

Alice & Jimmy

SCENE 5

(A HOUSE IN THE VERY SMALL TOWN OF ZEBULON, NORTH CAROLINA)

(JIMMY RAY (20), the Mayor's son, works outdoors under a tree. He fiddles with an old ice box on the street. ALICE enters, now age 16.)

(She approaches Jimmy Ray.)

Start

ALICE

Now that's a sight. The Mayor's son with his sleeves rolled up repairing an ice box.

JIMMY RAY

Well, if it isn't the little princess of Zebulon. Princess, what's the matter with repairing an ice box?

ALICE

Jimmy Ray, an ice box has no moving parts. My granny could repair an ice box. There's ice and a box. I think you're just showing off your muscles.

JIMMY RAY

Keep talking, Alice Murphy. I'm curious how your mind works.

ALICE

Okay. You remind me of Adonis. You know who Adonis is?

JIMMY RAY

I sure do. He's a Greek God.

ALICE

Well, you remind me of him. In fact, you remind me of the myth of Adonis when he repaired the ice box.

JIMMY RAY

You ever think you might be too smart for this town?

ALICE

All the time.

JIMMY RAY

What makes you so sure?

ALICE

I entered an essay contest in Raleigh. The first prize was five dollars, and I won it.

JIMMY RAY

What was it about?

ALICE

I wrote about how there should be a rebirth of Southern writers, all writing about the Southern way, and that's how we can make our voices known.

JIMMY RAY

I don't know how a group of judges from Raleigh could turn that down.

ALICE

They couldn't. I took that five dollars and put it toward my college fund.

JIMMY RAY

How much do you have in your college fund?

ALICE

Five dollars.
(then)
Want a biscuit?

End

JIMMY RAY

I wouldn't mind havin' a biscuit.

(ALICE takes one over to him. He reaches out for it.)

ALICE

Your hands are dirty! You don't want to eat a dirty biscuit.

JIMMY RAY

You better feed it to me then.

ALICE

Now, you and I were thinking the exact same thought.

(ALICE feeds him the biscuit.)

Jimmy, Stanford, Mayor Dobbs

SCENE 7

(ZEBULON. THE MAYOR'S LIVING ROOM.)

(The living room of MAYOR DOBBS (43).)

(MAYOR DOBBS, a powerful man, physically and professionally, stands with his lawyer, STANFORD ADAMS. JIMMY RAY enters.)

MAYOR

Jimmy Ray. You were supposed to be here a while ago. Thank you, ladies.

JIMMY RAY

Sorry, Daddy, I was out fixing Aunt Idell's icebox.

MAYOR

(to STANFORD)

Can you believe my son? I'm trying to hand over an empire to this boy and he's out fixing an icebox.

(picks up a document)

What's that?

JIMMY RAY

(grabs paper)

Application for college. I've been thinking about it.

MAYOR

Four years away from home when everything you need to learn I'm teaching you here within these walls? Your grandfather taught me and I teach you. That chain must not be broken.

JIMMY RAY

Well, Daddy, I understand, but I thought we'd discussed this.

MAYOR

Stanford, do I sense disinclination?

STANFORD

None of my business, Mayor.

JIMMY RAY

There's a whole world outside Zebulon. I want to get to know it.

MAYOR

Who are you getting this from? Where's that book you were reading?

JIMMY RAY

I gave it away.

MAYOR

Good. Let the Jazz Age infect someone else.

STANFORD

Mayor, the Conklins.

JIMMY RAY

The Conklins? In Charlotte? What about them?

MAYOR

They've got a beautiful daughter. Ola.

STANFORD

Well, a daughter with resources.

JIMMY RAY

Stanford, what exactly isn't your business?

MAYOR

The Conklins are a family with produce trucks that drive across this state, and we are the second biggest purveyors of produce for three hundred miles.

JIMMY RAY

You want me to marry someone for her trucks?

MAYOR

That's an equation they don't teach in college.

JIMMY RAY

Where's the romance in that?

(The MAYOR looks over at STANFORD.)

MAYOR

Romance?

STANFORD

(snide)

I have no comment.

End

Margo & Billy

FLORENCE (CONT'D)

Oh Billy, I'm so happy for you!

(BILLY looks confused. FLORENCE and EDNA exit.)

Start

BILLY CANE

Hello, Margo. The bookstore looks spick-and-span.

MARGO

I just made room for a new magazine rack.

BILLY CANE

Well, that's appropriate.

MARGO

Oh? How?

BILLY CANE

I've got something for you.

(He digs in his pocket.)

MARGO

You said you did. I was wondering...

*(He produces a folded piece of paper.
MARGO looks at it; opens it.)*

BILLY CANE

It's my new address.

