

BY MOUTH | Martin Garrison, Producer  
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ROLE: **MARGIE**

MARGIE: One Rocky's two young Italian-American "tarts" are comically feather-brained, sentimental, lazy, and reasonably content with life. Though they retain a degree of youthful prettiness, their trade is beginning to wear on them. Their pipe dream involves the denial of their status as whores. They relate to their pimp Rocky as two affectionate sisters might with a bullying brother.

**3 takes + pickups = \$200**

IMPORTANT: Looking for ACTIVE, natural, well-paced reads rather than SLOW, self-indulgent "actor-y" ones.

Be mindful of UNDERSCORING for emphasis-- and THROW AWAY non-emphasized words (please no reads emphasising every word).

Don't let the above make you rush or act stilted--simply keep it in mind.

For those who want an edge (casting process will be slow), read the entire SCRIPT before auditioning.

**PLEASE READ MARGIE LINES 961-982**

**MARGIE LINES BEGIN ON NEXT PAGE**

There's no use in hanging around this dive, taking care of you and shooing away your snakes, when I don't even get an eye-opener for my trouble.

BESS HOPE: No! Go to hell--or the circus, for all I care. Good riddance bejeez! I'm sick of ya! [then worriedly] Say, Ed, what the hell you think's happened to Hickey? I hope he'll turn up. Always got a million funny stories. You and the other bums are beginning to give me the willies. I'd like a good laugh with old Hickey. [chuckles at old memory] Remember that gag he always pulls about his wife and the iceman? He'd make a cat laugh!

NARRATOR: Rocky appears from behind the bar and begins pushing the black curtain towards the back wall.

ROCKY: Openin' time, Boss. [grumpily]: Why don't you go up to bed? Hickey'd never turn up dis time of de mornin'!

BESS HOPE [starts]: Listen--someone's comin'.

ROCKY [listens]: Ah, dat's on'y my two pigs--it's about time dey showed.

[Rocky walks to the back door.]

BESS HOPE [disappointed]: You keep them dumb broads quiet--I'm going to catch a couple more winks here and I don't want no damn-fool laughin' and screechin'. [grumbling] Never thought I'd see the day when Hope's would have tarts rooming in it--what would Harry think? But I don't let 'em use my rooms for business--and they're good kids--good as anyone else. And they pay their rent, too, which is more than I can say for-- Bejeez, Ed, I'll bet Harry is doing somersaults in his grave!

MARGIE (laughs):

ROCKY: Quiet!

MARGIE [glancing around]: Jeez, Poil, it's de Moigue wid all de stiffs on deck. [pause] Hello, Old Wise Guy, ain't you dead yet?

LARRY [grinning]: Not yet, Margie--but I'm waitin'.

MARGIE: Who's de new guy? Friend of yours, Larry? [pause] Wanta have a good time, kid?

955 PEARL: Ah, he's passed out--hell wid him!

956 BESS HOPE: Ya dumb broads--cut the gabbin', will ya?

957 ROCKY [admonishing them good-naturedly]: Sit down  
958 before I knock yuh down.

959 [The girls sit and Rocky pours drinks.]

960 ROCKY [in a lowered voice]: Well, how'd you tramps do?

961 MARGIE: Pretty good--didn't we, Poil?

962 PEARL: Sure. We nailed a coupla all-night guys.

963 MARGIE: On Sixth Avenoo. Booms from de sticks.

964 PEARL: Stinko, de bot' of 'em.

965 MARGIE: Steered 'em to to a real hotel. Figgered de was  
966 too stinko to bother us much and we could cop a good  
967 sleep in beds dat ain't got cobble stones in de mattress  
968 like de ones in dis dump.

969 PEARL: But we was out of luck--dey wouldn't go to sleep,  
970 see? I never hoid such gabby guys.

971 MARGIE: We was glad when de house come up and told us  
972 all to get dressed and take de air!

973 PEARL [proud of her lie]: We told de guys we'd wait for  
974 dem 'round de corner, see?

975 MARGIE: So here we are.

976 ROCKY: Yeah? I see ya--but I don't see no dough yet.

977 PEARL: Right on da job, ain't he, Mahgie?

978 MARGIE: Our little business man!

979 ROCKY: Come on--dig!

980 NARRATOR: As Rocky watches carefully, the girls pull up  
981 their skirts to get money from their stockings.

982 MARGIE: Scared we's holdin' out on ya, yeah?

983 PEARL: Way he grabs, yuh'd tink it was him done de woik.  
984 [Holds out bills to Rocky.]

985 PEARL: Here y'are, Grafter!

986 MARGIE: Hope it chokes yuh.

987 [Rocky counts money quickly then pockets it.]

ROCKY: And what would you do wit' money if I wasn't around? Give it to some pimp?

PEARL: Jeez what's the difference--? [hastily]  
Aw, I don't mean that, Rocky.

ROCKY: A lotta difference, get me?

PEARL: Don't get sore. Jeez can't yuh take a little kiddin'?

MARGIE: Sure, Rocky, Poil was on'y kiddin'. We know yuh got a reg'lar job. Dat's why we like yuh, see? Yuh don't live offa us--yuh're a bahtender.

ROCKY: I'm a bahtender--everyone knows me knows dat. And I treat ya goils right, don't I? [brief pause]  
I'm wise yuh hold out on me, but I know it ain't much, so what the hell, I let yuh get away wid it. I tink yuh're a coupla good kids. Yuh're aces wid' me, see?

PEARL: Yuh-re aces wid us, too--ain't he, Mahgie?

MARGIE: Sure.

NARRATOR: Rocky beams and takes glasses to the bar.

MARGIE [whispers]: Yuh sap, don't yuh know enough not to kid him on dat? Serves ya right if he beat yuh up!

PEARL: Jeez I'll bet he'd give yuh an awful beatin', too once he started. Ginnies got awful tempers.

MARGIE: Anyway we wouldn't keep no pimp, like we was reg'lar old whores.

PEARL: No we're tarts--dat's all.

ROCKY [rinsing glasses] Cora got back around three. Woke up Chuck and dragged him outa de hay to go get chop suey. [disgustedly] Imagine him standin' for dat!

