

~~MRS. MULLIN. Those fool girls keep askin' for you. They miss you, see? Are you goin' to be sensible and come back?~~

~~BILLY. And leave Julie?~~

MRS. MULLIN. You beat her, don't you?

BILLY. (*Exasperated.*) No, I don't beat her. What's all this damn-fool talk about beatin'? I hit her once, and now the whole town is... The next one I hear... I'll smash...

MRS. MULLIN. (*Backing away from him.*) All right! All right! I take it back. I don't want to get mixed up in it.

BILLY. Beatin' her! As if I'd beat her!

MRS. MULLIN. What's the odds one way er another? Look at the thing straight. You been married two months and you're sick of it. Out there's the carousel. Show booths, young girls, all the beer you want, a good livin' – and you're throwin' it all away. Know what? I got a new organ.

BILLY. I know.

MRS. MULLIN. How do you know?

BILLY. (*His voice softer.*) You can hear it from here. I listen to it every night.

MRS. MULLIN. Good one, ain't it?

BILLY. Jim dandy. Got a nice tone.

MRS. MULLIN. Y'ought to come up close and hear it. Makes you think the carousel is goin' faster. You belong out there and you know it. You ain't cut out fer a respectable married man. You're an artist type. You belong among artists. Tell you what – you come back and I'll give you a ruby ring my husband left me.

BILLY. I dunno – I might go back. I could still go on livin' here with Julie.

MRS. MULLIN. Holy Moses!

**BILLY.** What's wrong?

**MRS. MULLIN.** Can y' imagine how the girls'd love that? A barker who runs home to his wife every night! Why, people'd laugh theirselves sick.

**BILLY.** I know what *you* want.

**MRS. MULLIN.** Don't be so stuck on yerself.

**BILLY.** I ain't happy here, and *that's* the truth.

**MRS. MULLIN.** 'Course you ain't.

*(She strokes his hair back off his forehead, and this time he lets her. JULIE enters from house, carrying a tray with a cup of coffee and a plate of cakes on it. MRS. MULLIN pulls her hand away. There is a slight pause.)*

**BILLY.** Do you want anythin'?

**JULIE.** I brought you your coffee.

**MRS. MULLIN.** *(To BILLY in a low voice.)* Whyn't you have a talk with her? She'll understand. Maybe she'll be glad to get rid of you.

**BILLY.** *(Without conviction.)* Maybe.

**JULIE.** Billy – before I fergit. I got somethin' to tell you.

**BILLY.** All right.

**JULIE.** I been wantin' to tell you – in fact, I was goin' to yesterday.

**BILLY.** Well, go ahead.

**JULIE.** I can't – we got to be alone.

**BILLY.** Don't you see I'm busy? Here, I'm talkin' business and...

**JULIE.** It'll only take a minute.

**BILLY.** Get out o' here, or...

JULIE. I tell you it'll only take a minute.

BILLY. Will you get out of here?

JULIE. No.

BILLY. What did you say?

MRS. MULLIN. Let her alone, Billy. I'll drop in at Bascombe's bank and get some small change for the carousel. I'll be back in a few minutes for your answer to my proposition.

*(Exits above JIGGER. She looks at JIGGER as she goes. JIGGER looks at BILLY, then follows MRS. MULLIN off.)*

JULIE. Don't look at me like that. I ain't afraid of you – ain't afraid of anyone. I hev somethin' to tell you.

BILLY. Well then, tell me, and make it quick.

JULIE. I can't tell it so quick. Why don't you drink yer coffee?

BILLY. That what you wanted to tell me?

JULIE. No. By the time you drink it, I'll hev told you.

BILLY. *(Stirs coffee and takes a quick sip.)* Well?

JULIE. Yesterday my head ached and you asked me...

BILLY. Yes...

JULIE. Well – you see – thet's what it is.

BILLY. You sick?

JULIE. No. It's nothin' like thet.

*(He puts cup down.)*

It's awful hard to tell you – I'm not a bit skeered, because it's a perfectly natural thing –

BILLY. What is?

