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Come Back, Little Sheba

By Ketti Frings

Good morning.

You've come to see the room?

Yes, I have. I'm Marie Buckholder.

Oh. How are you, dear?

You're from the university?

- Yes. I hope I didn't get you up.

- Oh, no, honey.

I had to get up, anyway.

It's up here. Is this the first room
you looked for?

- Yes, it is.

- I hope you like it.

- I'm sure I will.

- We haven't any children, you know.

Come right in. Right in here.

This is the room, honey.

See? You got a closet.

Nice, big closet.

And a lamp for reading.

I'll have to get you a bulb.

It's usually more quiet.

I guess a student needs it quiet.

But today being Saturday,
the Coffman kids is home.

The view isn't too important.

- It ain't too much money?

- No, the price seems all right.

Nice bed. A wonderful bed.

Good mattress.

I know, 'cause I slept here myself.

- You did?

- Well, not lately.

My husband used to be sickly.

But he's all right now.

I don't know, Mrs Delaney,

I'll think it over.

There isn't anything
closer to the university.

- It's very convenient, but...

- The bathroom's nice.

I just had it repainted three years ago.

We could put in another shelf
for your towels and things.

- And that's...

- That's our room.
My husband's asleep or I'd show you.
My husband's a doctor.
Not a real MD, a chiropractor.
But he's got a good practice.
If you was interested in the front room,
I could speak to him.
No, I wouldn't think of it.
I just started looking
and I feel I should look around a bit.
You could get your own meal.
Kitchen privileges, they call it.
And I could get you your own key.
You could come and go as...
That's my sewing room.
- It's a little upset now.
- I will think it over.
You could use the house
as if it was yours.
We wouldn't interfere,
'cause we're very quiet.
We don't have much company.
- It's only two blocks to the bus.
- Yes, it's very convenient.
- It's quite likely I will be back, only...
- I'll keep my fingers crossed.
- Thanks a lot. Goodbye.
- Bye.
- Who was that, Lola?
- Morning. I didn't hear ya.
You know what I just thought I saw?
Little Sheba.
But it was just some little grey dog.
- Who was that upstairs with you?
- She's an awful sweet little thing.
Her name is Marie Buckholder.
She's a student at the university.
I keep thinking
every little dog I see is Sheba.
- What did Miss Buckholder want?
- She came about renting the bedroom.
I called up the university.
You know, Daddy. After all, six dollars
ain't to be sneezed at.

- What are you thinking of?
- Lots of people rent rooms.
Not the Delaneys.
I didn't mean to upset you.
I just thought...
- I don't want anybody here.
- Are you mad at me?
You know, it ain't like before.
Nobody'd see you getting drunk,
'cause you don't get drunk any more.
When I remember the way you used
to be, drinking and getting into fights.
- Please, baby.
- I'm sorry, Daddy.
You gotta understand, honey.
Sure, I know I'm fine today.
Today, I know I can control myself.
That's enough.
Oh, sure, Doc.
Gee, must have been after three
when you got home last night.
Where was you working?
At the jail or the hospital?
At the jail.
- Want fruit juice?
- Oh, sure. Nice and cold.
- You sure drink it up fast.
- You know what the doctor said.
I'll stock in a lot today.
I was sure there was still some left.
Doc, can I go with you
to the AA meeting?
- For your birthday party.
- Sure.
- Wish I had some orange juice.
- I'll go to the store.
- Don't bother.
- Oh, it won't take a minute.
- I can get some on the way to work.
- No, let me do it for you.
I'll be right back. Won't take a second.
Mrs Delaney?
- I'm Miss Buckholder.
- Mrs Delaney's out.

I've come about renting the room,
and not the upstairs room.
If Mrs Delaney could let me have
this one, it's really what I had in mind.
More a studio than a bedroom.
I was here a few minutes ago.
You see, I'm studying art
and this would work out just great.
D'you think she'd consider it?
But if I'd be in your way...
- It's rather far from the bathroom.
- Running up stairs keeps my legs slim.
If I have to run in and out and it's late,
I won't be bothering you.
Mrs Delaney said
I could move in right away.
Right away?
Well, then... then why don't you?
- She wouldn't mind it being this room?
- It's my house.
That's just wonderful! Thank you
so much, Mr... Doctor Delaney.
She said two weeks in advance
was satisfactory.
- That can wait till later.
- No, I insist.
Tell her I'll be moving in around
four o'clock. Oh, gee, thanks so much.
I hope I didn't disturb you.
Daddy?
Doc?
Oh. Daddy, why didn't you answer me?
- I didn't hear you.
- I thought you'd gone.
- I rented your room.
- Did that nice girl come back?
Your sewing room.
You'll have to take your things out.
- Sure.
- There's your first two weeks' rent.
Oh. Thanks, Daddy.
The money'll come in handy.
Good evening.
- Hello.

- Hello.

May I have your attention, please?

Good evening. My name

is Ed Anderson, I'm an alcoholic.

I'm happy to welcome you to the AA.

Those of you who are new,

I hope you find what I found when I

walked in that door five years ago.

First, let's have

all the alcoholics raise their hands.

Thank you. Now those of you

who are here for the first time.

It's good to have you here.

Now for the birthday babies.

Elmo Chester, four years.

Pearl Stimson, three years.

Henrietta Colby, two years.

Doc Delaney, one year.

Elmo.

It's a long time between drinks.

Pearl.

Three years ago, I wouldn't have

the wind to do this.

Henrietta.

I don't know...

I don't know what to say,

except I thank God and

all my friends here who've helped me.

Doc.

- I never thought I'd make it.

