come up when we did.

Uh, just what

was the trouble, ma'am?

- I don't care to make any charges.

- Just a minute, if you please.

I reckon you're a stranger in this part of the country, but this fella Jake...

- Did he molest you in any way, ma'am?

- No. No.

And the girl.

What about her, ma'am?

She even so much as thought of threatening you, we wanna know about it...

- Or if she give you any of her impudence.

- (Cackles)

- Shut up, girl.

- Excuse me, sir, but why are you two white men "ma'am-ing" her?

She's nothin' but a low-down colored gal.

- Tried to steal my man.

- Make him stop! Make him stop!

You heard what she said. He's got to slap her down, unless it's true.

Yes, it's true. I'm colored.

My grandmother's Mrs. DiceyJohnson.

Mrs. DiceyJohnson!

I oughta slap 'em both down, Chief.

Nah. Hold it.

- Why, I think I'll be going now.

- Go?

- You ain't goin' anywhere till

I tell you. Get in that car.

- I'm under arrest?

- What do you think?

- On what charges are you holding me?

You heard what I said.

Get in that car.

Don't worry.

I'll fx it. I know the judge.

Let me handle this.

(Horn Honking)

It looked like there was gonna be some trouble, and I searched her.

Then I took this knife off her, judge Walker. It was in her garter.

So I just brought 'em all in.

- Is this your knife?
- She's the one started trouble,
comin' takin' my money.
- That'll do. Find anything
on the other one?
- Didn't search her.
- Nothin' there, Judge.
- She had plenty time to throw it away.
- Rozelia, I could send you up
for this knife business.
- Yes, sir.

And I will if I hear one more
word about this matter... about
a knife or razor or any trouble.

- Is that clear?

- Yes.

- Now, go.

- Thank you, sir.

- As for you, Jake...

- Yes, sir. I was just...

You've been in this kind of
trouble before.

- After this, keep your hands
off other people's money.

- No, sir.

Never touch a nickel
that ain't mine, sir.

- I'm going to let you off this time.

- Thank you. Much obliged, Judge.

- But next time will be the last.

- Yes, sir. Thank you.

Now it's to you, Pinky.

If Jake owes you money
and doesn't pay it, let me know.

- I'll see that he does.

- Thank you.

I remember years ago,
after your mother died.

I remember when Dicey sent you away
to school. Aunt Dicey's a good woman.

I've always thought highly of her,
and I'd like to be able to think well
of her grandchildren.

I've done nothing, Judge Walker,

and I'm telling you the truth.

- I'm not saying you aren't, but...

- But because I'm colored,
you don't believe me.

You're not sure.

That's it, isn't it?

How'd you make out up yonder?

I graduated, then I took
three years' training as a nurse.

Oh, I didn't know. You managed to do
all that on what Dicey could send?

- Yes.

- Hmm.

I won scholarships. I worked,
waited tables. I got along.

Oh, that's good. That's very good.

All the more reason...

you should keep on being a credit
and comfort to your grandmother.

You've had advantages which are
denied to most members of your race...

people like Jake

and Rozelia, for example.

just try to keep out of trouble.

That's all.

Thank you, sir.

- Pinky.

- Yes, Granny?

Why don't you try and...

- Going somewhere, honey?

- Just for a walk.

- Evenin', Sister Johnson.

- Come in, Jake.

Stop sneakin' in here

behind me like that too.

I told Miss Pinky I'd drop around,
so here I is, man of my word.

Good. Pinky give me the \$1 5

you give her, said you'd be here
to give me the rest.

I guess she was kind of riled
after that little run-in.

- Run-in? What you mean, run-in?

- Oh, nothing.

- You workin' mighty late, SisterJohnson.

- Oh, I reckon I'll die...

with the shoes on my feet
and that old smoothin' iron
in my hand, good Lord willing.

You're a worker
from way back yonder. Yes, sir.

- I always admire a good worker.

- Look who's talkin'.

Well, there's work and then
there's work. My biggest work,
I do with my brain.

Liabile to get top-heavy
overworking that brain, eh, Jake?

That's the way to rise up
in the world. No more
being the skim milk forJake.

- He's gonna be the cream on top.

- Cream gotta be cream frst
before it rise.

- Where you goin', Sister?

- I gotta take this wash
back to Miss Em's.

Oh.

- Give me that.

- Don't you want me to read it for ya?

- Give it back, I say. It's mine.

- I can see... I can see that.

Give me that letter!

Not gonna read this letter
to nobody.

Well, you burned it up, didn't you?

That ain't gonna stop nothin'.

I got a feeling that
a fast letter coming like that
is a shadow moving before.

- Think so, Jake?

- Folks is coming, they come
treadin' on their shadows.

Course, I can stop him. Got his
name and address right here in my head.

Didn't I tell you I worked with
my brain? I can write a letter to him.

Say, I never seen

no colored man write like that.
Two stamps on the letter
and his name and address in
the corner with "M.D." after it.
- That means doctor.
- You think you'd be doing right?
You wanna keep Miss Pinky, don't you?
I'll send him a telegram.
That'll stop him just like that.
Don't you worry, Sister.
jake's gonna take care of everything.
Course, telegrams cost money, and I like
to do everything business-like.
That'll be a deductible item
from what I owe you.
(Train Whistle Blows, Distant)
- Evenin', ma'am.
Can we give you a lift?
- No, thank you.
Excuse me, ma'am. You must
be a stranger around here.
We can't let no white girl...
walk by herself through
this here nigger section.
- I live in this section.
- You what?
- I said I live here.
Now, just let me alone.
- Lives here? What do you know?
Who'd ever figure that?
- That's the whitest dinge I ever saw.
- Look at that swamp rabbit go.
- What do you say, let's go get her?
- Boy, let's go now.
We ain't gonna hurt you, baby.
Don't be afraid, baby.
We ain't gonna hurt you.
- We just wanna have a little fun, baby.
- Take it easy.
- (Cries Out)
- Come here, honey.
No! No! Stop! Stop!
- Please! Don't! Don't!
- What a build on her.

Let's see your face, baby.
Hold up your face.
Oh, you're pretty.
You're pretty. You're real pretty.
- (Screams)
- What's the matter, baby?
You want a drink?
- Hey, Al, give me that bottle.
- (Grunts)
- (Pinky Shrieking)
- Come back here, gal!
Come on back here, gal!
Ah, let her go.
(Shrieks)
(Shrieks)
(Panting)
(Knocking, Doorknob Rattling)
- (Rattling Continues)
- (Aunt Dicey) Pinky? Pinky?
- (Rattling Continues)
- (Aunt Dicey) Pinky? Pinky?
- Pinky?
- Granny?
Yes.
- What you got the door locked for?
- Granny, what is it?
- What's wrong? Tell me, Granny.
- It's Miss Em. Miss Em, honey.
- What's the matter with her?
- Oh, DocJoe say it's her heart again.
Her heart give out. It happened while
I was puttin' the linen in the closet...
talkin' to her
when she took her spell.
So I run down to the corner fast
as I could, phoned DocJoe.
- He picked me up on the way back.
He come that fast.
- Her heart? How old is she?
Oh, a year or two older
than me maybe.
Course, she never
allow that to my face.
Lord, I kinda hoped you'd take me

before you took Miss Em.

