

ALL SUMMER LONG

ACT ONE

SCENE III

*The time is about midnight—some days later.
It is a moonlit summer's night.
DON is in bed in his room. He is smoking.
As the music fades out, HARRY and RUTH
come around from the back of the house.
RUTH is silking, HARRY is whistling.*

HARRY: *[Moves up onto the porch and opens the screen door.]* You coming up, Ruthie?

RUTH: *[Takes magazine from magazine rack, sits on back Right side of front door step.]* It's too hot. I'm gonna sit here for a few minutes.

HARRY: Okay. *[He comes down and sits beside her on lower step facing Left and offers her a cigarette. He lights up.]*

RUTH: *[After some moments.]* How long do you think it'll be, Harry?

HARRY: *[Lights cigarette.]* What?

RUTH: Before we get away from this place.

HARRY: It's hard to figure, Ruthie. Everything's going up. Can't save as much as I'd hoped—

RUTH: *[Rises, drops purse on magazine rack.]* If I'd a thought we'd move right back into this house after the honeymoon— *[She doesn't finish.]*

HARRY. Let's not drag that all out again, kid. We agreed it was the quickest way to save money so we could have a place of our own—really buy a place.

RUTH. [*Sits in rocker.*] Yeah, I know. Though sometimes I think we're never gonna get away.

HARRY. We'll get away. [*There is a long pause—then.*] Sure was pretty, wasn't she?

RUTH. Who?

HARRY. Girl in the picture tonight.

RUTH. I suppose so.

HARRY. [*Turns to look at her.*] Aw, come on, give her a break. You're pretty too, but she was all right, huh?

RUTH. I said, I suppose so.

HARRY. How'd you like that when they showed her just before she was gonna have a baby. [*He laughs, remembering.*]

RUTH. What was so funny?

HARRY. She didn't look any different than before. That's pictures for you. They can have their babies without getting big and spreading out of shape and—

RUTH. [*Vicious.*] Shut up!

HARRY. Hey! What's the matter?

RUTH. Just shut up!

HARRY. That's not dirty. I was just saying that in real life when a woman's going to have a baby—[*RUTH gives a despairing moan and bends over double, her face in her hands.* HARRY rises, crosses to Left of RUTH.

RUTH swings chair Right.] Hey, Ruth. [*Crosses below and Right of her.*] Ruthie—? [*He tries to put his arms around her—not understanding.*]

RUTH. Yes. I'm pregnant.

HARRY. [*Puls cigarette out.*] Honey—

RUTH. [*Rises, crosses down Right. Pulling away.*] And I hate it.

HARRY. Aw, honey.

RUTH. [*At the stake.*] I hate it, hate it, hate it.

HARRY. [*Crosses in to RUTH.*] Honey, you want all the house to know?

RUTH. [*Turns to HARRY.*] They'll know soon enough. Willie staring at me all the time. He'll know first—

HARRY. Now, look Ruth—

RUTH. [*Crosses to edge of porch.*] He'll start saying Ruthie's like Lady. She's all big.

HARRY. [*Crosses in.*] Ruthie, don't! You make it sound so horrible, when—

RUTH. It is! Horrible. Ugly and horrible. [*She moves off away from him.*]

HARRY. [*Following her and trying to comfort her.*] Honey, we were gonna have children.

RUTH. [*Sits in rocker.*] No, we weren't.

HARRY. But, Ruth.

RUTH. We weren't! What do I want with children?

HARRY. But married people—

RUTH. Sure, they have children, and then what?

HARRY. I don't get it.

RUTH. Who's down at the dance hall all the time, dancing with the taxi dancers? Married men with kids and wives that look like Mrs. Parmesi.

HARRY. [*Crossing in to her.*] Honey, take it easy. Take it easy. A kid will—

RUTH. [*Rises and turns to him.*] What'll a kid do? Nothing but make me ugly. And when I'm ugly, what'll you do?

HARRY. Listen, Ruthie—I love you. You're my wife.

RUTH. You love me? Why do you love me?

HARRY. Well, because—

RUTH. Because I'm beautiful. Because I'm the most beautiful woman you ever saw. Aren't I?

HARRY. Sure, you are, honey. Only—

RUTH. [*Crosses Left and sits on porch step. Pathetically.*] I'm nothing more and I know it. I don't understand what you're talking about most of the time with your machines, and electrified fences. But I'm beautiful, and you're proud to take me riding in the convertible and have your friends say, "Look what Harry's getting."

HARRY. If that's what you think, Ruthie, you got the wrong idea.

RUTH. I got the right idea. I know you and everyone like you—inside out. I know what you want. What

you'll work for. A beautiful woman. And the rest of the talk is hog-wash.

HARRY. You don't know, Ruthie, and if that's what you think, I'm sorry for you. I don't know where you got that idea, but I'm sorry for—

RUTH. You don't need to be sorry for me.

HARRY. [*Crosses to RUTH and kneels. Trying to take her in his arms.*] Honey—honey, you wait— You'll see you're wrong.

RUTH. No, I won't see.

HARRY. What do you mean?

RUTH. [*Rises, crosses Right.*] I'm not gonna have this baby.

HARRY. [*Turns to her.*] Now don't talk foolish.

RUTH. [*Turns to him.*] It's not foolish. What do I want with a 'baby? If we have a kid, we'll never get out of here—

HARRY. Ruthie, quiet down. Come on upstairs to bed.

[*He tries to lead her towards the house.*]

RUTH. [*Crosses to knoll.*] Don't touch me!

HARRY. [*Tenderly—bewildered.*] Ruthie.

RUTH. [*Breaking into sobs.*] All my life I've wanted only one thing—to be beautiful. I knew if I was beautiful, I'd be loved, and if I was loved I could stand living in this no place, in all this ugliness—and now I'm to be ugly too—

[*HARRY finally succeeds in leading her sobbing softly, inside the house and up the stairs to their room. As they*

go up the stairs, DON puts out cigarette and turns on his side. When RUTH'S sobs can no longer be heard, WILLIE appears from under a blanket on the beach chair. His movements are slow and dazed, not quite believing, not understanding what he has heard. He gets up and walks across the porch and to the screen door, opens door and then he sits on the edge of the porch, trying to fathom what he has heard as

THE SCENE FADES OUT TO MUSIC

ACT ONE

SCENE IV

As the lights come up on the scene, DAD is down at the river bank looking at the river—looking worried. (Occasionally he bends over to look under at the cave before the river bank.

MOTHER is in the kitchen, folding the afghan and humming. She comes to the kitchen door to look out. She sees DAD and comes out. She stands looking at him for a moment.

DAD becomes conscious he is being watched, and is annoyed that he has been caught in his own private thoughts.

MOTHER. [*Crosses to rocker. DAD picks up newspaper and crosses to beach chair. MOTHER coming further out.*] Willie worries so.

DAD. [*Pretending he doesn't know what she's talking about.*] What?

MOTHER. Willie worries so.

DAD. That kid. [*Sitting in beach chair.*]

MOTHER. [*Looks back up at the house.*] I think Willie loves the house almost the way I do—in a way you never have.

DAD. How can you say that?