- Neither did I.

- Hi there.

- Hello.

I bet I know who you're writing to.

I got a real long one from him today.

Four pages.

- Was it as interesting as usual?

- Especially interesting.

You hear that, Daddy?

Doc, she got a letter from Bruce.

- Bruce?

- As if you didn't know who that was.

You hear that, Marie?

The boy she's engaged to.

- The young man back home.
- We're not exactly engaged.
I just got my eye on him. You sound
tired, Doc. What'd you see tonight?
Oh, we didn't go to a movie. We...
We went to see some friends.
- Night.
- I'll be up in a minute, Doc.
Did Bruce get his raise?
He's getting \$300 a month and
expenses and he gets to fly everywhere.
Oh, that's wonderful.
Well, I guess you're busy.
- Night, Marie.
- Good night, Mrs Delaney.
What about a little music?
I always think music
helps with letter writing.
Marie should really marry that fella.
He makes \$300 a month
and he gets to fly every place.
Thought she wants to get an education.
Drawing pictures?
That's what she studies the most of.
Honey, do me a favour. I don't want
Marie to know about me being in AA.
But that's the first thing the AAs
teach you, to admit you're an alcoholic.
I'll tell everybody
when I'm more sure of myself.
You certainly ought to be sure
after tonight. I was so proud of you.
You looked so nice standing up there
in front of all those people.
- This too much air?
- Fine.
I'm too tired to wash my face tonight.
Did you?
She must spend a fortune
on bath powders and salts.
That bathroom smells like a lilac factory.
Oh, yeah. I like it.
I dreamt about Little Sheba again
last night, Doc.

- You did?

- Yes.

It was just as real.

I put her on a leash to take her
downtown to do some shopping.

Everybody on the street
turned around to look at her.

I was so proud.

Then we started to walk.

And the blocks started going by so fast,
poor Little Sheba
couldn't keep up with me.

Suddenly, I looked around
and she was gone.

Ain't that funny?

I looked everywhere for her,
but I couldn't find her.

I stood there, feeling kind of afraid.

Do you suppose that means anything?

- Daddy? Are you asleep?

- Dreams are funny.

Do you suppose it means

Little Sheba's gonna come back?

I don't know, baby.

I miss her so.

She was such a cute little puppy.

- Wasn't she cute?

- Yes, she was cute.

Remember how white and fluffy
she used to be after I gave her a bath?

And how her little hind end wagged
from side to side when she walked?

I remember.

I just hated to see her grow old.

Little Sheba should have
stayed young forever.

Some things should never grow old.

That's what it amounts to, I guess.

- Hi!

- Hello! How's our star boarder today?

- Want your breakfast?

- Just fruit juice.

You look lovelier than a spring garden.

You sure you wouldn't like a roll?

I got to get to the library, check out
some special books before anyone else.
You want to study hard, be a fine artist
someday. Paint beautiful pictures.
I remember a picture my mother had
over the mantelpiece.
A picture of a cathedral in a sunset.
It made you feel religious
just to look at it.
These books are for biology.
I have an exam.
- That enough?
- Fine.
See you later.
- Morning, honey.
- Morning, dear.
I can't sleep late like I used to.
I used to be able to sleep
till noon if I wanted to.
- I can't any more, I don't know why.
- Habits change.
Maybe it's the spring. Everything else
is stirring, why shouldn't you?
I should be getting your breakfast,
but you're getting mine.
- Did you say your prayer?
- Yes, baby.
Did you ask God to be with you
and keep you strong?
- Yes, baby.
- Then God'll be with you, Doccy.
Say your prayer for me, Daddy.
I love to hear it.
God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can, and
wisdom always to know the difference.
That's so nice. That's so pretty.
When I think of the way
you used to be, Daddy,
always drinking and getting into fights.
I was always so scared.
I never knew what was gonna happen.
I don't know what I'd have done

without you.

I'm so proud of you.

You been sober over a year.

- Mr Cruthers is coming to the office.

- Oh, he said he never would.

It goes to show you

people are nicer than you think.

- They always give you another chance.

- Oh, sure.

Maybe... maybe you could take me

to a movie tonight?

- I have to do some Twelfth Step work.

- Again?

It's important. You help yourself

by helping other alcoholics.

Alcoholics are mostly disappointed men.

Oh. Sure, I know.

You wasn't ever disappointed,

were you, Doc?

The thing is not to dwell on the past,

to live each day as it comes,

and stay sober doing it.

- Who are you gonna help tonight?

- Some fellow they found on skid row.

He's down at the city hospital.

I kind of dread it.

You said it helped you.

It does if you can stand it.

I did some Twelfth Step work

there myself once before.

They put the alcoholics

in with the crazy people.

Horrible.

These men, all twisted and shaking.

Eyes all foggy and full of pain.

One fellow had his hands clamped

together so he wouldn't kill anyone.

There was a young man,

scratched his eyes out.

Oh, don't, Daddy.

It's awful they take 'em there,

just 'cause they get drunk.

They'll sober him up, that's the

important thing. Let's not talk about it.

Maybe Marie
can go to a movie with you.
No, she's probably going out
somewheres with Turk.
She shouldn't be going out
with a fellow like Turk.
I don't know why you say that.
Turk's nice.
Fellow like that has no respect
for nice, young girls.
I can tell just by looking at him.
You think every girl is like Jennifer
Jones in The Song of Bernadette.
I like to believe that young people
like her are clean and decent.