MARGIE: Bet dey been sittin' around kiddin' demselves wid dat old dream about gettin' married and settlin' down on a farm. Jeez when Chuck's on de wagon, de never lay off dat dope!

PEARL: Yeah, Chuck wid a silly grin on his ugly mug and Cora gigglin' like she was in grammah school and some tough guy'd just told her babies wasn't brung down de chimney by a boid!

1024 MARGIE: And her on the turf long before me and you!  
1025 And bot' of 'em ahguin' all de time.

1026 PEARL: And him swearin' ta never go on no more  
1027 periodicals! An' den her pretendin' [that she]--  
1028 It gives me a pain just to talk about.

1029 ROCKY: Of all de dreams in dis dump, dey got de  
1030 nuttiest! What would gettin' married get 'em. De farm  
1031 stuff is de sappiest part--when de bot' of 'em ain't  
1032 never been nearer a farm dan Coney Island! Dey'd get  
1033 D.T.s if dey ever hoid a cricket choip! [with deeper  
1034 disgust] Can you pitcha a good bahtender like Chuck  
1035 diggin' spuds? And imagine a whore hustlin' de cows  
1036 home! For Christ sake--ain't dat a pretty pitcha!

1037 MARGIE: Yuy oughtn't to call Cora dat, Rocky--she's a  
1038 good kid. She may be a tart, but--

1039 ROCKY: Sure dats all I meant--a tart.

1040 PEARL [giggling]: He's right about de cows, Mahgie.  
1041 Jeez I bet Cora don't know which end of de cow  
1042 has de horns--I'm gonna ask her.

1043 [Noise of a door opening in the hall and a couple  
1044 arguing.]

1045 CORA: An' how do I know yuh won't [get drunk no more]--

1046 CHUCK: Cuz I say so!

1047 ROCKY: Here's your chance--dat's dem two nuts now.

1048 CORA [gaily]: Hello, bums. [pause] Jeez, de Moigue on a  
1049 rainy night! [pause] Hello, Old Wise Guy--ain't you  
1050 croaked yet?

1051 LARRY: Not yet, Cora. It's tiring, this waitin' for the  
1052 end.

1053 CORA: Aw, gwan, you'll never die--you'll have to hire  
1054 someone to croak yuh wid an axe.

1055 BESS HOPE [cocks a sleepy eye at her]: You dumb hookers,  
1056 cut the noise! This ain't a cathouse!

1057 CORA: My, Bess! Such language!

1058 BESS [grunts]: Huh.

1059 [Cora sits.]

1478 CORA: Yuh can see dy're pretty, can't yuh, yuh big  
1479 dummy?

1480 CHUCK [mollifyingly]: Yeah, Baby, sure--if you like 'em,  
1481 dey're aw right wid me.

1482 MARGIE: Some cake, huh, Poil--lookit--six candles--  
1483 each for ten years.

1484 PEARL: When da we light 'em, Rocky?

1485 ROCKY [grumpily]: Ask that bughouse Hickey--he's elected  
1486 himself boss of dis boithday racket.

1487 MARGIE: Well, anyways, it's some cake, ain't it?

1488 ROCKY [without enthusiasm]: Sure, it's aw right by me--  
1489 but what de hell is de Boss goin' to do wid a cake?  
1490 If she ever et a hunk, she'd eat the whole ting, and  
1491 it'd croak her.

1492 PEARL: Jeez yuh're a dope--ain't he, Mahgie?

1493 MARGIE: A dope is right!

1494 ROCKY [stung]: You broads better watch your step or--

1495 PEARL [defiantly]: Or what?

1496 MARGIE: Yeah! Or what?

1497 CORA [to Chuck--acidly]: A guy what can't see flowers is  
1498 pretty must be some dumbbell.

1499 CHUCK: Yeah? Well, if I was as dumb as you--  
1500 [then mollifyingly] All I'm tinkin is, flowers is dat  
1501 louse Hickey's stunt--we never had no flowers for  
1502 de Boss's boithday before--she's like one o' de guys.  
1503 What de hell can de Boss do wid flowers--she don't  
1504 know a cauliflower from a geranium.

1505 ROCKY: Yeah, same ting with de cake--dat's Hickey's  
1506 doin', too. [bitterly] Jeez, ever since he woke up,  
1507 yuh can't stop 'im--he's taken on de party like it was  
1508 his boithday.

1509 MARGIE: Well, he's payin' for everything, ain't he?

1510 ROCKY: I don't mind de boithday stuff so much--what gets  
1511 my goat is de way he's tryin' to run de whole dump and  
1512 everyone in it. He's buttin' in all over de place--  
1513 tellin' everybody where dey gets off. On'y he don't  
1514 really tell yuh--he just keeps hintin' around.

1515 PEARL: He was hintin' to me and Mahgie.

1516 MARGIE: Yeah, de lousy drumma.

1517 ROCKY: He gives yuh an earful of dat bull about yuh got  
1518 to be honest wid yourself and not kid yourself, and have  
1519 de guts to be what yuh are. I told him dat's  
1520 aw right for de bums in dis dump--I'm sick of listenin'  
1521 to dem hop demselves up--but it don't go wid me, see!  
1522 I don't kid myself wid no pipe dream. [pause] What are  
1523 you two grinnin' at?

1524 PEARL [her face hard--scornfully] Nuttin'.

1525 MARGIE: Nuttin'.

1526 ROCKY: It better be nuttin'! Don't let Hickey put no  
1527 ideas in your nuts if you wanta stay healthy! [then  
1528 angrily] I wish de louse never showed up! I hope he  
1529 don't come back from de deli--he's gettin' everyone  
1530 nuts--he's ridin' someone every minute. He's got de Boss  
1531 and Jimmy run ragged, and de rest is hidin' in deir  
1532 rooms so dey won't have to listen to him. Dey're all  
1533 actin' cagey wid de booze, too, like dey was scared  
1534 if dey get too drunk, dey might spill deir guts or  
1535 sometin'. And everybody's gettin' a prize grouch on.

1536 CORA: Yeah, he's been hintin' to me and Chuck, too.  
1537 Yuh'd tink he suspected we had no real intention of  
1538 gettin' married--that Chuck wasn't goin' to stop gettin'  
1539 drunk--or maybe didn't even wanta.