I kinda hoped you would.

Thy will be done.

- Everyone has to die, Granny.

- You're right, baby...

but the least we can do

is ease their passin'.

I'm so glad you're here. Seems

like the Lord sent you here

out of pure goodness.

- Me?

- I say, "DocJoe..." I say,

"Never you mind."

And was I proud to say it.

I say, "Never you mind, sir.

My Pinky's here,

and she's a good nurse."

- So he's sittin' there

waitin' for you right now.

- You told him I'd nurse her?

Course, honey. DocJoe say

everything depend on good nursing.

He say she gotta have a trained

nurse, and he can't lay his hand

on one for love or money...

if Miss Em had the money,

which she ain't.

Then tell him to keep right

on looking. I'm not interested.

- But she'll die.

- Then let her die.

- Pinky!

- I didn't mean that, but, Granny,

try to understand my side.

I only came back here because

I hadn't anywhere else to go.

I'd forgotten what it was like.

I've been away a long time.

I've known another kind of life.

I've been treated like a human being.

Try to understand... like an equal.

Don't you see I can't go back

into that house? Haven't

I had enough without that?

Pinky.

I worked long
and hard to give you an education...
and if they done educated
the very heart out you...
everything I've worked
and slaved so hard for is wrong.

Now, hear me!

You're goin' up to Miss Em's!
You're gonna take good care of her,
like the nurse you is...
or I swear on the Holy Bible,
I'll rip the livin' daylights out you!
Yes. I'm going away.

I should never have come back here.

Here. Let me help you.

Kind of wrinkled. Reckon
I'd better run the smoothin' iron...
over it before you pack it.

Kind of pretty too. Must
take a heap of studying,
learning to be a nurse.
The course is three years,
as you know.

- Miss Em didn't have no training at all.

- Why should she?

Her kind never

learns anything useful.

Didn't stop her from nursing me,
though, when I was down sick
with pneumonia, fxin' to die.

Miss Em nursed you?

I'd like to see that.

Where you been living,
child? What sort of stuff
they teach you up yonder?
Have I put in all my work
on you for you to turn out to
be nothin' but low-down trash?

Yes, Pinky.

Miss Em did nurse me.

If you don't believe me,
ask DocJoe. Miss Em stay here,
sleep in your little room.

She cook for me, feed me with a spoon,
wash my poor, tired body.
Even emptied my slops
like she was my loving servant.
Now she's fxin' to die...
and my own grandchild
done hardened her heart agin her.

- Doctor.

- Oh, yes. Glad you could come.
She's at pretty low ebb.
Under the hypo right now.
No fear of disturbing her.
Oh, yes. Pinky, isn't it?
A nurse. Of course.
Your granny's talked a lot
about you, but I didn't realize that...
Uh, some things
I've jotted down here for you.
Really not very much
we can do right now.
She's reached the age where
the mechanism begins to slow down.
If she has another attack...
Have you ever given a hypo?

- I'm a graduate nurse.

- Yes, yes, of course.

Well, I'm very glad to leave
Miss Em with a graduate nurse.
No phone in this house,
and I'm pretty hard to get hold of...
so it'll be a matter
of using your own judgment.

- I understand, Doctor. Your hat.

- Oh, no. Here.

Yes. Thank you.
You know, of course, that Miss Em
can't afford to pay for a trained nurse.

- Or do you?

- I know, Doctor.
Might be some of her old pupils
could pay you something.
Most of them still live...
No, Doctor. It isn't a question of money.
I'm doing it for my grandmother.

- Well, I'll look in tomorrow afternoon.

- Good night, Doctor.

(Clock Chiming)

- Who are you?

- I'm your nurse.

Dacey's girl, Pinky, aren't you?

- Yes.

- Why didn't you say so?

Come over here

and let me see you.

You didn't call yourself Pinky

when you were off up yonder, did you?

- No.

- Speak up. What name did you go by?

Patricia.

Pinky's better.

- What are you doing there?

- Dr. McGill left some pills for you.

You didn't think I'm gonna take

any more of Joe McGill's stupid dope?

They'll relieve the pain,

Miss Em. You are in pain?

Course I'm in pain. What do you think?

That you die in ease and ecstasy?

- What's this thing on my feet?

- Hot water bottle.

Take it away. I won't have it.

Brick's much better.

Over there on the hearth.

Put it in the embers.

Go to the wardrobe.

Open the door.

Look on the second shelf. You'll find

a bit of blanket to cover the brick.

Take your hands out of there.

I said the second shelf.

Miss Em, I'm not dishonest,

if that's what you're implying.

Furthermore, I don't have to...

Miss Em?

Miss Em!

Miss Em.

(Train Whistle Blowing, Distant)

(Aunt Dacey)

Now, make tracks, y'all. Don't
wanna see hide nor hair of ya...
till tomorrow.
- That you, Pinky honey?
- Yes, Granny.
Miss Em ain't...
No. She's better.
Praise the Lord.
Dr. Joe's with her now. He said for me
to come on down and get some rest.
You're supposed to sit with her
for the rest of the afternoon.
- Then you get some sleep, honey.
- I don't feel like sleeping.
What you doing
with my clothes?
With you being so busy
and all, I reckoned I'd unpack for you.
Put them back.
They can stay packed till I leave.
It's only a matter
of a few days, at the most.
DocJoe say that?
A few days?
I can see for myself.
Oh, for heaven's sake, Granny,
it's only a mean old woman.
She's been driving me
and nagging me ever since
she woke up this morning.
She do that?
That's good.
- What's good about it?
- Then she do feel better, sure enough.
Miss Em start feelin' better,
the more "coniferous" she act.
Pay no attention to her
worrisome ways, sugar. She
don't mean nothin' by it.
She means to put me
in my place and keep me there...
just as she's kept you
all these years.
Oh, Pinky child, when folks

is real friends, there ain't
no such thing as place.

(Man)

Hello? Anybody home?

Miss Johnson?

I beg your pardon.

You're Miss PinkyJohnson?

Yes, sir.

You're looking for me?

- I'm Dr. Canady from over in Leesburg.

- How do you do, Doctor?

My wife and I heard you
were here. We'd like you to come
over to the house to dinner.

- Well, that's...

- If you'll just set the date...
any night that's convenient.