- Hi.
- Hi, honey. My, you're up early.
- You want any breakfast?
- No, thank you.
It's such a nice morning,
why don't you walk with me?
- Yeah, Daddy, it'll do you good.
- I might come home for lunch.
Fine. I'll fix something hot for you.
- I hope I'm not rushing you.
- Not at all.
Have a good day. That's all right,
Daddy, you go on.
- Bye, you two, have fun.
- Wanna walk to the office?
- No, Daddy, I ain't even dressed.
- Kiss Daddy goodbye.
- Bye-bye.
- Aren't you gonna kiss me goodbye?
- Go on, Doc.
- Can't spend time kissing all the girls.
- Can I carry those?
- They're not heavy, I can manage.
It would look silly, a man my age.
A lot of men your age go to school.
I guess you had your share of college.
You can always tell
when a man's educated.
And isn't that a Phi Beta Kappa key?

I found it in a drawer the other day.
You're observant, Marie.

- Where'd you go?

- Mead. Most people never heard of it.
If they know anything
about medical colleges they have.
It's to medicine what Harvard is to law.
I had an uncle who went there.
Do people usually go to Mead
to become chiropractors?

- Well, I... I didn't finish there.

- What happened?

Well, I... I just didn't finish.
You take biology? You like it?

Sure. What's more interesting than
nature, especially our own bodies?
Speaking of bodies, my friend Turk.
This is where I have to leave you.
Have a good day.

- Same to you, Marie.

- Hey, Turk.

- If it isn't Mrs Rembrandt.

- Got room for me on your handlebars?

- Hello, Mrs Coffman. How are you?

- Thank you, fine, Mrs Delaney.
You're the busiest woman I ever saw.
Keeping busy is keeping happy.
With four kids to look after,
you've got no time to sit around.

- No, I suppose not.

- You don't hear me complain.
Oh, no, you never complain.
I wouldn't, either, if I had
a little cutie like Gretchen.
She's such a darling.
I'm afraid my little doggy has gone
for good, Mrs Coffman. I miss her so.
The only way to keep from
missing one dog is to get another.
No, I never could find another
little doggy as cute as Little Sheba.
I put an ad in the paper
for two weeks, but nobody answered it.
It's just like she vanished.

Just vanished into thin air.
That was months ago, Mrs Delaney.
You should get busy and forget her.
You should get busy, Mrs Delaney.
Yeah, I'm going to. As a matter of fact,
I've got something cooking now.
See you later.

- Hello, Mr Postman. How are you?
- Morning.
You better have something for me.
Sometimes I think
you don't even know I live here.
It's been two weeks
since you brought me anything.
If you can't do any better,
I'll have to get a new postman.
You'll have to get someone to write you
some letters. Nothing for you.
I was just joking.
You knew I was joking, didn't you?
I bet you're thirsty. Come in and
I'll get you a nice, cold glass of water.
Come in and rest your feet for a while.
I'll take you up on that.
I've worked up quite a thirst.
You sit down there. I won't be a minute.
Won't be a minute.
Feel free to ask me for a glass of water
any time you wanna.
That's what we're here for,
to make each other comfortable.
Thank you, ma'am.

- I hope you can't taste the cantaloupe.
- Is that what it is?
- I'll get you some fresh.
- No, this is fine.

You haven't been our postman
very long, have you?
You postmen have things pretty nice.
I hear you get a nice pension
from the government after 20 years.
I think that's fine. It's a good job, too.
You may get tired,
but it's good for a man to be outdoors

and get a lot of exercise.
My husband is a chiropractor.
He has to stay inside his office
all day long.
The only exercise he gets
is rubbing people's backbones.
But it makes his hands
awful strong, you know.
He's got the strongest hands
you ever saw. But a weak digestion.

- You want any more?

- No, thanks.

You know, my husband
is Alcoholics Anonymous.
He wouldn't mind if I told you.

He's proud of it.

He hasn't touched a drop in over a year.
All that time, we've had a bottle of
whisky in the kitchen. Just for company.
He hasn't even gone near it.

Doesn't even want to.

Alcoholics can't drink like
ordinary people. They're allergic to it.
They start drinking and they can't stop.
Liquor transforms them.

But if they leave liquor alone,
they're perfectly all right.

They're just like you and me.

You should've seen Doc
before he gave it up. He was awful.

He lost all his patients,
he didn't wanna go to the office.

He just wanted
to stay drunk all day long.

You wouldn't believe it now.

He's got all his patients back.

- He's doing just fine.

- I know Dr Delaney.

I deliver mail to his office.

He's a very fine man.

- You don't drink, do you?

- Just a few beers once in a while.

I don't think that stuff
is good for anybody.

- You got any kids?

- I got three grandchildren.

We don't have any and we get these
toys in our boxes of breakfast foods.
I usually save them
for the Coffman kids, but you take it.

- That's very kind of you.

- That's all right.

Goodbye, Mr Postman.

You're gonna get a letter
if I have to write it myself.

- Thanks. Bye.

- Bye.

Taboo.

It's Taboo, radio listeners,
your 15 minutes of temptation.

Won't you join me?

Won't you leave behind your routine,
the dull cares that make up
your day-to-day existence,
the little worries, the uncertainties,
the confusions
of the workaday world?

Follow me where pagan spirits
hold sway,
where lithe natives dance
on a moon-enchanted isle,
where palm trees sway
with the restless ocean tide.

Restless, surging on the white shore.

Won't you come along?

But remember... it's taboo.

I hope we're not disturbing her.

I didn't hear you come in,

I was half asleep.

I brought Turk home

to pose for me. In there.

- Pose?

- For my poster for the spring relays.

I have to do it for life class.

I had to grab him when I could.

Lucky I got my track pants on.