1540 CHUCK: He didn't say it right out or I'da socked him  
1541 one. I told him, "I'm on de wagon for keeps and  
1542 Cora knows it."

1543 CORA: "Sure, I know it." I tells him. "And Chuck ain't  
1544 never goin' to trow it in my face dat I was a tart,  
1545 neider. And if yuh tink we're just kiddin' ourselfs,  
1546 we'll show yuh!"

1547 CHUCK: Yeah!

1548 CORA: We've decided Joisey is where we want de farm, and  
1549 we'll get married dere, too, because yuh don't need no  
1550 license. We're goin' to get married tomorrow--ain't we,  
1551 Honey?

1552 CHUCK: You bet, Baby.

1553 ROCKY [disgusted]: Christ, Chuck, are yuh lettin' dat  
1554 bughouse louse Hickey kid yuh into--

1555 CORA [turns on him angrily]: Nobody's kiddin' him into  
1556 nuttin'--nor me neider! And Hickey's right--if dis big  
1557 tramp's goin' to marry me, he ought to do it, and not  
1558 just shoot off his old bazoo about it.

1559 ROCKY [ignoring her]: Yuh can't be dat dumb, Chuck.

1560 CORA; You keep outa dis! And don't start beefin' about  
1561 crickets on de farm drivin' us nuts. You and your  
1562 crickets--yuh'd tink dey was elephants!

1563 MARGIE [coming to Rocky's defense--sneeringly]:  
1564 Don't listen to dat brad, Rocky--yuh heard her say  
1565 "tomorrow," didn't yuh--it's de same old crap.

1566 CORA [glares at her] Is dat so?

1567 PEARL [lines up with Margie--sneeringly] Imagine Cora  
1568 a bride--dat's a hot one! Jeez, Cora if all de guys you  
1569 been wid was side by side, yuh could wak on 'em from  
1570 here to Texas!

1571 CORA [starts moving toward her threateningly]: Yuh can't  
1572 tak ta me like dat, yuh fat Dago hooker! I may be a  
1573 tart, but I ain't a cheap old whore like you!

1574 PEARL [furiously]: I'll show yuh who's a whore!

1575 NARRATOR: They start to fly at each other, but Chuck and  
1576 Rocky grab them from behind and Chuck forces Cora into a  
1577 chair.

1578 CHUCK: Sit down and cool off, Baby.

1579 ROCKY [doing the same to Pearl]: Nix on de rough stuff,  
1580 Poil.

1581 MARGIE [glares at Cora]: Why don't you leave Poil alone!  
1582 She'll fix dat blonde's clock--or if she don't, I will!

1583 ROCKY--Shut up, you! [disgustedly] D'yuh wanna gum up  
1584 de Boss's party?

1585 PEARL [a bit shamefaced--sulkily]: Who wants ta?  
1586 But nobody can't call me a--

1587 ROCKY--[exasperatedly] Aw, bury it--what are ya,  
1588 a voigin?



1589 PEARL [after a pause]: Yuh mean you tink I'm a whore,  
1590 too?

1591 MARGIE: An' me?

1592 ROCKY: Now don't youse start nuttin'!

1593 PEARL: I suppose it'd tickle ya if me and Mahgie did  
1594 what dat louse, Hickey, was hintin' at and come right  
1595 out and admitted we was whores.

1596 ROCKY: Aw right--what of it--it's de truth, ain't it?

1597 CORA [lining up with Pearl and Margie--indignantly]:  
1598 Jeez, Rocky, dat's a hell of a ting to say to two goils  
1599 dat's been as good to yuh as Poil and Mahgie! [pause]  
1600 I didn't mean to call yuh dat, Poil--I was on'y mad.

1601 PEARL [accepts the apology gratefully]: Sure, I was  
1602 mad, too--no hard feelin's.

1603 ROCKY [relieved]: Dere--dat fixes everything, don't it?

1604 PEARL [turns on him--hard and bitter]: Aw right, Rocky--  
1605 we're whores--you know what dat makes you, don't it?

1606 ROCKY [angrily]: Look out, now!

1607 MARGIE: A lousy little pimp, dat's what!

1608 ROCKY: I'll loin yuh!

1609 [He gives her a slap on the face.]

1610 PEARL: A doity little Ginny pimp, dat's what!

1611 [He gives her a slap too.]

1612 ROCKY: Dat'll loin you too!

1613 MARGIE: He's provin' it to us, Poil.

1614 PEARL: Yeah, Hickey's convoyed him--he's give up his  
1615 pipe dream!

1616 ROCKY [furious and at the same time bewildered by their  
1617 defiance] Lay off me or I'll beat de hell [out of ya!]

1618 CHUCK [growls]: Lay off now--de Boss's party ain't no  
1619 time to beat up your stable.

1620 ROCKY: Whose stable? Who d'yuh tink yuh're talkin' to?  
1621 I ain't never beat dem up--what d'yuh tink I am? I jus'  
1622 give dem a slap, like any guy would his wife, if she got

1623 too gabby. Why don't yuh tell 'em to lay off me--I don't  
1624 want no trouble at de Boss's boithday party.

1625 MARGIE [a victorious gleam in her eye--tauntingly]:  
1626 Aw right, den, yuh poor little Ginny--I'll lay off yuh  
1627 till de party's over if Poil will.

1628 PEARL [tauntingly]: Sure I will--for Bess's sake not  
1629 yours yuh little Wop!

1630 ROCKY [stung]: Say listen youse!

1631 LARRY [bursts into a sardonic laugh]:

1632 ROCKY [transferring anger to him]: Who de hell yuh  
1633 laughin' at, yuh half-dead old stew bum?

1634 CORA [sneeringly]: At himself, he ought to be! Jeez,  
1635 Hickey's sure got his number!

1636 NARRATOR: Ignoring them, Larry turns to Hugo and shakes  
1637 him by the shoulder.

1638 LARRY [in a comically intense, crazy whisper]: Wake up,  
1639 Comrade! The Revolution's starting right in front of you  
1640 and you're sleeping through it! By God it's not to  
1641 Bakunin's ghost you ought to pray in your dreams, but to  
1642 the great Nihilist, Hickey! He's started a movement  
1643 that'll blow up the world!

