
BLANCHE [faintly to herself]:
I've got to keep hold of myself! [Stella comes quickly around the corner of the building and runs to the door of the downstairs flat.]

5 STELLA [calling out joyfully]:
Blanche! [For a moment they stare at each other. Then Blanche springs up and runs to her with a wild cry.]

BLANCHE:

Stella, oh, Stella, Stella! Stella for Star! [She begins to speak with feverish vivacity as if she feared for either of them to stop and think. They catch each other in a spasmodic embrace.]

BLANCHE:
Now, then, let me look at you. But don’t you look at me, Stella, no, no, no, not till later, not till I’ve bathed and rested! And turn that over-light off! Turn that off! I won’t be looked at in this merciless glare! [Stella laughs and complies.]

Come back here now! Oh, my baby! Stella! Stella for Star! [She embraces her again.]

I thought you would never come back to this horrible place! What am I saying? I didn’t mean to say that. I meant to be nice about it and say—Oh, what a convenient location and such—Haa-ha! Precious lamb! You haven’t said a word to me.

STELLA:
You haven’t given me a chance to, honey! [She laughs, but her glance at Blanche is a little anxious.]

25 BLANCHE:
Well, now you talk. Open your pretty mouth and talk while I look around for some liquor! I know you must have some liquor on the place! Where could it be, I wonder? Oh, I spy, I spy! [She rushes to the closet and removes the bottle, she is shaking all over and panting for breath as she tries to laugh. The bottle nearly slips from her grasp.]

STELLA [noticing]:
Blanche, you sit down and let me pour the drinks. I don’t know what we’ve got to mix with. Maybe a coke’s in the icebox. Look’n see, honey, while I’m—

30 BLANCHE:
No coke, honey, not with my nerves tonight! Where—where—where is—?

STELLA:
Stanley? Bowling! He loves it. They’re having a—found some soda!—tournament...

BLANCHE:
Just water, baby, to chase it! Now don’t get worried, your sister hasn’t turned into a drunkard, she’s just all shaken up and hot and tired and dirty! You sit down, now, and explain this place to me! What are you doing in a place like this?

STELLA:
Now, Blanche—

50 BLANCHE:
Oh, I’m not going to be hypocritical, I’m going to be honestly critical about it! Never, never, never in my worst dreams could I picture—Only Poe! Only Mr. Edgar Allan Poe!—could do it justice! Out there I suppose is the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir! [She laughs.]
55  STELLA:
    No, honey, those are the L & N tracks.

60  BLANCHE:
    No, now seriously, putting joking aside. Why didn't you tell me, why didn't you write me, 
honey, why didn't you let me know?

65  STELLA [carefully, pouring herself a drink]:
    Tell you what, Blanche?

    Why, that you had to live in these conditions!

70  STELLA: 
    Aren't you being a little intense about it? It's not that bad at all! New Orleans isn't like 
other cities.

75  BLANCHE: 
    This has got nothing to do with New Orleans. You might as well say—forgive me, blessed 
baby! [She suddenly stops short]
    The subject is closed!

78  STELLA [a little drily]:
    Thanks. [During the pause, Blanche stares at her. She smiles at Blanche.]

80  BLANCHE [looking down at her glass, which shakes in her hand]:
    You're all I've got in the world, and you're not glad to see me!

85  STELLA [sincerely]:
    Why, Blanche, you know that's not true.

88  BLANCHE:
    No?—I'd forgotten how quiet you were.

90  STELLA: 
    You never did give me a chance to say much, Blanche. So I just got in the habit of being 
quiet around you.

95  BLANCHE [vaguely]:
    A good habit to get into... [then, abruptly] You haven't asked me how I happened to get 
away from the school before the spring term ended.

98  STELLA:
    Well, I thought you'd volunteer that information—if you wanted to tell me.

100  BLANCHE:
    You thought I'd been fired?

103  STELLA:
    No, I—thought you might have—resigned...

105  BLANCHE:
    I was so exhausted by all I'd been through my—nerves broke. [Nervously tamping 
cigarette.]
    I was on the verge of—lunacy, almost! So Mr. Graves—Mr. Graves is the high school 
superintendent—he suggested I take a leave of absence. I couldn't put all of those details into 
the wire... [She drinks quickly]
    Oh, this buzzes right through me and feels so good!
STELLA:
    Won’t you have another?
BLANCHE:
    No, one’s my limit.
STELLA:
    Sure?
BLANCHE:
    You haven’t said a word about my appearance.
STELLA:
    You look just fine.
BLANCHE:
    God love you for a liar! Daylight never exposed so total a ruin! But you—you’ve put on some weight, yes, you’re just as plump as a little partridge! And it’s so becoming to you!
STELLA:
    Now, Blanche—
BLANCHE:
    Yes, it is, it is or I wouldn’t say it! You just have to watch around the hips a little. Stand up.
STELLA:
    Not now.
BLANCHE:
    You hear me? I said stand up!
    [Stella complies reluctantly.]
    You messy child, you, you’ve spilt something on the pretty white lace collar! About your hair—you ought to have it cut in a feather bob with your dainty features. Stella, you have a maid, don’t you?
STELLA:
    No. With only two rooms it’s—
BLANCHE:
    What? Two rooms, did you say?
STELLA:
    This one and— [She is embarrassed.]
BLANCHE:
    The other one? [She laughs sharply. There is an embarrassed silence.]
BLANCHE:
    I am going to take just one little tiny nip more, sort of to put the stopper on, so to speak....
    Then put the bottle away so I won’t be tempted. [She rises.]
I want you to look at my figure! [She turns around.]
    You know I haven’t put on one ounce in ten years, Stella? I weigh what I weighed the summer you left Belle Reve. The summer Dad died and you left us....
STELLA [a little wearily]:
    It’s just incredible, Blanche, how well you’re looking.
BLANCHE: [They both laugh uncomfortably]
    But, Stella, there’s only two rooms, I don’t see where you’re going to put me!
175  STELLA:  
We’re going to put you in here.

BLANCHE:  
What kind of bed’s this—one of those collapsible things? [She sits on it.]

180  STELLA:  
Does it feel all right?

BLANCHE [dubiously]:  
Wonderful, honey. I don’t like a bed that gives much. But there’s no door between the two rooms, and Stanley—will it be decent?

185  STELLA:  
Stanley is Polish, you know.

BLANCHE:  
Oh, yes. They’re something like Irish, aren’t they?

190  STELLA:  
Well—

BLANCHE:  
Only not so—highbrow? [They both laugh again in the same way.]

195  STELLA:  
I brought some nice clothes to meet all your lovely friends in.

BLANCHE:  
I’m afraid you won’t think they are lovely.

200  STELLA:  
What are they like?

BLANCHE:  
They’re Stanley’s friends.

205  STELLA:  
Polacks?

BLANCHE:  
They’re a mixed lot, Blanche.

210  STELLA:  
Heterogeneous—types?

BLANCHE:  
Well—anyhow—I brought nice clothes and I’ll wear them. I guess you’re hoping I’ll say I’ll put up at a hotel, but I’m not going to put up at a hotel. I want to be near you, got to be with somebody, I can’t be alone! Because—as you must have noticed—I’m not very well...  

220  [Her voice drops and her look is frightened.]