MARGO

Oh.

BILLY CANE

In Asheville. I'm going to live there and write there.

MARGO

Are you sure that's...

(He shows her the check.)

Ten dollars? From the Asheville Southern Journal.

BILLY CANE

Not published yet, but...

MARGO

Oh Billy, that's so exciting! A real adventure.

BILLY CANE

I can still send you my stories. That all right?

MARGO

(gathers herself)

Of course.

BILLY CANE

Will you miss me?

MARGO

End Like I miss trouble.

BILLY CANE

Did you ever think that you might be selling a magazine with one of my stories in it?

(She hands him the money.)

MARGO

Yes.

BILLY CANE

Oh Margo, I could almost kiss you!

(He shakes her hand. BILLY disappears down the road and is out of sight.)

#8 ASHEVILLE

MARGO

WHEN YOU GET TO ASHEVILLE
WRITE ME IF YOU WILL
TELL ME HOW YOU'RE DOING
HOW IT'S TREATING YOU
DO YOU LIKE YOUR NEW JOB?
DID YOU FIND A NEW LOVE?
IS IT EVERYTHING THAT YOU WERE DREAMING OF?

Lucy, Daryl, Billy

SCENE 2

(SHINY PENNY CAFE AND BAR, ASHEVILLE.)

(A lively cafe-bar in Asheville.)

#16A THE SHINY PENNY

(People are dancing - along with LUCY and DARYL - to a jazzed up version of Asheville. They separate from the dancers. Light music continues.)

Start

DARYL

I gave Miss Murphy one of my humor pieces.

LUCY

Oh, great Daryl! What did she say?

DARYL

She said she really liked it and could I turn it into a humor piece.

(BILLY enters.)

Well, look who walked in. Does he know this place sells intoxicating beverages?

LUCY

(rising)

I say he's lonely. Let's find out.

(LUCY goes over to him.)

Well, boy meets girl. This calls for a sloe gin fizz.

BILLY CANE

It does?

LUCY

It does.

BILLY CANE

I'll have one.

LUCY

Have you had one before?

BILLY CANE

I've seen photos.

LUCY

So, you lonely since you've been here?

BILLY CANE

Every evening I have a date...with my typewriter.

LUCY

That's not company. This is what a real person feels like, in case you forgot.

(She takes his hand.)

BILLY CANE

That does feel real.

LUCY

End There's more where that came from.

(She offers the other hand. He takes it - for a moment. DARYL delivers the two gin fizzes.)

DARYL

Don't drink 'em both, Lucy.

(DARYL exits.)

LUCY

Here you are.

(he tastes)

What do you think?

BILLY CANE

It's sweet and tart at the same time.

DARYL

Just like Lucy.

(BILLY takes another swig.)

LUCY

It's called a sloe gin fizz, but you don't have to drink it slow.

Alice & Billy

Start



ALICE

You have to cut the word "twixt."

BILLY CANE

Wait, what's the matter with "twixt?" You don't like "twixt?"

ALICE

Use "between."

BILLY CANE

Why?

ALICE

Because a man wrote this, not Tinkerbell.

(then)

And the second to the last paragraph should be cut.

BILLY CANE

What? I cried when I wrote that.

ALICE

Clearly. It's as purple as a baboon's butt.

BILLY CANE

(shocked)

Miss Murphy!

ALICE

Well, it's true.

(then, thoughtfully)

And then there's this last sentence. It flows nicely, but I'm curious.

BILLY CANE

About?

ALICE

Now why...why, Mr. Cane, would you end your essay with a word ninety-nine percent of our readers would have to look up?

(reads)

Dot dot dot, "the longing of the human heart and its search for propinquity."

BILLY CANE

I did that on purpose, Miss Murphy.

ALICE

Why?

BILLY CANE

It's the only five-dollar word in the whole piece. And because of it, I get the impact of the ending twice. The reader lands on a striking word with an elegant cadence. "Propinquity." Then, the reader goes to the dictionary...

(he mimes the action of picking up a dictionary)

"The longing of the human heart and its search for..."

(he opens the pages of the imaginary dictionary)

...closeness."

(There is a pause.)

ALICE

I'll tell you what. If you can sway Daryl, you can sway me.

BILLY CANE

So then there's hope.

ALICE

Let me put it this way. No one has ever swayed Daryl.

End

(She exits.)

#11B SCENE CHANGE

ENSEMBLE

(moody)

BRIGHT STAR
KEEP SHINING FOR ME
SHINE ON
AND SEE ME THROUGH
BRIGHT STAR
KEEP SHINING FOR ME
AND ONE DAY
I'LL SHINE FOR YOU

[TRANSITION TO:]