1644 HUGO [with guttural denunciation]: You, Larry! Renegade!  
1645 Traitor! I will have you shot! [He giggles.] Don't be a  
1646 fool--buy me a trink! [spying a drink in front of him]  
1647 Ah! [he downs it in one gulp--in a low tone of hatred]:  
1648 That bourgeois svine, Hickey--he laughs like good  
1649 fellow, he makes jokes, he dares make hints to me so I  
1650 see vhat he dares to sink. He sinks I am finish, it is  
1651 too late, and so I do not vish the Day come because it  
1652 will not be my Day--oh, I see vhat he sinks--he sinks  
1653 lies even vorse, dat I--

1654 NARRATOR: He stops abruptly with a guilty look--afraid  
1655 he's about to let something slip.

1656 HUGO [vengefully guttural]: I will have him hanged on  
1657 de first lamppost! [abruptly giggling again]: Vhy you so  
1658 serious, leedle monkey-faces? It's all great joke, no?  
1659 So ve get drunk, and ve laugh like hell, and den ve die,  
1660 and de pipe dream vanish! [A bitter mocking contempt  
1661 creeps into his tone.] But be of good cheer, leedle  
1662 stupid peoples! "The days grow hot, O Babylon!"

1663     Soon, leedle proletarians, ve vill have free picnic in  
 1664     ze cool shade, ve vill eat hot dogs and trink free beer  
 1665     beneath the villow trees! Like hogs, yes! Like beautiful  
 1666     leedle hogs! [Then he abruptly stops--confused and at  
 1667     what he's heard himself say] Huh...[then gutturally]  
 1668     Dot Gottamned liar, Hickey--it is he who makes me want  
 1669     to sleep.

1670     [His head hits the wood table.]

1671     CORA [uneasily]: Hickey ain't overlookin' no bets,  
 1672     is he--he's even give Hugo de woiks.

1673     LARRY: I warned you this morning he wasn't kidding.

1674     MARGIE [sneering]: De old wise guy!

1675     PEARL: Yeah, still pretendin' he's de one exception,  
 1676     like Hickey said--he don't do no pipe dreamin'--oh, no!

1677     LARRY [sharply resentful]: Huh! [pause] All right, take  
 1678     it out on me, if it makes ya feel good. I love every  
 1679     hair on your heads, my great big beautiful baby dolls--  
 1680     and there's nothing I wouldn't do for ya!

1681     PEARL [stiffly]: Yeah? Well we ain't big. And we ain't  
 1682     your baby dolls! [Suddenly mollified, she smiles]  
 1683     But we admit we're beautiful--huh, Mahgie?

1684     MARGIE [smiling]: Sure ting--but what would he do wid  
 1685     beautiful dolls, even if he had de price, de old goat?  
 1686     [She laughs teasingly] Aw yuh're aw right at dat, Larry,  
 1687     even if yuh are full of bull!

1688     PEARL: Sure, yuh're aces wid us--we're noivous, dat's  
 1689     all. Dat lousy drummer--why can't he be like he's always  
 1690     been? I never seen a guy change so. You pretend to be  
 1691     such a fox, Larry--what d'yuh tink's happened to him?

1692     LARRY: I don't know. With all his gab, I notice he's  
 1693     kept that to himself. Maybe he's saving the great  
 1694     revelation for Bess's party. [then irritably] To hell  
 1695     with him--I don't wanna know! Let him mind his own  
 1696     business and I'll mind mine.

1697     CHUCK: Yeah, dat's what I say.

1698     CORA: Say, Larry, where's dat young friend of yours  
 1699     disappeared ta?

1700     LARRY: I don't care where he is--except I wish it was a  
 1701     thousand miles away!

1741 ROCKY: Aw, Hickey's aw right--what's he done to you?

1742 JOE [sullenly]: Dat's my business--I ain't buttin' in  
 1743 yours, is I? [bitterly] Sure, you think he's all right--  
 1744 he's a white man, ain't he? [His tone becomes  
 1745 aggressive.] Listen to me, white boys! Don't you get it  
 1746 into your heads I's pretendin' to be what I ain't--or  
 1747 dat I ain't proud to be what I is--get me? Or we's goin'  
 1748 to have trouble!

1749 NARRATOR: Picking up his drink, he walks as far from  
 1750 them as he can get and slumps down on the piano stool.

1751 MARGIE [in a low angry tone]: What a noive! Just because  
 1752 we act nice to him, he gets a swelled nut--if dat ain't  
 1753 a coon all over!

1754 CHUCK: Talkin' fight talk, huh--I'll moider de dinge!

1755 JOE [speaks up shamefacedly]: Listen, boys, I's sorry--  
 1756 I didn't mean dat--you been good friends to me--I's  
 1757 nuts, I guess. Dat Hickey, he gets my head all mixed up  
 1758 wit' craziness.

1759 CORA: Aw, dat's aw right, Joe--de boys wasn't takin' yuh  
 1760 serious. [then to the others, forcing a laugh] Jeez,  
 1761 what'd I say: Hickey ain't overlookin' no bets--even  
 1762 Joe. [She pauses--then adds puzzledly] De funny ting is:  
 1763 yuh can't stay sore at de bum when he's around. When he  
 1764 forgets de preachin', and quits tellin' yuh where yuh  
 1765 get off, he's de same old Hickey. Yuh can't help likin'  
 1766 de louse. And yuh got to admit he's got de right dope--  
 1767 [She adds hastily] I mean, on some of de bums here.

1768 MARGIE [with a sneering look at Rocky]: Yeah, he's  
 1769 coitinly got one guy I know sized up right--huh, Poil?

1770 PEARL: He coitinly has!

1771 ROCKY: Cut it out, I told yuh!

1772 LARRY [more to himself than to them] I have a feeling  
 1773 he's dying to tell us--but he's afraid. He's like that  
 1774 damned kid--it's strange the way he seemed to recognize  
 1775 him. If he's afraid, it explains why he's off booze--  
 1776 like that damned kid again--afraid if he got drunk,  
 1777 he'd spill his [guts]--

1778 NARRATOR: Hickey appears in the rear doorway--arms piled  
 1779 with packages, beaming like a little boy.

1780 HICKEY [booms with rising volume] Well! Well!! Well!!!  
1781 Here I am in the nick o' time--give me a hand with these  
1782 bundles, somebody.