I'm on a case now,
and after that, I'm going away.

When you come back then.

Your being here is the best news
we had in a long time.

We had some girls over in Leesburg,
high school graduates...

with no chance
for regular training.

- With your help, we can
set up a real nursing school.

- It's out of the question.

- You see.

- Excuse me. How are you
and your family these days?

- Fine, thank you, Aunt Dicey.

- You see, I...

I'm not planning
to come back.

I see. I have never been north.

I took my M.D. at Meharry.

I was tempted to go, of course,
but I felt my job was here.

These girls I was telling you about, it's
gonna be kind of hard to disappoint them.

I'm sorry, but my plans
are all made.

Well, good luck
to you, Miss Johnson.
(Miss Em)
Get the feet.
Mind that candlestick.
My great-grandfather bought that when
they sold Thomas Jefferson's things.
Things. Hmm.
They last longer than people.
This furniture was made
to present to Henry Clay...
if he was elected,
but the voters thought different...
and Grandfather bought it
at auction.
Look what you've done.
My best brooch.
Well, you've looked
at it long enough.
- What do you think of it?
- It's very nice, Miss Em.
Don't be evasive. I want the truth.
What do you think of it?
It's one of those rather clever
imitations one can buy in
the chain stores for a dollar.
Ninety-eight cents.
Any fool would know that.
Now, go dust that center table.
Bring me a pitcher of water.
Miss Em, I've already done
those things, and you know it.
- Don't be impudent.
- It isn't impudent to say what's true.
I'm a trained nurse,
and I won't be spoken to like that.
You don't like it here;
why did you come?
Because my grandmother said
she'd whip the living daylights
out of me if I didn't.
(Chuckles)
That Dicey. Nobody like her.
Did she really say that?

- That's the sort of answer
you want to hear, isn't it?

- No.
I prefer the truth.
You forgot that fre screen.
Don't be so upset.
I'll be dead soon...
and you'll be free
to go back north again.
Going to give up your nursing
when you get back up yonder?
Nursing's my profession. In certain
places, a nurse is treated with respect.
Nobody deserves respect as long as
she pretends to be something she isn't.
How I live my life
is my own business, Miss Em.
Course it is. It isn't your husband's
business or your children's.
You can go now, Pinky. I'll be all right
till your grandmother comes.
You can't dismiss me as you did
when I was a child and you drove
me out of your garden.
Oh, you remember.
Yes. Very clearly.
What do you want me to do,
stay here and live this sort
of life when I don't have to?
just prove you're addicted
to the truth, like you pretend.
Wherever you are, be yourself.
What am I then? You tell me.
You're the ones that set
the standards, you whites.
You're the ones that judge people
by the color of their skins.
By your own standards,
by the only ones that matter
to you, I'm as white as you are.
That's why you all hate me.
What should I do? Dye my face?
Grovel and shuffle?
Say "yes'm" and "no'm"?

Marry some man like Jake Waters?
Carry a razor in my stocking?
Nobody hates you, Pinky.
Don't just stand there.
When you leave the room, go quickly.
I hate dawdling.
Pat!
- Oh, darling.
- Oh, if you only knew what
I went through finding you.
What's wrong? What got into you,
running off like that?
- How did you find me?
- I got your old address
from the nuns' school...
and then that crazy telegram
came, signed Pinky Johnson.
- Why "Pinky"?
- I didn't send you any wire.
Come on.
Come on up to the house.
What's it all about, Pat?
I can see you're working, but why here?
Why didn't you want me to know?
What are you doing, charity work?
No. I live here.
Is that it? Is it because
you were ashamed of telling me
you lived in a place like this?
I often wondered why you never
spoke about your home and family, but...
Don't you know who lives
in this kind of house?
Come on in.
Come here, Tom.
There's an old colored woman
who can't read or write...
a washerwoman
people around here call Aunt Dicey.
There's the basket she carries her
clothes in. There's the ironing board.
And those are the heavy irons
she heats on that old wood stove.
Year in and year out,

she's washed and ironed...
and carried her clean clothes
to people's back doors...
through rain and cold
and the heat of summer.
And she saved her money and lived
on scraps white people gave her.
Why? For me. So she could
send me off to school...
so I could learn to be a nurse.
So her granddaughter would be spared
the kind of life she's had to live.

- Her granddaughter?

- Yes. Her granddaughter.

Me.

Now you understand.

- Pat...

- My name is Pinky.

She's coming.

Tom, please... please go.

- I don't want her to find you here.

- I've got a car. We'll drive.

- No. No.

- Not until you tell me
the whole story. Come on, Pat.

And then, that day at the hospital,
I met you for the first time.

At first, I tried to keep you away,
even to the point of being rude.

That's true,
isn't it? Remember?

But you wouldn't give up.

I thought I could take the chance
of seeing you, being with you.

I'd never been in love. I never
dreamed it would ever be serious.

When I found it was, a kind of daring
came over me, with your love.

So I thought I could have everything.

For a few weeks I believed it...

until you wanted
to get married right away.

Remember? You said I'd have
to make up my mind sometime.

Then I realized what
my decision would have to be.

So I ran.

- Poor Pat...

- I'm not looking for pity, and
don't tell me it doesn't matter.

- I couldn't stand that.

- I won't lie to you.

Of course it matters.

It makes... makes problems,
important problems.

- But let's try and face them
like rational people.

- (Scoffs) Rational.

What's rational about prejudice?

I don't think I'm prejudiced.

I'm a doctor and I hope
enough of a scientist...

not to believe in the mythology
of superior and inferior races.

It is a tricky business, though.

You never know what exists
deep down inside yourself.

I want to be absolutely sure
nothing like that exists inside of me.

You'd be so easy to hurt, Pat.

In this case, too much kindness
could easily be misunderstood...

and hurt worse

than cruelty.

A man should be able to lose
his temper and cuss out his wife...

once in a while without her
misunderstanding the reason.

That's why I didn't give way
to my impulse when you first told me.

I wanted to sort of hold myself
under a microscope a little bit longer...

till I could be sure I was right.

- What do you mean?

- I've got two reservations
on the plane from Birmingham.

I don't know.

I don't know.

- Come on, Pat. We've got an hour to catch our train.

- No, no. Wait. Wait.

- Darling, I love you.

- Tom, we can't... Wait...

- I couldn't help myself, even if I wanted to.

- I don't know. I don't... That's the important thing. The rest of it we can work out between ourselves. It'll be our secret. Nobody else will ever know it.

- (Crying)

- Here.

- Come on. We'll stop at your house and pick up your things.

- Tom, I can't go with you now.

- Why not?

- Not now. I'm on a case.

- Let them get somebody else.

- This isn't just a case. It's a debt that has to be repaid.

- That's the true reason?

- Oh, I swear it is. I'm through with running away.