- What's he gonna do?

- Strip. Down to like this.

I thought you meant
he was gonna pose naked.
Men models seldom do.

- Is Turk a model?
- Lots of college athletes pose for us.
They like to be stared at, I guess.
The women pose naked
and the men don't?
Men are more proper.
If it's all right for a woman,
it oughta be for a man.
The man always
keeps covered. Ready?

- Is this all right?
- Over here, please.
It'll be tough not holding a javelin.
- What about the broom?
- I'll manage.
- It'll be just the thing.
- Is she always around?
She's not so bad.
Look, I want your left foot here.
- I'd rather have you pose for me.
- Ain't that good, Marie?
- That's fine.
- Nice of you to trouble yourself.
I'm glad to help.
What about a little music?
That's nice, Marie.
That's real artistic. I wish I was artistic.
I'll get you something cold to drink.
- She makes me feel undressed.
- Aren't you?
- Ain't she seen a man before?
- Not a big, beautiful man like you.
You know, you're gonna
get yourself into trouble.
Get back.
Hello, Dr Delaney.
You know Turk Fisher, a classmate.
- Hello, Daddy.
- Hiya, Doc, what's up?
- Marie's doing a drawing.
- I'm entering the poster competition.

Lunch ain't ready,
but it won't take a minute.
Here. Make yourselves at home.
Cottage cheese and buttermilk.
- How does that sound?
- Fine.
What happened to his clothes?
Marie's doing a drawing
for her life class, Daddy.
Why doesn't she draw him
in his clothes?
It's not the same, Doc.
You see, this is a life class.
They just draw bodies.
They all do it in the classroom.
It's not right. I don't care
if they do teach it at college.
Marie shouldn't do things like that.
But he's just posing for her.
Marie says lots of the athletes do it.
They fuss because they haven't
any children. They had one who died.
I can think of more interesting subjects
than them.
- You asked.
- I just meant he didn't care for me.
Doc is sort of tense. He used to be sick.
And getting old is no fun, I guess.
Yeah. Our age is the time.
- You said it.
- We don't want to waste any of it.
Turk, just hold that pose.
I'm almost finished.
Why doesn't she draw something else?
Flowers, a cathedral, a sunset?
All I know is Marie says if she does
a good drawing of Turk,
they'll use it for the posters
in the spring relays.
So I guess they don't want sunsets.
Suppose somebody walked in.
What would they think?
Well, if you think it's wrong, Daddy,
I won't let them do it again.

- I just don't like it.
- I don't see any harm in it.
- No harm? She's engaged, isn't she?
- Well, it ain't set yet.

All right. If anything happens to that girl, I'll never forgive you.

- Mrs Delaney.
- Who cares about her?
- I'll get it.
- Yes, it's probably for you, Daddy.

Hello? I'll call her.

- Who is it?
- It's for Marie.
- Yeah, but who is it?
- Marie, telephone.

Thanks.

Hello? Oh, hi.

Aren't we the big shot now?

Nice record you chalked up today.

- Turk was the star of the track meet.
- Oh, Turk!

I'm getting ready now. I'll be waiting.

OK.

- Where you going?
- Dance and whatnot.

I used to be popular, wasn't I, Doc?

Remember the homecoming dance, when Charlie Kettlecamp and I won the charleston contest?

Remember how mad you was when he thought he ought to bring me home?

- I did not get mad.
- Oh, yes, you did.

Charlie was all right.

You was just jealous.

- I was not jealous.
- Yes, you were, Doc.

You got jealous when we went anyplace if I even looked at another boy.

There was nothing between Charlie and me. There never was.

Honey, I'm trying to read.

Are you hungry? Hungry?

Lots of other boys

called me up for dates.

Sammy Knight.

Hank Biederman.

- Dutch McCoy.

- Sure, baby, you were the It girl.

But I saved all my dates for you,
didn't I, Daddy?

- As far as I know.

- Doc, I did.

You know I did. I never had a date
with any other boy but you.

That was a long time ago.

It's all forgotten.

Doc, how can you say that? Those were
the happiest times of our lives.

I'll never forget them.

I'll never forget that spring.

It was such a nice spring.

The trees were so full and so green.

And the air smelled so sweet.

Remember the walks we took
down by the old chapel?

It was so quiet and still.

That was such a nice spring.

In spring, a young man's fancy turns...
pretty fancy.

I was pretty then, wasn't I, Doc?

Remember the first time
you kissed me?

You were scared as a young girl.

You trembled so.

We'd been going together
almost a year.

And you'd always been so shy.

That night, for the first time,
you grabbed me and kissed me.

There was tears in your eyes, Doc.

You said you'd love me

forever and ever. Remember?

You said if I didn't marry you,
you just wanted to die.

I remember because it scared me
to have anybody say anything like that.

Yes, baby.

Then, when it got dark,
we stretched out on the cool grass.
You kissed me all night long.
You've got to forget those things.
It was 20 years ago.
Those years have vanished.
Just vanished into thin air.
Maybe you're sorry
you married me now, Doc.
You didn't know I was gonna
get old and fat and sloppy.
- Oh, baby...
- It's the truth. That's what I am.
But I didn't know it either.
Are you sorry you married me?
- Of course not.
- Are you sorry you had to marry me?
We were never gonna
talk about that, baby.
But, Doc... you was the only one.
- I'd just die if you didn't believe that.
- I know.
You were so nice and proper,
I never thought anything we did together
would be wrong or make us unhappy.
Do you think we did wrong?
You can't defy convention.
Or the laws of God.
I don't think anybody ever knew
except my folks.
If the baby had lived,
everyone would have known.
My losing her, the way it turned out,
you wouldn't have had to marry me.
Honey, what's done is done.
But it must make you feel bad
to think you had to give up your studies
and support a wife.
You might have been a real MD today.
- Marie, don't keep me waiting.
- Will I need a coat?
No, you got me.
If the baby'd lived,
she'd be just like Marie.