1783 NARRATOR: Margie and Pearl start taking them and putting  
1784 them on the table. Now that Hickey's here, what Cora  
1785 said is true: they can't help liking and forgiving him.

1786 MARGIE: Jeez, Hickey, yuh scared me half ta death,  
1787 sneakin' in like dat.

1788 HICKEY: You were all so busy drinking in words of wisdom  
1789 from the Old Wise Guy here, you couldn't hear anything  
1790 else. [He grins at Larry.] From what I heard, Larry,  
1791 you're not so good at playin' detective--ya got me all  
1792 wrong--I'm not afraid of anything now--not even myself.  
1793 You better stick to the part of Old Cemetery, the  
1794 Barker for the Big Sleep--that is, if you can still  
1795 let yourself get away with it! [chuckles]

1796 CORA [giggles]: Old Cemetery--that's him--we'll have to  
1797 call him dat.

1798 HICKEY [with a simple persuasive earnestness]:  
1799 Startin' to do a lot of puzzling about me, aren't you,  
1800 Larry? But that won't help you--you've got to think of  
1801 yourself. I can't give you my peace--you've got to  
1802 find your own. All I can do is help you and the  
1803 rest of the gang by showin' ya the way to find it.

1804 NARRATOR: He pauses, and for a moment they stare at him  
1805 with resentful uneasiness.

1806 ROCKY [breaks the spell]: Aw, hire a church!

1807 HICKEY [placatingly]: All right--all right--don't get  
1808 sore, boys and girls. I guess that did sound too much  
1809 like a lousy preacher--let's forget it and get busy with  
1810 the party.

1811 NARRATOR: The gang looks relieved.

1812 CHUCK: Is dose bundles grub, Hickey--ya bought enough to  
1813 feed an army.

1814 HICKEY [with boyish excitement]: Can never be too much!  
1815 I want this to be the biggest birthday Bess's ever had.  
1816 You and Rocky go in the hall and get the big surprise--  
1817 my arms are busted from luggin' it.

NARRATOR: Catching his excitement, Chuck and Rocky go out, grinning expectantly. The girls gather around Hickey, full of thrilled curiosity.

PEARL: Jeez, yuh got us all heated up--what is it?

HICKEY: I got it as a treat for the three of ya more than anyone. I thought to myself: I'll bet this is what'll please those whores more than anything.

NARRATOR: Before they have a chance to be angry...

HICKEY [affectionately]: I said to myself: I don't care how much it costs, they're worth it--they're the best little scouts in the world, and they've been damned kind to me when I was down and out--nothing's too good for them. [earnestly] I mean every word of that, too--and then some! [jubilantly]: Look--here it comes!

NARRATOR: Chuck and Rocky enter carrying a huge wicker basket full of champagne.

PEARL [with childish excitement]: Look Mahgie--it's dat wine wid bubbles! Jeez, Hickey, you is a sport!

NARRATOR: She gives him a hug, forgetting all animosity, as do the other girls.

MARGIE: I never been soused on dis kinda wine--let's get stinko, Poil.

PEARL: You betcha--de bot' of us!

NARRATOR: A holiday spirit has seized them all. Even Joe stands up to grin at the champagne--and Hugo raises his head to blink at it.

JOE: You sure is hittin' de high spots, Hickey. [boastfully] Man, when I runs my gamblin' joint, I'm gonna drink dat old bubbly water in steins! [He stops guiltily--then with defiance] I's goin' to drink it dat way, too, Hickey--soon's I make my stake! And dat ain't no pipe dream, neider!

ROCKY: What'll we drink it outa--we ain't got no wine glasses.

HICKEY [enthusiastically]: Joe has the right idea--schooners! That's the spirit for Bess's birthday!

HUGO [with his silly giggle]: Ve vill trink vine beneath the villow trees!

2182 PARRITT [jeers angrily]: The old foolosopher, eh?  
2183 [spits out contemptuously] You lousy old faker!

2184 LARRY [pleads weakly]: For the love of God, leave me in  
2185 peace the little time I have left!

2186 PARRITT: Aw don't pull that pitiful old-man junk on me--  
2187 you'll never die as long as there's a free drink of  
2188 whiskey left!

2189 LARRY [stung--furiously]: You waitch how you try to taunt  
2190 me back into life, I warn you! I might remember the  
2191 thing they call justice, and the punishment for [ratting  
2192 out your]--

2193 NARRATOR: With effort, he checks himself.

2194 LARRY [with an indifference that comes from exhaustion]:  
2195 Aw, I'm old and tired--to hell with you--you're as mad  
2196 as Hickey, and as big a liar--I don't believe a word you  
2197 say to me.

2198 PARRITT [threateningly]: The hell you don't! Wait till  
2199 Hickey gets through with you!

2200 NARRATOR: Pearl and Margie enter from behind the bar.  
2201 At the sight of them, Parritt instantly becomes  
2202 self-conscious and defensive.

2203 MARGIE [jeeringly]: Why, hello, Tightwad Kid. Come to  
2204 join de party? Gee, don't he act bashful, Poil?

2205 PEARL: Yeah--especially wid his dough.

2206 THE CAPTAIN [Fight vocalizations/shouts/grunts]:  
2207 THE GENERAL [Fight vocalizations/shouts/grunts]:  
2208 PEARL: Hey, Rocky! Fight in de hall!

2209 NARRATOR: Rocky and Chuck run from behind the bar and  
2210 into the hall.

2211 ROCKY: What de hell?  
2212 [The scuffle stops.]

2213 NARRATOR: Rocky appears holding The Captain, followed by  
2214 Chuck with a similar hold on The General. Although  
2215 they've been drinking, they're both--for them--sober.  
2216 Clothes dishelved from the tussle, they are sullen and  
2217 angry.

2218 ROCKY [astonished, amused and irritated]: Can yuh  
2219 beat it--I've heard youse two call each odder every name  
2220 yuh could tink of but I never seen ya--[indignantly]  
2221 A swell time to stage your first bout, on de Boss's  
2222 boithday! What started it?