- You're being honest? You promise you'll come as soon as you can?

- I'll take the next train.

- If you don't, I'll be here wanting to know why.

- Oh, I will!

- (Woman)

George, you still drive too fast.

- Yes, ma'am.

Well, shut off the engine.

(Knocking)

About time.

Oh, so you're the one. I'd heard you were light, but I'd no idea you were... Well, you're practically white.

- What is it that you want, please, ma'am?

- I'm here to see Miss Emma.
- I'm sorry. She's not supposed to receive visitors.
- I'm her cousin, Mrs. Wooley.
Oh, yes, Mrs. Wooley.
Well, if you'll wait down here, I'll see if Miss Em can see you.
- How is she?
- She's improving.
Won't you have a chair, please?
- Miss Em, I'm afraid...
- I know. Let her come up. But don't leave me alone with her.
- She'll wanna be alone with you, Miss Em.
- Well, I don't.
- (Mrs. Wooley)
How is my dear Cousin Em today?
- (Groans)
Well, I'll find out.
Sit in that chair.
If I knock over the bell, tell her I have to have an enema or something. Get rid of her.
- But Miss Em, I've just started your luncheon.
- Do what you're told, honey.
- Oh, Mrs. Wooley, Miss Em can see you now.
- I know. I can hear.
Cousin Em, what do you mean, gettin' sick like this?
When you're 80 years old, you expect to be sick. Sit down.
Now, now. Naughty, naughty.
Eighty years young is what we say.
I don't. It's old, and I won't have it minimized.
Takes a lot of livin' to get there and pure, cursed endurance.
- Eighty years young indeed!
- Yes, yes, Cousin Em. Of course.
- That's all now. I'll be sitting here with Cousin Em.

- Stay there, Pinky.
She's a trained nurse.
I want her there in case I have a spell.
Oh. Now, tell me, dear.
Are you being taken care of?
- What can I do for you?
- Nothing.
jeffers and I have been away on holiday,
and we didn't know a thing until yesterday.
I said to Jeffers,
"I'm gonna see Cousin Em tomorrow
no matter how busy I am.
I just have to know whether she's
getting every single thing she needs. "
And Jeffers said to me, "Melba, that's
just like you. You can never rest...
"till you know
you've done your duty.
And if you can take
a little sunshine into the life
of that poor old soul, you'll..."
Cousin Em?
She's nappin'.
- Or is she doped?
- Just tired. She's been very ill.
Well, I'll just
sit here till she wakes up.
Oh, Pinky, I do believe I forgot to tell
George to put the brake on my car.
Go down there
and make sure it's on.
- Cousin Em...
- I never nap, and I'm not doped.
- My goodness, she's whiter than I am!
- Prettier too.
Well, it just
gives me the creeps.
Seriously, Cousin Em. I gotta
talk to you alone. It's important.
I came in to warn you about
this girl, Pinky. My new maid,
Rozelia, knows all about her.
Now, Melba. I'm not gonna soil
my ears by listening to kitchen gossip.

But for all you know, lyin' up here
in bed, she's stealin' you blind.

Oh, Melba.

I think I left my brooch
over there on the bureau.

- See if it's still there.

- Well, I certainly will.

I most certainly will.

That's just what I been talking about.

- Oh, is this it?

- Yes.

- (Mrs. Wooley) Well,
thank goodness. It's still here.

- Oh.

Mrs. Wooley,

George says your brake is still on.

- What do you think of the brooch?

- Hmm?

Oh! Oh, it's lovely, Cousin Em.

Priceless. A real antique.

- Why do you ask?

- Oh, I know you like jewelry.

just wanted to be sure.

I was thinkin' of makin' my will.

Oh, Cousin Em,

you mustn't think of such a thing.

Why, it isn't as if you had

a lot of relatives. Jeffers and

I are the only two you got.

And I know how strongly you feel
about keepin' things in the family.

What an idea to make a will.

Why, you'll live years and years, dear!

Pinky's a nurse. She graduated

from one of the best hospitals up yonder.

Let's ask her.

Think I should be makin' my will?

Well, if you were ever gonna

make a will, Miss Em, it's time

you were getting it done.

There, Melba. There's

a nurse's opinion. Very sensible...

especially as it agrees

with my own.

I'm sorry, Mrs. Wooley.

Miss Em must rest now.

Well, she looks fine to me,
and besides, we haven't finished
our little visit yet, have we?

I do feel a little queer.

Maybe I have another fit comin' on.

- Fit?

- That's the way they start.

- Then I go clean out of my head.

- (Mrs. Wooley) Oh.

Well, in that case,

I guess I had better be on my way.

- Oh, you going? But you'll
come back, won't you?

- Oh, yes, dear.

I'll be in first thing next week.

I certainly will.

And no more nonsense about
making a will, you naughty girl.

No more nonsense!

Stop that. I won't have
you laughing at my relatives.

Sorry, Miss Em.

She's not a blood relative, is she?

She married my cousin, Jeffers Wooley.

He's my first cousin, once removed.

He nearly removed himself clean out
of the family when he married her.

(Chuckles)

Jeffers never did have much sense.

His father wanted him to study law.

Didn't have the brains for it.

Took up insurance.

Tried to sell me a policy.

Life insurance, he called it.

I asked him if it would insure
that I should live one day
longer than the Lord allows.

He said it didn't, so I said,

"Well, call it death insurance.

You oughta be ashamed mentioning
it to one of your own family."

Why are you

standing there for?

Why are you

standing there for?

Do you want tea or milk

with your lunch?

- Coffee.

- Miss Em, you know the doctor said...

I said coffee,

and make it strong.

Yes, Miss Em.

And, Pinky,

when you bring my tray...

bring me paper, pen and ink.

When you've washed the dishes,

you can take the rest

of the afternoon off.

I don't like to leave

you alone, Miss Em.

- Then send Dicey over.

- She can't stay long.

- This is her afternoon

to take the wash into town.

- Don't argue.

Do as I say. Don't want you

back here till after 5:00.

- Yes, Miss Em.

- Make that coffee strong.

- I want the spoon to stand up in it.

- Yes, Miss Em.

(Inhales, Exhales Wearily)

(Door Opening, Closing)

(Glass Shattering)

Miss Em!

- Miss Em! Miss Em.

- Why am I in bed for?

- Thought I was sittin' in a chair.

- You've had another attack.

You've been up

and doing too much.

Whose business is it

if I do too much, I'd like to know?

Nobody's at all

if you want to shorten your life.

- Flat on her back.