We'd be watching her go on dates.
Lola, people have got to forget the past
and live for the present.
We all make mistakes.
When my family left me all that money,
I could have gone back and finished,
instead of drinking it all up.
We could have had a nice house,
friends, comforts.
Maybe we could have adopted a family,
since you couldn't have any more.
We don't have any of those things.
So what?
We gotta keep living, don't we?
I can't give up just because I made
a few mistakes, I gotta keep going.
Sure, Doc. I know.
I'd better get ready.
I'll walk down to the corner
with you, Daddy.
Ed Anderson's picking me up.
Are you gonna be late tonight?
I don't know. Saturday's a bad night
at the hospital. Don't wait up for me.
- Take it easy.
- Hi, Doc.
Little Sheba.
Come, Little Sheba, come back.
Come back, Little Sheba.
I remember being taken to this hospital
in a padded limousine and a straitjacket.
I should think you'd try to forget it.
If you talk about it enough,
you do forget, so they tell me.
No good burying it or being ashamed.
I'm going in under my own steam now,
that's what's important.
I was never violent. I had quiet DTs.
The noises were made by
the caterpillars on the wall
while I waited
for them to turn into butterflies.
What's the matter, Doc?
It's no picnic, but you get used to it.

- Looks like we're having company.

- Yeah.

Bruce is coming tomorrow night.

I'm gonna ask him to dinner.

- Marie know about it?

- Yeah. She was real pleased.

She said she thought it was
very thoughtful of me.

Gotta take this polish back
to Mrs Coffman.

- I'm pooped.

- Don't use that word, it sounds vulgar.

I hear Marie say it all the time.

I thought it was cute.

Marie doesn't say it,
her language is refined.

Well, Turk, then. Somebody.

- Marie studying?

- No, she went out.

I didn't hear her.

Let's get some peppy music.

I love peppy music.

I guess it's 'cause I used to be
such a good dancer. Wasn't I?

- Doc, let's dance.

- Oh, no, dear.

Come on, Daddy, you used to be
a good dancer.

We oughta go dancing all the time, Doc.

If we did, maybe I'd lose
some of this fat.

I remember when I could dance like this
all night and never notice it.

Remember the charleston?

That used to be my specialty.

- Hey, not bad.

- The place is jumping.

- You gonna study?

- If it's still all right.

Oh, sure.

Marie said she couldn't go out tonight,
so I said she could use the parlour.

Turk's going to help with my chemistry.

Oh, you don't have to leave.

- I have to go out anyway.
- Oh, you do?
I have a meeting. I won't be late.
That's Marie's scarf.
- I borrowed your scarf, honey.
- That's all right. Sit down, Turk.
Sure is nice of you,
letting us take over like this.
I gotta make hay
while she's still smiling at me.
Make yourselves at home.
- I wish they'd both go out.
- You don't sound much reformed.
Well, you gave me the "go" signal.
I know you women
gotta pretend to be offended.
- But when you come back for more...
- I'll slap your face.
Now, you gonna study or not?
I am studying.
- Is there anything wrong, Doc?
- If you don't know, I can't tell you.
You like him, but he's no good.
Marie's innocent, she doesn't
understand guys like him.
- I ought to run him out of the house.
- You wouldn't do that.
They always behave so nice, Doc.
I know, I watch them.
- What do you mean, you watch them?
- Well, I let them use the parlour.
You watch them?
You watch young people making love
in the movies. That's not wrong.
They're so sweet and nice,
why shouldn't I watch 'em?
I think it's the sweetest time in life.
Makes me feel young to watch 'em.
He's too coarse for her.
Why don't you talk to her, Daddy,
talk to her like a father?
- I couldn't do that.
- It'll be all right.
Bruce will be here soon

and Turk won't be around any more.

Night, Daddy.

- Have a nice evening, Dr Delaney.

- Thanks.

- He hates my guts.

- He does not.

- He does. If you ask me, he's jealous.

- Jealous?

Yeah, I think he has a crush on you.

Turk, don't be silly. Doc's nice to me.

It's just little things he does, like fixing my breakfast. He's nice to everyone.

- He ever make a pass?

- No, Doc'd never get fresh.

- He'd better not.

- Turk, don't be ridiculous.

Doc's a real nice, quiet man.

If he likes running his fingers through my hair, well, why not?

He's got a wife of his own.

Let him make passes at her.

Things like that

are none of our business.

OK, how about a snuggle?

- Not tonight.

- Why is tonight different?

We should make it a rule

every once in a while to just sit and talk.

OK.

What'll we talk about?

- There's lots of things.

- OK, start in.

A person doesn't start

a conversation that way.

Start it any way you want to.

Two people should have something

to talk about, like... philosophy

or politics, religion.

- How about sex?

- Turk!

You wanted to talk about something.

I was trying to please. Let's have a kiss.

- Not tonight.

- Who are you saving it for?

- Don't talk like that.
- Well, thanks for a nice evening.
- Where are you going?
- I'm a man of action, baby.
- Don't go.
- Why not? I'm not doing any good here.

Don't go.

Why didn't you think about this before?

Come on.

- Let's get to work.
- This is all we ever do.
- Are you complaining?
- No.
- Then why put up such a front?
- It's not a front.

What else is it?