2223 THE CAPTAIN [forcing a casual tone]: Nothing, old chap.  
2224 Our business, you know. That bloody ass, Hickey, made  
2225 some insinuation about me, and the boorish Boer had the  
2226 impertinence to agree with him.

2227 THE GENERAL: Dot's a lie! Hickey made joke on me, and  
2228 Limey said yes, it vas true!

2229 ROCKY: Well, sit down, de bot' of yuh, and cut out de  
2230 rough stuff.

2231 NARRATOR: Dumped into adjoining chairs, they turn their  
2232 backs on each other as far as possible.

2233 MARGIE [laughs]: Lookit de two bums--like a coupla kids!  
2234 Kiss and make up, for Gawd's sakes!

2235 ROCKY: Yeah, de Boss's party begins in a minute and we  
2236 don't want no soreheads around.

2237 THE CAPTAIN [stiffly]: Very well. In deference to the  
2238 occasion, I apologize, General--provided you do as well.

2239 THE GENERAL [sulkily]: Yes, I sorry, too--because Bess  
2240 is goot lady.

2241 ROCKY: Aw ya mean yuh can't do better'n dat?

2242 NARRATOR: Ed and Mac enter together from the hall.  
2243 Both have been drinking but are not drunk.

2244 MAC: I'm tellin' ya, Ed, it's serious this time. That  
2245 bastard Hickey has got Bess by the hip. And you know it  
2246 isn't going to do us no good if he gets her to take that  
2247 walk tomorrow.

2248 ED: Yer damn right--Bess'll mosey around the ward,  
2249 dropping in on everyone who knew her when. [indignantly]  
2250 And they'll all give her a phony glad hand and a ton of  
2251 advice about what a sucker she is to put up with us.

2252 MAC: She's sure to call on your relations to do a little  
2253 cryin' over dear Harry. And you know what that S.O.B.  
2254 thought o' me.



NARRATOR: Both Bess and Jimmy have been drinking heavily. Bess is touchy and pugnacious--entirely different from the usual easygoing beefing she delights in and which no one takes seriously. Now, she has a real chip on her shoulder.

Jimmy, beneath a pathetic veneer of gentlemanly poise, is obviously terrified and shrinks into himself.

Hickey grabs Bess's hand and pumps it up and down. Bess appears unaware of this handshake--then she jerks her hand away.

BESS HOPE: Cut out the glad hand, Hickey. D'you think I'm a sucker? I know you, bejeez, you sneakin', lyin' drummer! [with rising anger, to the others] And all you bums--what the hell you trying to do, yellin' and raisin' the roof--you want the cops to close the joint and take my license? [pause as Cora continues to play] Hey, you dumb tart, quit banging on that box! Bejeez, the least you could do is learn the tune!

CORA [stops--deeply hurt]: Aw, Bess! Jeez, ain't I [any good any more?]

BESS HOPE: And you two hookers, screamin' at the top of your lungs--what d'you think this is, a dollar cathouse?

PEARL [miserably]: Aw, Bess-- [She begins to cry.]

MARGIE: Jeez, Bess I never thought you'd say that--  
like yuh meant it. [Pause] Aw, don't bawl, Poirl--  
she don't mean it.

HICKEY [reproachfully]: Now, Bess--don't take it out on the gang because you're upset about yourself. Anyway, I've promised you you'll come through all right, haven't I? So quit worrying.

BESS HOPE [dismissive]: Huh!

HICKEY: Just be yourself--you don't want to bawl out the old gang just when they're congratulin' you on your birthday, do ya?

BESS HOPE [looking guilty and shamefaced--forcing an unconvincing attempt at her natural tone]: Bejeez, they ain't as dumb as you--they know I was only kidding 'em. They know I appreciate their congratulations. Don't you, gang?

2373 ED [uninspired]: Sure, Bess.

2374 WILLIE: [uninspired]: Yes.

2375 MCLOIN [uninspired]: Of course we do.

2376 NARRATOR: Bess comes forward to the two girls--with  
2377 Jimmy and Hickey following--and pats them awkwardly.

2378 BESS HOPE: Bejeez, I like you broads--you know I was  
2379 only kiddin'.

2380 MARGIE: Sure we know, Bess.

2381 PEARL: Sure.

2382 HICKEY [grinning]: Bess's the greatest kidder in this  
2383 dump and that's sayin' somethin'! Look how she's kidded  
2384 herself for twenty years!

2385 BESS HOPE [bitterly]: Huh.

2386 HICKEY: Unless I'm wrong, my good lady--and I'm  
2387 bettin' I'm not--we'll know soon, eh? Tomorrow morning.  
2388 No, by God, it's this morning now!

2389 JIMMY [with a dazed dread]: This morning?

2390 HICKEY: Yes, it's tomorrow at last, Jimmy. [Pause]  
2391 Don't be so scared--I've promised I'll help ya.

2392 JIMMY [masking his dread behind an offended, drunken  
2393 dignity]: I don't understand you. Kindly remember  
2394 I'm fully capable of settling my own affairs!

2395 HICKEY [earnestly]: Well isn't that exactly what I  
2396 want you to do--settle with yourself once and for all?  
2397 [a confidential whisper] Only be careful of the booze,  
2398 Jimmy--not too much from now on--you've had a lot  
2399 already and you don't want to let yourself duck ot of  
2400 it by being too drunk to move--not this time!

2401 BESS HOPE [to Margie--still guiltily] Bejeez, Margie you  
2402 know I didn't mean it--it's that lousy drummer riding me  
2403 that's got my goat.

2404 MARGIE: I know. [waving her head] Come on--you ain't  
2405 noticed your cake yet--ain't it grand?

2406 BESS HOPE [trying to brighten up]: Say, that's pretty.  
2407 Ain't had a cake since Harry--six candles--each for  
2408 ten years, eh--bejeez that's thoughtful of ya.

2409 PEARL: It was Hickey got it.

2410 BESS HOPE [her tone forced]: Well...he means well,  
2411 I guess. [face hardening] Huh--to hell with his cake.

2412 PEARL: Wait Bess--yuh ain't seen de presents from all of  
2413 us--and dere's a watch all engraved wid your name and de  
2414 date from Hickey.