- No. No. Prop me up.
Give me some pillows.
I'm not gonna lie fiat
until I'm laid out.
- Be soon enough now.
- Might as well let her have her own way.
That's all I ever wanted...
to have my own way.
Here.
Open your mouth.
- What's that? Dope?
- Open your mouth.
I want some fresh water.
It's stuck in my throat.
- (Pouring)
- No, I said fresh water.
Close the door behind you.
There's a draft in here.
- (Door Closes)
- I don't want that girl
knowin' my business.
Now, go over there and look
on the second shelf...
in that book.
No, no.
The other end. The other end.
There. Now, open the book.
There's an envelope in it.
Get the envelope.
Bring it here.
- That's my will, and I want
you to witness it.
- Of course. Surely.
- No. You don't have to read it.
I just want you to sign it.
- Mmm.
Here. You'll have to sign it
again... in my presence.
- You know my signature.
- Sign it again, please.
These things
have to be done legally.
Oh, lawyers have more fool
rigamarole than doctors.

There. Now, put it back
in the envelope.

Seal it up.

Put it away.

Who's your executor?

- You are.

- Me?

- Isn't Judge Walker your lawyer?

- He's retiring.

Aren't you my friend?

No.

Never mind that now.

I don't need it.

It's gone down.

You didn't think

I'm plannin' to die this minute?

I'll be up to meet my classes
right after holidays.

Mm-hmm.

My school...

What'll the girls be doin'
with me in bed?

Don't you worry, now.

You'll be up and around in a few days.

Try to get some sleep now.

A fine woman.

One of the old school.

Never afraid to speak her mind or take
a stand for what she thought was right.

- How long, Doctor?

- Can't tell.

Extraordinary vitality,
but the last attack...

Perhaps a week.

Perhaps only a few hours.

Isn't there anything...

There, now.

You did a good job.

I might even say a devoted job.

Well, I'll stop in
first thing tomorrow.

- Good night.

- Good night, Doctor.

(Sobbing)

(Sniffing, Sobbing)

(Woman)

Twenty cents, please.

- Somethin' for ya, ma'am?

- Yes. Do you have
any mourning veils, please?

Right this way, ma'am.

This is our best quality, ma'am... 2.98...
and the last
we got in stock.

Yes. That'll be fine.

I'll take it.

I'll allow you're goin'
to Miss Em's funeral, ma'am.

- They say she had a lot of friends.

- Miss Viola.

- Come wait on me, please.

- Sorry, Ms. Wooley.

just a minute, please.

- I'll be right with ya.

- Where's Mr. Goolby?

- Excuse me, please, ma'am.

I only meant I was waitin' on someone.

- Mr. Goolby!

- I only have to wrap this
and get the change.

- Mr. Goolby.!

Why, yes, Mrs. Wooley, what can
I do for you today, please, ma'am?
Since when has it been your policy
to wait on nigras before white folks?

Why, I...

I'm sorry, Mrs. Wooley. I'm...

I'm sure that Miss Viola just...
just didn't see you.

- Miss-Miss Viola.

- Well, I'm... I'm sorry, Mrs. Wooley.

I should think you would be.

I'll repeat... Since when
has it been your policy...

Now, just what would you
be interested in this morning?

We have some nice broadcloth.

- We also have some...

- What's that?

Well, that's the money...

the money, ma'am, she gave me... \$5.00.

- Is that Miss Em's money?

- No, Mrs. Wooley.

Would you mind tellin' me

where you did get it?

I don't care to say

where I got it, Mrs. Wooley.

Well, that's all you'll get away with.

You can rest assured of that.

Charge this.

(Woman)

What's going on?

I'll take my veil now,

Mr. Goolby...

unless you don't sell

to colored people.

I'm in business to sell goods, and

your money's good if it's honest money.

It's honest money.

My grandmother earned it...

by harder work

than selling goods over a counter.

Do you wish

to sell me the veil?

4.98.

Very well, Mr. Goolby.

My change, please.

(Register Clatters)

(Church Bell Tolling)

When are you fxin'

to leave, honey?

Oh, uh...

in the morning.

There's a train at 9:00.

Then, in that case, I'm gonna fx ya

a nice, hot supper tonight.

Oh, Granny,

please don't trouble yourself.

I don't...

- Oh.

- (Car Door Shuts)

- Howdy, Aunt Dicey.

- (Aunt Dicey) Howdy, Doc Joe.
- Howdy, Pinky.
- Here. Have a chair, Dr. Joe.
- Somebody sick out this way?
- No. Nobody's sick.

I... got some news for you, and I thought the sooner you knew it, the better.

- (Bell Continues Tolling)
- Copy of Miss Em's will.

She left her pa's law books to her cousin, Mr. Wooley. Family portraits too.

And her jewelry to Mrs. Wooley.

Good, 'cause Mrs. Wooley sure likes all kinds of geegaws and fxin's.

"To my faithful servant and friend, DiceyJohnson, colored...

I leave all personal clothing of which I died possessed."

Bless her heart. Sometimes I think she always get her shoes extra big...

'cause when these ft her just right, they pinch my bunion.

And I'm mighty proud to have her clothes too.

Miss Em left you the house, Pinky, and everything in it.

The land too... about 20 acres.

"The remainder of my estate I give and bequeath...

"to the aforesaid

DiceyJohnson's granddaughter, Pinky.

"This bequest being an expression of my genuine regard for her...

and my confidence in the use

to which she will put this property. "

- That what the paper say?

- Here. Read it for yourself.

It say it for a fact, Doc Joe?

(Doc Joe)

That's the way she wrote it.

But if I were you,

I wouldn't count on it just yet.

You see, the Wooleys...

Mrs. Wooley in particular...
figured on gettin' all that stuff.
Hear they've already hired a lawyer.
You mean, they're gonna contest it?
On what grounds?

(Sighs)

Undue influence, I suppose...

question Miss Em's sanity,
that sort of thing.

There's already been some talk.

So that's why Mrs. Wooley
and those men in town...

Don't you think

Miss Em was sane?

Far as I know, she was.

That last night her mind
wandered a bit...

but that's not unnatural.

You just keep that if you want
to look it over some more.

But I don't believe

I'd count on gettin' it.

Better wait and see.

I don't know how the folks
around here are gonna take this.

(Tolling Continues)

I wonder why she did it.

Ain't you gonna finish
your fried chicken, honey?

Oh, I'm sorry, Granny.

I wonder why she did it.

Well, Miss Em had grown
powerful fond of you.

But she should've known better.

Pinky, I've lived

in this world a long time...

long enough to know for sure
if it's somethin' white folks
don't want you to have...

or somethin' they

want for their self...

you might as well

forget all about it.

But she meant me to have it.