"Oh, no, Turk. Not tonight, Turk.

"I wanna talk about philosophy, Turk."

If I went out of here without trying, you'd be sore.

- Oh, Turk.
- It's true.
- Maybe.
- How about tonight, baby?
- What about Mrs Delaney?
- What about her?
- Women sense those things.
- She ever say anything?
- No.
- You're imagining things.
- Maybe.
- Stop it.

I know I treat you kind of rough.

I never was very gentlemanly, but...

you really don't mind it, do you?

- You know I'm nuts about you.
- Are you?

Miss Buckholder, what's your opinion of the psychodynamic pressure of living in the atomic age?

Turk, don't make fun of me.

Tonight?

OK.

Let's go and have a few beers.

Come back here when they're asleep.
You're wearing me down.

- Who are you showing off for?
- That blonde. She's drooling at me.

If I didn't know you so well
I might drool, too.

What time is it, d'you think?
Time for the old folks to be in bed.

- Come on, let's get going.
- You're awfully fresh.

Why here, half a block away?
I might be leaving late.
No sense in waking the Delaneys.

- I forgot my key.
- That's a good excuse. Let me see.

Turk, stop it.
OK, we'll both stay out here, then.
Suits me.

- No comfy porch swing?
- You're becoming a nuisance.

Since when have I changed?
You recognised my type at first glance.

- Let me see your key.
- Go ahead, look.

I told you I didn't have it.
Don't you dare.
"Come in," said the spider to the fly.
You'd look cute, climbing in windows.

- Isn't it fun doing things you shouldn't?
- Not here.

Cut the conversation.
You want somebody to hear us?
The Delaneys'll hear us.
Give a girl a chance to breathe.

- Who's the guy?
- Bruce. He wants to marry me.
- Can he kiss like I can?
- Better. He's perfect.
- He's in love with me.
- So he's there and I'm here.
- He'll be here tomorrow.
- What are you trying to pull?

You dames are always playing
one of us against the other.

I don't want to fight.

Turk, I won't!

OK. But don't you come teasing
around me any more.

Marie? Will you help me
move the table?

Oh, sure.

We have more room this way.

Little early to be doing this.

I like to set the table early
and spend the rest of the day
looking at it. Oh, the cups.

- You feeling better?

- Fine.

That's good.

Marie, d'you know what
I'm gonna have for dinner?

- No, what?

- I was awake half the night planning it.

We're gonna have stuffed pork chops,
twice-baked potatoes
and a big chocolate cake.

- And tomato juice.

- Sounds perfect.

Look at this tablecloth. Irish linen.

Doc's mother gave it to us.

- It's lovely.

- The china's real Haviland.

- Beautiful.

- Doc's awful proud of it.

- Anything his mother gave him.

- A real mama's boy.

He was the only child and she thought
the sun rose and set in him.

- What were your parents like?

- My father was awful strict.

He didn't let me go out with boys,
on account of I was so pretty.

Once, he caught me holding hands
with Dutch McCoy.

He wouldn't let me out for a month.

- He didn't even want me to marry Doc.

- Why? Doc's such a gentleman.

My dad was just... Well, I guess it was

because I was so young.
Doc and I moved to the city
and I never went back again.
But my mother comes to see me.
- I have to get to class.
- Where's the baking soda?
- Just a minute.
- I'll get it for him.
I'm sorry you don't feel good.
- I'll fix it.
- No, it's no bother.
I'm glad to do it for you.
There, that'll perk you up.
- Oh. You going so soon, Doc?
- Yes.
Aren't you gonna kiss me goodbye?
Get home early, we want to
give Bruce a royal welcome.
- You feeling all right?
- Doc, I'll walk to the corner with you.
- I'm late.
- Bye, Daddy.
That's funny. I wonder why
Doc took his raincoat.
It's a beautiful day.
There isn't a cloud in sight.
I've never seen such activity.
What got into you?
Company's coming. Look at your lilacs,
don't they look nice?
Beautiful. My, and you did your
spring house-cleaning all in one day.
I certainly have to hand it to you.
All these years, I've said to myself,
"Mrs Delaney is a good-for-nothing.
"Sits around the house all day,
never even shakes a dust mop."
It just goes to show
you can never tell about people.
- Candy?
- Thank you, no.
- Your dinner smells good.
- Pork chops and twice-baked potatoes.
That reminds me,

my kids must be hungry.

- Nice.

- Doc's favourite.

I forgot to return your silver polish.

Thanks for lending it to me.

- Have a nice evening.

- Thanks.

- Night.

- Good night.

Mrs Delaney?

Mrs Delaney.

- Yeah?

- Would you help me?

You and Doc won't mind if we eat and run? Bruce will want to take me out.

That's all right, honey.

We understand perfectly.

- Thanks a lot.

- That's a beautiful dress.

- You never wore that before.

- I know my man.

- Are you gonna marry Bruce?

- I am. I made up my mind last night.

- I feel kinda sorry for Turk.

- He may be sore for a while.

- But he has other girls. He'll get over it.

- Won't he feel bad?

He's had his eye on a pretty girl in his history class for a long time.

- He's just not the marrying kind.

- Oh. Really?

Oh, Bruce!

- You want me to open the door?

- I'll get it.

- Can't you get out of it?

- Not without hurting her feelings.

If we have to eat with them,

I'd rather take them out.

- And not be able to get rid of them?

- Who's clever now?

Hello there.

Mrs Delaney, this is Bruce. Finally.

- How do you do?

- How do you do?

Marie was so excited about
your coming. I bet you're hungry.

Marie says very nice things
about you in her letters.

Go right in, honey.