2415 BESS HOPE: To hell with it--he can keep it!

2416 PEARL: Jeez, she ain't even looked at our presents.

2417 MARGIE [bitterly]: Dis is all wrong--we gotta put some  
2418 life in dis party or I'll go nuts! Hey, Cora, what's de  
2419 matter wid dat box--can't yuh play for Bess? Yuh don't  
2420 have to stop just because she kidded yuh!

2421 BESS HOPE [with forced heartiness]: Yes, come on, Cora--  
2422 you was playin' fine.

2423 [Cora resumes playing.]

2424 BESS HOPE [almost tearfully sentimental]: That was  
2425 Harry's favorite tune--he was always singing it.  
2426 It brings him back--I wish [he were]--[She chokes up.]

2427 HICKEY [grins at her--amused]: Yes we've all heard you  
2428 tell us you thought the world of him.

2429 BESS HOPE [with frightened suspicion]: Well I did,  
2430 bejeez! Everyone knows I did! [threatening] Bejeez,  
2431 if you say I didn't [think the world of him]--

2432 HICKEY [soothingly]: Now Bess, I didn't say anything--  
2433 you're the only one knows the truth about that.

2434 JIMMY [with self-pitying melancholy out of a  
2435 sentimental dream]: My Mary's favorite song was "Loch  
2436 Lomond." She was beautiful and she played beautifully  
2437 and she had a beautiful voice. [with gentle sorrow]  
2438 You were lucky, Bess. Harry died. But there are more  
2439 bitter sorrows than losing the man one loves by the hand  
2440 of death--

2441 HICKEY [with an amused wink at Bess]: Now listen Jimmy--  
2442 we've all heard that story about how you came back to  
2443 Cape Town and found her in the hay with an officer.  
2444 We know you like to believe that's what started you on  
2445 the booze and ruined your life.

2446 JIMMY [stammers]: I--I'm talking to Bess. Will you  
2447 kindly keep out of [my affairs]--[with a pitiful  
2448 defiance] My life is not ruined!

2490 [He grabs his schooner and takes a greedy gulp--  
 2491 then sets it back down on the table.]

2492 HUGO [in an arrogantly disdainful tone, as if he were  
 2493 rebuking a butler]: Dis vine is unfit to trink--it has  
 2494 not been properly iced!

2495 HICKEY [amusedly]: Always a high-toned swell at heart,  
 2496 eh, Hugo? God help us poor bums if you ever get to  
 2497 telling us where to get off! You'd be drinking our blood  
 2498 beneath those willow trees! [chuckles--then as he goes  
 2499 on he becomes more moved and obviously sincere] A toast,  
 2500 Ladies and Gents! To Bess Hope, who's been a friend in  
 2501 need to every one of us! Here's to the old gal, the  
 2502 best sport and the kindest, biggest-hearted gal in the  
 2503 whole world! Here's wishin' ya all the luck there is,  
 2504 and long life and happiness! Come on, everybody!  
 2505 To Bess! Bottoms up!

2506 MAC/ED/WILLIE/JOE/JIMMY/PEARL/MARGIE/CORA/ROCKY/CHUCK  
 2507 [they've caught his enthusiasm]: **To Bess!**

2508 [They drain their drinks down.]

2509 HOPE [deeply moved--her voice husky] Thanks, all of ya.  
 2510 Bejeez, Hickey you old son of a gun, that's good of ya!  
 2511 Bejeez, I know you meant it, too.

2512 HICKEY [moved]: Of course I meant it! And I mean it when  
 2513 I say I hope today will be the best day of your life,  
 2514 and in the lives of everyone here, the beginning of a  
 2515 new life of peace and happiness where no pipe dreams can  
 2516 ever nag at you again. Here's to that, Bess!

2517 NARRATOR: But this time he drinks alone--in an instant,  
 2518 the attitude of the gang has become uneasy and  
 2519 defensive.

2520 ROCKY [growls]: Aw, forget dat bughouse line of bull for  
 2521 a minute, can't yuh?

2522 HICKEY [sitting--good-naturedly]: No, you're right--it's  
 2523 Bess we want to hear from. Come on, Bess! [He pounds his  
 2524 schooner on the table.] Speech! Speech!

2525 [The gang raps their schooners on the table.]

2526 BESS HOPE [lamely]: Bejeez, I'm no good at speeches.  
 2527 All I can say is--thanks to everybody for remembering me  
 2528 on my birthday. [bitterness coming out] Only don't think  
 2529 because I'm sixty I'll be a bigger damned fool easy mark

2616       MAC [spitefully]: Yes!

2617       ED [spitefully]: That's right!

2618       BESS HOPE: Bejeez, you've hit it, Larry! I've noticed he  
2619       hasn't shown her picture around this time!

2620       ED: He hasn't got it--the iceman took it away from him!

2621       MARGIE: Jeez, look at him--who could blame her?

2622       PEARL: She must be hard up to fall for an iceman!

2623       CORA: Imagine a sap like him advisin' me and Chuck to  
2624       git married!

2625       CHUCK: Yeah he done so good wid it!

2626       JIMMY: Least I can say my Mary chose an officer and a  
2627       gentleman.

2628       THE CAPTAIN: Look at him, chaps, he's sprouted horns  
2629       like a bloody antelope!

2630       THE GENERAL: Pigger, py Gott--like water buffalo!

2631       WILLIE [sings his Sailor Lad tune]: "Come up," she  
2632       cried, "my iceman lad, And you and I'll agree--"

2633       WILLIE/ED/JOE/THE CAPTAIN/THE GENERAL/MAC/  
2634       PEARL/MARGIE/CORA/ROCKY/CHUCK "And I'll show ya the  
2635       prettiest [rap, rap, rap] That ever you did see!"  
2636       [A roar of derisive, dirty laughter]

2637       HICKEY [joining in the laughter--enjoying the joke at  
2638       his expense]: Well, boys and girls, I'm glad to see you  
2639       in good spirits for Bess's party, even if the joke's  
2640       on me. I admit I asked for it by always pulling that  
2641       iceman gag in the old days. [w good-natured generosity]  
2642       So laugh all you like.