**JULIE.** Well – when two people live together –

**BILLY.** Yes –

**JULIE.** I'm goin' to hev a baby.

*(She turns away. He sits still and stunned. Then he rises, crosses to her, and puts his arms around her. She leans her head back on his shoulders. Then she leaves and starts for the house. As she goes to the steps, BILLY runs and helps her very solicitously. JIGGER has re-entered and calls to BILLY with two short whistles.)*

**JIGGER.** Hey, Billy!

**BILLY.** *(Turning to JIGGER.)* Hey, Jigger! Julie... Julie's goin' to have a baby.

**JIGGER.** *(Calmly smoking his cigarette.)* Yeh? What about it?

**BILLY.** *(Disgusted at JIGGER.)* Nothin'.

*(He goes into the house.)*

~~**JIGGER.** *(Flamboyantly.)* My mother had a baby once~~

~~*(He smiles angelically and puffs on his cigarette. MRS. MULLIN enters.)*~~

~~**MRS. MULLIN.** He in there with her?~~

~~*(JIGGER ignores the question.)*~~

~~They're havin' it out, I bet.~~

~~*(JIGGER impudently blows a puff of smoke in her direction.)*~~

~~When he comes back to me I ain't goin' to let him hang around with you any more. You know that, don't you?~~

~~**JIGGER.** Common woman.~~

**LOUISE.** You needn't bother about marryin' beneath your station! I wouldn't have you. And I wouldn't have that stuck-up buzzard for a father-in-law if you give me a million dollars!

*(BILLY looks at 1ST HEAVENLY FRIEND and smiles, happy over this.)*

**ENOCH, JR.** *(Outraged, hit in a tender spot.)* You're a fine one to talk about my father! What about yer own? A cheap barker on a carousel and he beat your mother!

**LOUISE.** *(Giving JUNIOR a good punch.)* You get out of here! You sleeky little rascal-de-da!

*(Spins him around and aims a well-directed kick at him. BILLY, seeing all this, puts out his foot and trips JUNIOR just as he is passing him.)*

I'll - I'll kill you - you -

*(JUNIOR, baffled, runs out left. LOUISE suddenly turns, crosses to her chair, sinks on it, and sobs. BILLY looks over at LOUISE, who is a very heartbroken little girl. He turns to the 1ST HEAVENLY FRIEND.)*

**BILLY.** If I want her to see me, she will?

*(The 1ST HEAVENLY FRIEND nods. BILLY approaches LOUISE timidly.)*

Little girl - Louise!

*(She looks up through her tears.)*

**LOUISE.** Who are you?

**BILLY.** I... I...

*(He's nearly as rattled as he was the night he suddenly faced BASCOMBE on the wharf.)*

LOUISE. How did you know my name?

BILLY. Somebody told me you lived here. I knew your father.

LOUISE. My father!

BILLY. I heard what that little whippersnapper said. It ain't true - any of it.

LOUISE. It is true - all of it.

*(Pause. He is stunned.)*

BILLY. Did your mother tell you that?

LOUISE. No, but every kid in town knows it. They've been throwin' it up at me ever since I ken remember. I wish I was dead.

*(She looks away to hide her tears.)*

BILLY. *(Softly.)* What - what did yer *mother* say about - him?

LOUISE. Oh, she's told me a lot of fairy stories about how he died in San Francisco - and she's always sayin' what a handsome fellow he was -

BILLY. Well, he was!

LOUISE. *(Hopeful, rising.)* Was he - really?

BILLY. He was the handsomest feller around here.

LOUISE. You really knew him, did you? And he was handsome?

*(He nods his head.)*

What else about him? Know anythin' else *good* about him?

BILLY. *(Passing right hand through his hair.)* Well-ll... he used to tell funny jokes at the carousel and make people laugh.

LOUISE. *(Her face lighting up.)* Did he?

*(They both laugh.)*

What else?

*(Pause. He's stuck and changes the subject.)*

BILLY. Look – I want to give you a present.

LOUISE. *(Backing up right, immediately suspicious.)*  
Don't come in, mister. My mother wouldn't like it.

BILLY. I don't mean you any harm, child. I want to give you somethin'.

LOUISE. Don't you come any closer. You go 'way with yer frightful face. You scare me.

BILLY. Don't chase me away. I want to give you a present – somethin' pretty – somethin' wonderful –

*(He looks at the 1ST NEWMEN FRIEND, who turns front and smiles. BILLY takes the star from his inside vest pocket. LOUISE looks at the star with wonderment, then at BILLY.)*

LOUISE. What's that?

BILLY. Psst! A star.

*(He points up to the sky with right hand to indicate whence it came. LOUISE is terrified now.)*

LOUISE. *(Backing up right.)* Go away!

BILLY. *(Growing panicky and taking her arm.)* Darling, please. I want to help you.

LOUISE. *(Trying to pull her arm away.)* Don't call me "darling." Let go of my arm!

BILLY. I want to make you happy. Take this –

LOUISE. No!