Mrs Delaney has fixed
the grandest dinner.

That was to be my treat. I thought we
could all go to my hotel and celebrate.

- Have a few cocktails.
- We can have cocktails here.
- I'll get them.
- She even cleaned the house for you.
- Marie.
- Yes?

We'll have to go ahead without Doc.

- What's the matter with Doc?
- He got held up at the office.

It would be when I needed him most.

- Sure you don't need help?
- No, everything's ready.
- Marie, you sit here, honey.
- Thank you.
- Bruce, will you sit here?
- Thank you.

Three's a crowd, so I'm just gonna
serve you lovebirds.

- There's no hurry.
- Oh, sure.

Gotta start, 'cause the food will all spoil.

Let's have some candles.

- Let me do that.
- Thanks, Bruce.

I always think candlelight's so romantic.

If you'll just excuse me.

Just a minute.

Hello.

Oh, Ed. Have you seen Doc?

He went out this morning
and he isn't home yet.

We're having company for dinner.

No, but you know that bottle of whisky
we had in the kitchen all this time?

Well, Doc's never gone near it.

I was gonna make drinks
for the company
and I went to get it and it was gone.
No. I don't think so.
Oh. He said this morning
his stomach was kind of upset.
Would... would you, Ed?
Thanks, Ed. Thanks a million times.
Yes, I'll be here.
I'm afraid it's a little late for cocktails.
But tomato juice is real good for you.
I'm high already, getting my girl back.
- Sure you won't eat with us?
- I'm not a bit hungry.
Well...
What about a little music?
Oh, Ed, it's Mrs Delaney again.
I hated to call so early, but I just had to.
Did you find Doc?
No. No, he hasn't.
He probably won't come home until he's
had all he can drink and wants to sleep.
I don't know what else
to think, Ed. I'm scared.
I'm awfully scared.
If I need you later on,
will you come over?
Thanks.
Doc!
Are you all right, Daddy?
Where's the morning paper?
I want to see the paper.
We don't get any morning paper,
you know that.
Then I suppose I'm drunk.
Is that what you're trying to say?
- No, Daddy.
- Then get me the morning paper.
Sure, Doc.
Here we are.
- Now, you sit right there and be quiet.
- Why shouldn't I be quiet?
- Nothing, Doc.
- "Nothing, Doc."

- Doc? You're sure you're all right?

- Course I'm all right.

Doc, where've you been?

What business is it of yours

where I've been?

- Daddy, I...

- Just let me alone, that's all I ask.

Why did you do it?

You said you'd be home early

and I had a nice dinner fixed

for Bruce and you never came.

- Bruce. A big dinner for Bruce.

- But it was for you, too.

- Well, I don't want it.

- Daddy, don't get mad.

Where's Marie?

I don't know. She didn't come home

last night. She went out with Bruce.

I suppose you peeked through

the keyhole and applauded.

Daddy, don't say things like that. He's

a nice boy. They're going to be married.

Probably has to marry her.

Just 'cause she's pretty

and he got amorous one day.

- Like I had to marry you.

- Don't, Daddy.

You and Marie are a couple of sluts.

- Daddy, please don't talk like that.

- What are you good for?

- You can't even cook my breakfast.

- I will, Doc, I will.

You don't sweep the floors till some

bozo comes and makes love to Marie.

Then you fix things up like...

like Buckingham Palace.

Or a Chinese joint,

with perfume on the lamp bulbs.

And flowers. And china.

Gold-rimmed china.

China my mother gave us.

My mother didn't buy these

for sluts to eat off!

- Oh, Doc!

- Gonna get me a drink.
No, please don't!
Daddy, please don't!
- You stay away from me.
- Doc, you know what it does to you.
Makes me want to come home
and look at you, you...
Soon I'm gonna have another.
And another.
Ed, Ed, he's home.
Can you come over, Ed?
- He's drinking. I don't know what to do!
- Get away from that phone!
Please come. He's got a knife!
No! Daddy!
No. No, Doc. Please, Daddy.
That's right,
tell the whole world that I'm drunk.
Scream, you fat slut! Holler
so the neighbours think I've beaten you.
Where's Bruce now?
Under Marie's bed?
Got all pretty for him, didn't you?
Combed your hair. Even washed
your neck and put on a girdle.
Please don't talk like that.
I'd rather you hit me.
I can't bear you to say
things like that. Talking crazy!
I'm making sense for the first time ever!
Didn't think I knew about it, did you?
I heard 'em sneaking in.
I saw them! You thought you
were putting something over on me.
No, Doc, I didn't know anything about it.
You're crazy if you think I didn't know!
Running a regular Lonely-hearts place.
- Probably since we were married.
- No, it's not true!
- You're lying!
- No, Daddy! Daddy, please!
That's not gonna happen any more.
I'm gonna fix you.
- Once and for all!

- No! Don't do this to me!
Daddy! It's me, Lola!
What's going on? I heard...
- Are you all right, lady?
- Yes, I'm fine.
Some men will be here soon.
Everything will be all right.
We got here as soon as we could.
- Tried to use that on you?
- I'm all right.
We can't leave him here
if he's playing with knives.
Doc, it's Ed and Elmo.
We're gonna take care of you.
- Get off me.
- How much has he had?
- I don't know. He hasn't been home.
- It's hit him hard.
- Shall I get him some coffee?
- No, he's past that.
- Get out. This is my house.
- We're taking you with us.
- Where are you taking him?
- City hospital.
No! No, wait, don't take me there.
That's where they put the crazy people.
If you don't come peacefully,
we'll call the cops.
You'll have to wear this off in the cooler.
You wouldn't like that.
OK. OK, I'll go.
Just give me one more drink. Please.
- Please don't.
- Can't make much difference now.
OK, Doc, we're gonna give you a drink.
Take a good one. It's gonna be your last
for a long, long time.
He'll be there a few days,
then he'll be home, good as new.
OK. I'm all right.
It's all right.
Honey, stop them!
Don't let them take me!
Stop them, somebody! Please!