"Expression
of my genuine regard for her...
and my confidence in the use
to which she will put this property."
- What did she mean?
- That don't mean nothin' where
the white folks is concerned.
- 'Sides, you goin'
back up yonder, so why...
- (Knocking)
- Evenin', SisterJohnson.
Evenin', Miss Pinky.
- Hello, Jake.
Well, I just started uptown,
and I thought I'd stop by for a while.
Well, Miss Pinky, I hear as how
you got some property comin' to ya.
- What else have you heard?
- Well, the white folks are sayin'...
you kept Miss Em
doped all the time.
They say she must have been
out of her head, and you must've
made her write that will.
- It's nonsense, and they know it.
- Is or ain't, I don't know.
But it sure spells
trouble for somebody.
If I was you, Miss Pinky, I'd stick
close to the house for a while.
- She's leavin'
frst thing in the morning.
- Goin' back up north?
- Yes.
- That's good.
That's mighty good.
Then Ms. Wooley
get the property by default.
- Everything's fine...
no trouble for nobody.
- Is that the law?
Default? Well, unless you get
a lawyer to file an answer.
Of course, me, I've had

considerable dealings with
the law, but I ain't licensed.
But even if I was licensed,
I wouldn't touch your case...
for a stack
of hundred dollar bills that high.
I got a nice house
and no fre insurance.
And I'm glad you decided
to be sensible about this thing.
Because if you hadn't, I was gonna make
reservations across the state line...
and go fshin'
for three or four weeks.
Oh, what is it?
What is it, child?
Pinky.
Pinky, tell me.
What are you fxin' to do?
I'll be staying on for a while,
till this business is settled.
Miss Em meant me
to have the house...
and I'm not gonna give it up
to please Mrs. Wooley...
or anybody.
Granny.
Can't do it, Pinky.
You know that I'm retiring.
As judge, yes, sir. But that
leaves you free to take my case.
Frankly, I don't want to get
mixed up in this.
There's too much feelin', too many tales
around about you and Miss Em.
- They're not true, sir.
- Possibly they're not, but...
Say, perhaps you could compromise...
settle it out of court.
- I'm sure Mrs. Wooley would be generous.
- With my property?
- Court'll decide whose it is.
- It won't even come up
before the court...

unless I can
induce a lawyer to act for me.
But you don't want a lawyer
who thinks the will was
ill-considered and a mistake.
All right, sir.
Good-bye.

judge Walker, Miss Em
was your lifelong friend.
Whether the will was a mistake
or not, wouldn't she expect you
to help carry out her wishes?
- I'll take your case.
- Thank you, sir. Of course,
I'll pay the customary fees.
Oh, no. There'll be expenses you'll have
to meet, but there won't be any fee.
I'm a fool to take your case and
the only one who can win it for you...
but if I'm gonna get into a fight,
it'll be on clean ground.

Come see me tomorrow.

(Doc) But it was Miss Em who
owned the property, and she
wanted this girl to have it.
- But that isn't the point. Doc.
- It's the principle.

Dr. Joe?

- Come on. See ya later, Doc.
- Be seein' ya, Doc.
Dr. Joe, could you help me...
help me to find a job?
I only need a few days...
to help cover the court expenses...
and I can't ask Granny.
She's been ill lately,
hasn't been able to work at all.
Might as well face it, Pinky.
I couldn't possibly
get you a job now.
A lot of the folks even down
on my neck about this thing...
blamin' me for puttin' you
over there in the first place.

- If it isn't too much, I could...

- Oh, no, Doctor.

Thank you. I'll find a way.

(Nervous Chuckle)

Good-bye.

(Granny Humming)

(Metal Clanging)

Hello.

Pinky?

Yes, Granny?

Tom.

Darling, come here.

Granny.

Granny, this is

Dr. Thomas Adams.

- How do you do?

- Pleased to meet you, sir.

I reckon you got things
to talk about.

Why on earth
are you doing this?

I needed some money.

Granny was sick.

- Could've asked me for it.

- No, Tom.

This is something

I have to do by myself.

I still don't know

what it's all about, Pat...

or why you think it's important
enough to change our plans.

Quite a stir in the papers up north,
Negro papers in particular.

Got ahold of some clippings for you.

I read in one of 'em

the trial was set for tomorrow.

Read them.

"Negro Heiress Defies Lynch Law."

Yes, there... there was a reporter here,
but I didn't tell him anything.

"Negro Girl Fights To Hold Her..."

I had no idea

they'd make so much of it.

Why go through with it? What for?

It isn't too late to back out.

- The trial's tomorrow.

- Let it go by default.

We don't need the house.

I got plenty for both of us.

- Be sensible. Pack,
and let's get out of here.

- I can't do that, Tom.

- What are you fighting for, a run-down
house and a few acres of worthless land?

- No.

If I should back out now,
I'd be letting Miss Em down.

I can't do that.

I can't let her down.

I can't let myself down
or... my people.

- They're not your people, Pat!

- What?

Not really. There'll be
no PinkyJohnson after we're married.

You'll be Mrs. Thomas Adams
for the rest of your life.

Tom, you can change your name,
but I wonder if you can change
what you really are inside.

What's behind all this?

You haven't really told me.

I don't know.

I'm not being heroic. I'd hate that.

I just know I have
to go through with it to the end.

You see, they're trying
to steal the property...

steal it from Miss Em
as much as from me.

They'll probably
get away with it.

But I'm gonna make them
do it out in the open...

right out in court
for everyone to see and hear.

It won't be pleasant, Tom. They'll lie.
They'll try to humiliate me.

They'll try
every trick of prejudice.
But I just...
All right, Pat.
I'll be there. I understand.
We also propose to show, Your Honor,
that the defendant, PinkyJohnson...
We also propose to show, Your Honor,
that the defendant, PinkyJohnson...
colored... is of a violent nature...
quarrelsome,
a troublemaker...
that she is capable of executing
the scheme I have described to you...
and that she had every
opportunity of doing so.
The deceased
was unquestionably senile.
The fact that she signed the will twice
is evidence of a confused mind.
She was unduly influenced by
the defendant as I have outlined to you.
And she was under
the influence of drugs...
administered by the defendant.
Furthermore, this will
was written at a time when...
reliable witnesses will prove
she was of unsound mind.
May I see that will again, please?
In view of these things, we therefore
ask that the will be set aside...
and the property inherited
by the next of kin.
I yield to you, Judge Walker.
(Crowd Murmuring)
Your Honor.
I agreed to act
for the defendant in this case...
because I feared
an injustice was about to be done.
Your Honor, apparently
my fears were well-founded.
Counsel for the plaintiff

has made it perfectly clear...
that my client in effect
is to be tried because she is a Negro...
and because a Negro cannot be permitted
to inherit property in this community.
- (Murmuring)
- (Gavel Pounds)
(Judge Walker) That is
a harsh fact, but we must face it.
Though many of us
may criticize this bequest...
I do not believe any of us
who knew Miss Em... and most
of us knew and loved her...
can accept the contention
that she was insane.
I do not believe counsel
for the plaintiff can prove...
that undue influence
was exerted by my client.
I think most of us know how difficult it
was to influence Miss Em in any respect.
We need not look too far
for a motive in making this bequest.
She was a proud woman
who'd leave no debt unpaid.
This was a real obligation.
She took the only means open to her
of paying for my client's services...
through the provisions
of her will.
The expressed wishes of the dead
should not be set aside...
to gratify the greed
or the prejudice of the living.
Your Honor,
this is a small country town.
We've always thought
that what happened here
was our own private concern.
This is no longer true...
just as it is no longer true
that our country as a whole...
can exist

entirely to itself.