2643       NARRATOR: But this time they don't laugh--they only  
2644       stare at him with baffled uneasiness.

2645       HICKEY: Well, this forces my hand--your bringing up the  
2646       subject of Evelyn. I didn't want to tell you--not yet--  
2647       I wanted to wait until the party was over. But you're  
2648       getting the wrong idea about poor Evelyn--and I've got  
2649       to stop that.

2650       NARRATOR: As he pauses, there's a tense stillness in the  
2651       room.

2652 HICKEY [quietly]: I'm sorry to tell you, friends--  
2653 my dearly beloved wife Evelyn is dead.

2654 [A quick intake of breath is heard from the gang.]

2655 LARRY [aloud to himself with a superstitious shrinking]:  
2656 By God, I felt the touch of death on him!

2657 NARRATOR: Then suddenly he's ashamed of himself.

2658 LARRY [stammers]: Forgive me, Hickey--I'd like to cut my  
2659 dirty tongue out!

2660 CORA: Sorry, Hickey.

2661 MARGIE: We're sorry, Hickey.

2662 PEARL: Yeah.

2663 HICKEY [in a kindly, reassuring tone]: Now look here,  
2664 everybody--don't let this be a wet blanket on Bess's  
2665 party. There's no reason-- You're getting me all wrong  
2666 see--I don't feel any grief.

2667 NARRATOR: They gaze at him startled.

2668 HICKEY [with convincing sincerity]: No, I'm glad--for  
2669 her sake. Because she's at peace--she's rid of me at  
2670 last. Hell, I don't have to tell you--you all know what  
2671 I was like. You can imagine what she went through,  
2672 married to a no-good cheater and drunk like I was. And  
2673 there was no way out of it for her. Because she loved  
2674 me. But now she's at peace like she always longed to be.  
2675 So why should I feel sad? She wouldn't want me to feel  
2676 sad. Why, all Evelyn ever wanted out of life was to make  
2677 me happy.

2678 [Significant Musical Interlude]

2679 NARRATOR: It's now the morning of Bess's birthday.

2680 Joe moves around, a box of sawdust under his arm--  
2681 throwing it onto the floor. His manner is sullen, his  
2682 face gloomy. When he runs out of sawdust, he goes behind  
2683 the counter and begins cutting loaves of bread.

2684 Behind the bar, Rocky washes glasses--looking sleepy,  
2685 irritable and worried.

2686 At a table without a drink, deep in thought, sits Larry.  
2687 Next to him, Hugo's asleep on his arms, a whiskey glass  
2688 beside his hand.

4813 BESS HOPE [looks around her in an ecstasy of bleery  
4814 sentimental content]: Bejeez, I'm cockeyed! Bejeez,  
4815 you're all cockeyed! Bejeez, we're all all right!  
4816 Let's have another!

4817 [They pour out drinks.]

4818 HUGO [reiterates stupidly]: Vhat's matter, Larry--vhy  
4819 you keep eyes shut--you look dead--vhat you listen for?

4820 NARRATOR: Larry doesn't answer. Or open his eyes.  
4821 Suddenly, Hugo bolts up and backs away from the table.

4822 HUGO [mumbling with frightened anger]: Crazy fool--you  
4823 is crazy like Hickey--you give me bad dreams, too.

4824 ROCKY [greet's him with boisterous affection]:  
4825 Helloo, dere, Hugo--welcome to de party!

4826 BESS HOPE: Yes, bejeez, Hugo--sit down--have a drink!  
4827 Have ten drinks, bejeez!

4828 HUGO [giving his familiar giggle]: Helloo, leedle Bess!  
4829 Helloo, nice, leedle, funny monkey-faces! [warming up,  
4830 changes abruptly to his usual declamatory denunciation]  
4831 Gottamned stupid bourgeois! Soon comes the Day of  
4832 Judgment!

4833 THE CAPTAIN [good-naturedly derisive]: Sit down!

4834 CHUCK [good-naturedly derisive]: Can it!

4835 HUGO [giggling good-naturedly]: Give me ten trinks,  
4836 Bess--don't be a fool.

4837 [The gang laughs.]

4838 NARRATOR: Everyone turns towards the rear as Margie and  
4839 Pearl appear, drunk and disheveled.

4840 MARGIE [defensively truculent]: Make way for two good  
4841 whores!

4842 PEARL: Yeah! And we want a drink quick!

4843 MARGIE: Shake de lead outa your pants, Pimp! A little  
4844 soivice!

4845 ROCKY [face grinning welcome]: Well, look who's here!  
4846 [He goes to them with open arms.] Helloo, dere,  
4847 Sweethearts! Jeeez, I was beginnin' to worry about yuh,  
4848 honest!

NARRATOR: He tries to embrace them but they push his arms away.

PEARL [with amazed suspicion]: What kind of a gag is dis?

BESS HOPE [calls to them warmly]: Come and join the party! Bejeez, I'm glad to see ya!

NARRATOR: The girls exchange a bewildered glance, taking in the party atmosphere.

MARGIE: Jeez, what's come off here?

PEARL: Where's dat louse, Hickey?

ROCKY: De cops got him--he gone crazy and croaked his wife.

MARGIE/PEARL [with more relief than horror]: Jeez!

ROCKY: He'll get Matteawan--but he ain't responsible. What he pulled don't mean nuttin'. So forget dat whore stuff--I'll knock de block off anyone calls you whores! I'll fill de bastard fulla lead--yuh're tarts, and what de hell of it? Yuh're as good as anyone--so forget it, see?

NARRATOR: They let him put his arms around them now--smiling and exchanging maternal glances.

MARGIE [with a wink]: Our little bahtender, ain't he, Poil?

PEARL: Yeah, and a cute little Ginny at dat!

MARGIE/PEARL [laugh]:

MARGIE: And is he stinko!

PEARL: Stinko is right. But he ain't got nuttin' on us. Jeez, Rocky, did we have some kinda time at Coney!

BESS HOPE: Bejeez, sit down, you two--welcome home--have a drink--have ten drinks, bejeez! [a host whose party is a huge success--rambling on happily.] Bejeez, this is all right--we'll make this my birthday party, and forget the other--we'll get paralyzed! But who's missing? Where's the Old Wise Guy? Where's Larry?

ROCKY: Over by de window, Boss. Jeez, he's got his eyes shut. De old bastard's asleep. To hell wid him. Let's have a drink.