No! No, wait! Wait, Ed!

- Don't, Mrs Delaney.

- I want to go with him!

No, lady, that's no place for you.

You'll only be in the way.

- Is there anything I can do for you?

- No, I guess not.

Keep busy, Mrs Delaney.

Keep busy and forget it.

Yes. I'm gonna keep busy, Mrs Coffman.

Look at this mess.

And he'd been behaving so long.

I'll get it.

Hello? Yes.

Mrs Delaney, I'll get it.

A telegram from

Mr and Mrs Bruce Cunningham.

Yes, yes, I am listening.

Married tonight. Yes.

Mrs Delaney, you mustn't.

Thanks. Send it over later.

Delaney.

Is he all right, Ed? I had to come.

He gets scared without me.

- This is Mrs Delaney.

- Ma'am.

- Can I see him?

- You can see him later.

- We just gave him a sedative.

- No, I gotta see him now.

All right, come with me.

- Not in here?

- He's safer here.

He tried to throw himself out of the car.

Doc.

Daddy. Daddy?

- I don't think he hears me.

- Probably not.

He's trying to say something.

Who's Lola, pretty Lola?

He keeps mumbling, "Pretty Lola."

That's me.

Mrs Delaney.

You wanna come in for coffee?

No, thanks. We were having breakfast
when you called.
You get some sleep.
Long distance.
I want Maple 240.
This is Valley 846.
Hello, Mom. It's Lola, Mom.
How are you?
Yeah. Yeah, I know, Mom,
but Doc's sick again.
Do you think Dad would mind very
much if I came home for a little while?
I'm awfully unhappy, Mom.
Don't you think just for a little while?
Just until I've made up my mind
what to do.
All right, Mom.
Oh, no. No, it wouldn't
do any good for you to come here.
I'll... I'll let you know if I need you.
Thanks, Mom.
And... tell Daddy hello.
You forgot your bag, Doc.
- I don't know how to thank you.
- We'll see you later.
- If there's any trouble...
- Call us any time. So long, Doc.
And good luck.
Lola?
Lola?
Doc?
Daddy... are you all right?
Yes, I'm all right.
Honey, please don't stand like that.
Like I was gonna...
I'm sorry, Doc.
- How have you been?
- Oh, I'm all right.
I've been fine.
I got a letter and a telegram from Marie.
She and Bruce got married.
After all our worrying about her.
- Did you like Bruce?
- He was awful nice. Like I expected.

Marie wrote something awful nice.
She said you really kept her
from falling for Turk.
- I hope she'll be happy.
- Oh, sure, Doc.
We're gonna be happy, too, Daddy.
Did they treat you all right?
Don't ever leave me.
Please don't ever leave me.
I don't know what I did or what I said.
I can hardly remember anything.
But please forgive me.
I'll try to make everything up.
I'd never leave you, Daddy.
You're all I got, Doc.
You're all I ever had.
- I feel better already.
- Yes, so do I.
Did you have any breakfast?
No. When the doctor told me I could go,
I thought I'd wait till I got here
and make breakfast myself.
No, I'll get you some breakfast.
Come in the kitchen
and I'll get you a hot breakfast.
I'll scramble you some eggs.
Come on, Doc.
You sit down and
I'll get you your fruit juice.
And we got bacon, too, Doc.
My, it's expensive now, you know.
There you are, Daddy.
I'll light the oven
and make you some toast.
- And Doc, we got orange marmalade.
- It looks different here.
Oh, sure, I fixed it all up. We got
new curtains. I painted the ice box.
- Looks nice.
- It's gonna stay nice, too.
I had another dream
the other night, Doc.
- About Little Sheba?
- About everything and everybody.

Marie and I was going to the Olympics.
Only it was back in
our old high school stadium.
There was thousands of people there.
Turk was in out in the field,
throwing the javelin.
Every time he threw it,
the crowd would roar.
You know who the man in charge was?
My father.
But Turk kept changing into somebody
else, so my father disqualified him.
Then he had to sit on the sidelines.
Guess who took his place, Daddy.
You. You came trotting out
on the field just as big as you please.
- How'd I do, baby?
- Oh, fine.
You picked up the javelin like it was
real heavy, but you threw it, Doc.
You threw it clear up in the sky.
It never came down again.
Then it started to rain.
I was going nearly crazy
'cause I couldn't find Little Sheba.
There were so many people,
I didn't know where to look.
You was waiting to take me home.
So we walked and walked
through the mud and the slush.
People was all crowding around us.
And then... This is the sad part, Daddy.
All of a sudden, I saw Little Sheba.
She was lying
in the middle of the field, dead.
I felt terrible, Doc.
Nobody else paid any attention.
But I cried and cried.
It made me feel awful.
That sweet little puppy.
Her white fur all smeared with mud.
No one to stop and take care of her.
- Why couldn't you?
- You wouldn't let me.

You kept saying, "We can't
stay here, honey, we gotta go on."

- Ain't that strange?

- Dreams are funny.

I don't think Little Sheba's
ever coming back, Doc.

- I ain't gonna call her any more.

- Not much point in it, baby.

I guess she's gone for good.

I'll fix your eggs.

It's good to be home.