What is done in our courts
in cases such as this...

has become a matter of moment
in the eyes of the world.

Let us examine our conscience. Let us
look into our attitude and our tradition.

Let us take care,
lest it be said of us that here...
there is neither law
nor justice.

Your Honor, we're all anxious
to get to the bottom of this
as quickly as possible...
before the temperature of this room
reaches the boiling point.

Fortunately, there is one witness
who is qualified to testify...
on the only matters
of pertinence to this hearing...
the question of Miss Em's sanity
and the question of undue influence.

Incidentally, he will be
the defense's only witness.

He was Miss Em's physician, in constant
attendance during her last illness.

He was also her confdant,
witnessed her will...
and is the executor of her estate...

Dr. Joseph McGill.

Your Honor, I disagree with
my esteemed opponent's notions...
of what is or isn't
pertinent to this hearing.

But I am perfectly willing to have
Dr. McGill take the stand at this point.

- Very well. Call Dr. McGill.

- Do you think that's...

Oh, let him put his witness
on frst. We'll close with ours.

Dr. Joe doesn't seem
to be here, Your Honor.

Well, take a look in the corridor.
See if he's there.

- He ain't out here, Your Honor.
- Well, that bein' the case...
we'll have to proceed with
the plaintiff's witnesses.
- Are you ready, Mr. Stanley?
- Yes, Your Honor.
- Better find Dr. Joe and bring him here.
- Yes, Judge Walker.
Money and a man, I believe,
is what caused the trouble.
The usual thing.
Well, we picked 'em both up, along
with the man they was fightin' over.
Judge Walker heard the case.
That's all I know about it.
Yeah, money and a man.
Thank you. Your witness.
Chief Anderson, what was
the final prison sentence
imposed on my client?
- Why, Judge Walker,
you know there wasn't any.
- So she was cleared.
Is that correct?
- Well, I wouldn't exactly say that.
- You wouldn't?
You generally always let 'em off with
a good talkin' to, like you give her.
You know how it is.
(Chuckles)
- If you put them niggers in jail
every time somethin' happens...
- That'll do.
Your Honor, this witness's
testimony should be ignored
and stricken from the record...
- As totally irrelevant to the hearing.
- Your Honor, I object!
just a minute! The court is capable
of deciding any questions of relevancy.
Motion denied.
Call the next witness.
Well, for one thing,
on my last visit...

this girl simply wouldn't
leave the room.

And I could see that Cousin Em
actually didn't dare to dismiss her.

Then Cousin Em began
to talk about makin'a will.

Well, I tried to cheer her up,
but she turned to this Pinky
and said, "What do you think?"
as if... as if she didn't dare
to make up her mind alone...

which was never
like Cousin Em... never.

- What did the girl say?

- Oh, she spoke up, bold as you please...

and said Cousin Em had better
make a will if she was ever goin' to.

- That's the part I mentioned to you.

- Impudent, yes...

but the way she said it...

a threat too.

And I'm just glad that Cousin Em was
allowed to die a natural death in her bed.

I think everyone in this courtroom
understands what you mean, ma'am.

Did you notice anything peculiar
about her condition that day?

Oh, yes. She closed
her eyes while I was talkin'.

She kept droppin' off
in a stupor. She was doped!

And then she told me
she was subject to fts...

that half the time she was
clean out of her mind.

Poor soul. Poor soul.

Thank you, Mrs. Wooley.

Your witness.

Mrs. Wooley, you have testified
that my client's tone was threatenin'.

Now, Miss Em must've made some
sort of reply if she was threatened.

- What were Miss Em's next words?

- I don't remember. She was doped.

Didn't she say Pinky's opinion
was sensible because that agreed
with what she thought herself?
Were you there, Judge Walker, or are you
just bein' primed by that girl over there?

- Did you ever hear such...
- Uh, answer the question, please.
- Isn't that what Miss Em said?
- I'd certainly remember it if she had.
- Mrs. Wooley, do you know
the penalty for perjury?
- I object!

Your Honor, I object to this attempt
to intimidate the witness!

She's answered the question.

She doesn't remember.

And now, if my opponent will stop
putting words in the mouth of the dead...

No personalities, gentlemen.

It's hot enough in here as it is.

- Will Your Honor please
rule on my objection?

- Objection sustained.

- Thank you!

- (All Laughing)

Didn't I tell you he's a good'n?

Didn't I tell you he's a good'n?

So, Aunt Dicey, you were there in
the room when she was writing her will.

Yes, sir.

Sittin' right there...

like I always done
when my Pinky's out.

And Miss Em was still writin'
when I left to take the wash uptown.

'Cause Judge Walker
and some is mighty particular
when they gets their wash.

- (Spectators Laughing)
- I understand, Aunt Dicey.
- You know what a hypodermic is?
- Yes, sir.

Did you ever see your granddaughter
stick one of those things in Miss Em?

Yes, sir.

I see her do it twice.

- What happened?

- Miss Em...

talked to herself for a while.

You mean raved?

(Aunt Dicey)

Kind of mumbled, like.

Then she go off to sleep

like she a little baby.

Now, just one more

question, Aunt Dicey.

What makes you think it was her will

that Miss Em was writing that day?

- I know it was, sir.

- Well, you see, Aunt Dicey,

this is a court of law...

and you're sworn

to tell the truth before God.

Some of us think this will may have

been written at some other time...

while your granddaughter

was present.

Did Miss Em tell you

she was writing her will?

No, sir, Mr. Stanley.

But you were sitting where

you could see the paper she was

writing on, weren't you?

Yes, sir, Mr. Stanley.

Well, now, didn't you see

enough of it to know what it was?

He's going to trap her. He knows she

can't read, and she'll never admit it.

- (Whispers) From Dr. Joe.

- Come, now, Aunt Dicey.

Let's have an answer.

You know, sir,

as well as me it ain't manners...

readin' what ain't meant

for you to read.

- (Spectators Laughing)

- (Gavel Pounding)

(Shouting) Then how can you swear

before God you knew it was her will?
Now, Aunt Dicey,
you answer me the gospel truth!
Couldn't this will have been written at
some other time? Couldn't it? Couldn't it?
- Yes...
- Couldn't Pinky have helped Miss Em
make a will when you weren't around?
- I reckon she could, sir.
- (Stanley) Your witness.!
(Spectators Laughing, Murmuring)
Your Honor, we'll waive
cross-examination of this witness.
All right, Aunt Dicey.
You can step down now.
I have here a note from Dr. Joe in which
he says he's going to be delayed.
Now, on the basis of this note,
I petition for a brief recess.
May I see this note, please?
- Do I have your permission
to read this to the court?
- You certainly have.
"Sorry. Mary Picken's baby
jumped the gun.
"When it gets here,
I'll get there.
- Joe McGill."
- (Crowd Laughing)
Seriously, Your Honor,
I object to this petition...
or to any legal strategy intended solely
to drag out this unfortunate affair...
which should have never
seen the light of day anyway.
judge Walker had as much time
as we did to summon witnesses...
and to make sure they'd be here.!
As for this note, it's easy
to read between the lines.
Naturally, Dr. Joe didn't want
to hurt his old friend's feelings here...
with a direct refusal to appear
as a witness in this unpleasant case.

It's obvious, however, that bountiful nature and the ethics of his profession...

- Have come to his aid.

- (Crowd Laughing)

- (Gavel Pounds)

- Oh, this is going to be a long confinement!

- (Laughter Continues)

- (Gavel Pounding)

He's not asking for a recess, Your Honor.

He's asking for a postponement!

(Laughter)

- Petition denied, Judge Walker.

- Thank you, Judge Shoreham.

(Cheering, Applause)

Any more of that,

and I'll have the room cleared.

- Have you any further witnesses?

- No more, Your Honor.

I agree with counsel for the plaintiff.

- There's no point in dragging this out any longer.

- Thank you.

The court has heard all the facts and is ready to announce its fiinding.

Thank you, sir.

I do not intend to defend

the wisdom of this bequest...

nor do I intend to base my findings

on the conclusions of the witnesses...

nor on the hearsay evidence

admitted here today.

This will is a legal document.

I have examined it, and I see no reason to doubt that it was written...

by a woman

in full possession ofher faculties.

Moreover, plaintiffs have failed to establish that any undue influence...

was exerted by the defendant.

The will is therefore

declared to be good and valid...

and the executor shall

carry out its terms as written.

- But Judge Shoreham!
- (Spectators Clamoring)
- (Gavel Pounding)
- I want it clearly understood...
any attempt to interfere with
the defendant or her property...
will be answerable to this court.
- Court is now adjourned.
- (Clamoring Continues)
(Bailiff Shouting)
Quiet.! Quiet, please.!
(Clamoring Continues)
judge Walker,
I don't know how to thank you.
Well, Pinky, you won.
You got the house and the land.
And you got justice.
But I doubt if any other interests
of this community have been served.
(Spectators Grumbling)
(Crowd Quiets)
Come on, darling. Let's go.
All right, Tom. All right.
(Glass Tinkling)
Big old houses like this
are a drug on the market.
We'll find a good real estate man
and turn it over to him.
We'll auction off the furniture
and the silver separately.
You know, some of those pieces
down there look valuable.
We'll sell them all in your name,
so you'll be independent...
just in case you decide
to run away from me again.
(Glass Tinkling)
This is... is quite a room.
Yes.
Yes.
Oh, say, isn't this
a beautiful fire screen?
Miss Em was proud of that.
Martha Washington is supposed

to have done the embroidery.
Oh, we can't let this get away from us.
We'll have it sent out to Denver.
Denver?
Didn't I tell you? L...
I've accepted a position
in a clinic there.
But all your ties are in Boston...
your family.
Oh. But the...
- The publicity.
- Oh, it's partly that...
but I've always thought
about moving out west.
Besides, too many people in Boston
know, or they might find out.
Pat, you'll love it in Denver. Some
friends of mine are starting this clinic.
They want me to go in with them.
I can't sell the house, Tom. That isn't
why she left it to me... to sell...
or why I went through
with the trial.
She said, with confidence in the use
to which I'd put the property.
Let's be practical. Her lawyer
had it straight when he said she was...
merely... merely trying
to pay off her debt to you.
- Now, if you'll let me...
- No, that wasn't her reason.
She'd have left it to Granny.
She owed her far more.
Miss Em accepted service as her due.
No, she had some purpose...
something she wanted me to do.
Come on now, Pat. I know she was
a wonderful old woman and all that...
and she made a deep impression
on you, but she's dead.
Your own life is much more important
than her purpose, if she had one.
It's my life she was thinking of.
She told me once

to be myself wherever I was.

- Well, that's pretty good advice, but...

- But you said yesterday...

there'd be no PinkyJohnson

after we were married.

- How can I be myself?

- It was only a figure of speech.

Now, let's get out of this place. You're letting the trial get under your skin.

- Will you forget it?

- You mean run away from it, Tom.

This time to Denver,

running away for the rest of our lives.

- You're all confused.

- No. I'm just beginning to understand.

She didn't want me to go. She didn't want me to pretend. We talked about it.

- Pat...

- That's why she wrote the will.

- She thought the house

would keep me here.

- But she was wrong.

- That's why she wrote it.

- She was wrong, wasn't she?

Wasn't she?

I can't go with you.

I'm sick of lying, Tom.

We wouldn't be happy, either of us.

What do you expect to do,

crawl into a closet and live

there the rest of your life?

Close the door and lock it...

lock everything?

Pat, look at me. Look at me!

Will you come to your senses? You've got to make a break, get away from it!

I don't want to get away

from anything.

I'm a Negro.

I can't forget it, and I can't deny it.

I can't pretend to be anything else,

and I don't want to be anything else.

- Don't you see, Tom?

- No, I don't.

You can't live without pride.

I'm sorry, Tom.

I'll never forget you
or what you tried to do.

But please go now.

Don't say anything.

just go.

What did you mean, Miss Em?

Tell me.

- (Chattering)

- (Woman) Come here a minute.

- (Chattering Continues)

- I'm sure you will.

- Miss Pinky, you have to do
something about Aunt Dicey.

- What is it this time?

She's been at that
new sterilizer again.

Every time I sterilize the sheets, she puts
'em back. Says they ain't white enough.

I'll speak to her about it,
but I doubt if it'll do much good.

- Lunch is laid out.

- All right. I'll get them in.

- Good morning, Miss Pinky.

- Hello, Teejoe.

- Teejoe is gonna do a little
fiying. That right, Teejoe?

- Yes, Dr. Canady.

- Well, Pinky.

- Hello, Dr. Joe.

- Mornin', Doctor.

- Mornin', Doctor.

- Uh, thought I'd look in
on the Freeman boy.

- He's in the dining room.

(Chattering)

- (Ringing)

- (Children Chattering, Laughing)