

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

ROCKY: The night bartender, Rocky is a 20-something, Italian-American in his late twenties. He is comically irascible and prickly--tough, sentimental, and good-natured. His pipe dream involves his refusal to admit to himself that he is a pimp to a pair of whores who live upstairs.

3 takes + pickups = \$1,200.

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 ROCKY LINES 2693-2724

ROCKY LINES BEGIN ON NEXT PAGE

NARRATOR: Welcome to By Mouth...bringing classic plays to sonic life...in their essence.

By Mouth presents: The Iceman Cometh by Eugene O'Neill.

The year: 1912. The setting: New York City.

We're in the back room of Hope's Saloon & Rooming House.

A dirty black curtain separates it from the bar. This-- along with an crusty, old sandwich on every table-- allows liquor to be served after hours due to a legal technicality.

Strewn over four tables, passed out drunk, are the usual gang: nine male barflys who room upstairs-- and their bark-but-no-bite, sixty-year-old, female proprietor and benefactor, Bess Hope.

Rocky, the night bartender, enters through the curtain and stands looking over the back room.

ROCKY [signals to Larry cautiously]: Sstt.

NARRATOR: Opening his eyes to check on Bess--and nod-- is Larry. Rocky goes back to the bar and returns with a bottle of whiskey and a glass.

ROCKY [in a low voice out of the side of his mouth]: Make it fast.

NARRATOR: Larry pours a drink and gulps it down. Rocky takes the bottle and puts it on the table.

ROCKY: Don't want de Boss to get wise when she's got one o' her tightwad buns on. [chuckles] "Not a damned drink on de house," she tells me, "and all dese bums got to pay up dir room rent--beginnin' tomorrow," she says. Jeez, yuh'd tink she meant it!

LARRY [grinning]: I'll be glad to pay up--tomorrow. And I know my fellow inmates will promise the same. [with half-drunken mockery] It'll be a great day for them, tomorrow. Their ships will come in, loaded to the gills with cancelled regrets, and promises fulfilled and clean slates and new leases!

ROCKY:[cynically]: Yeah, and a ton of hop!

LARRY: Have you no respect for religion, you unrepentant Wop? So what if their favoring breeze has the stink of nickel whiskey, and their sea is a growler of lager and

39 ale. And their ships are long since looted and scuttled
40 on the bottom? To hell with the truth! It's irrelevant
41 and immaterial, as the lawyers say. The lie of the
42 pipe dream is what gives life to the whole mad
43 lot of us, drunk or sober. And that's enough wisdom to
44 give ya for one drink of rot-gut.

45 ROCKY: De old Foolosopher, like Hickey calls yuh,
46 ain't yuh? I s'pose you don't fall for no pipe dream?

47 LARRY [a bit stiffly]: I don't, no. Mine are all
48 dead and buried behind me. What I do have is the
49 comforting fact that death is a fine long sleep,
50 and it can't come soon enough.

51 ROCKY: Just hangin' around hopin' you croak, are yuh?
52 Well, I'm bettin' you'll have a good long wait.
53 Jeez, somebody'll have to take an axe to croak you!

54 LARRY [grins]: Yes, it's my bad luck to be cursed with a
55 constitution even Bess's booze can't corrode.

56 ROCKY: De old anarchist wise guy knows all de answers!

57 LARRY [frowns]: Forget the anarchist part--I'm through
58 with the movement--a long time ago. I saw men didn't
59 want be saved--that would mean they'd have to give up
60 greed, and they'll never pay that price. So I said:
61 God bless, and may the best man win and die of gluttony!
62 And I took a seat in the grandstand to observe the
63 other cannibals.

64 NARRATOR: Larry shakes his buddy Hugo.

65 LARRY [chuckling]: Ain't I telling the truth,
66 Comrade Hugo?

67 ROCKY: Aw, fer Christ sake...

68 NARRATOR: Raising his head, Hugo peers through thick
69 glasses.

70 HUGO [thick German accent]: Capitalist swine! Bourgeois
71 stool pigeons! Have the slaves no right to speak even?
72 [grins playfully] Hello, leedle Rocky--leedle monkey-
73 face--vere are your slave girls? [abruptly bullying
74 tone] Don't be a fool--lend me a dollar--damned
75 bourgeois Wop--buy me a trink!

76 NARRATOR: His head falls--and he's asleep again.

77 ROCKY [exasperated not angry]: He's lucky we know him--
78 or he'd wake up every morning in a hospital.

79 LARRY: No one takes him seriously.

80 ROCKY: He's gonna pull dat slave-girl stuff on me once
81 too often.[defensively] Hell, yuh'd tink I was a pimp or
82 sometin'--everybody knows me knows I ain't--I'm a
83 bahtender. Dem tarts, Margie and Poil, dey're just a
84 side line to pick up some extra dough--strictly
85 business. I fix de cops for dem so's dey can hustle
86 widout gettin' pinched. Hell, dey'd be in the clink if
87 it weren't fer me. And I don't beat dem up like a pimp
88 would--I treat dem fine. So what if I do take deir
89 dough--dey'd on'y trow it away. Tarts can't hang on to
90 dough--me, I'm a bahtender and I work hard for my livin'
91 in dis dump--you know dat, Larry.

92 LARRY [flatteringly]: A shrewd business man, who doesn't
93 miss any opportunity to get on in the world. That's what
94 I'd call you.

95 ROCKY [pleased]: Sure ting--dat's me--have another,
96 Larry.

97 NARRATOR: Larry pours himself another drink from the
98 bottle.

99 ROCKY: Yuh'd tink dese bums didn't have a good bed
100 upstairs to go to. Scared if dey hit de hay de wouldn't
101 be here when Hickey showed up and dey'd miss a coupla
102 drinks. Dat's what keeps you up too, ain't it?

103 LARRY: It's not so much--for me--the hope of booze, if
104 you can believe that. It's that Hickey is such a great
105 one for making a joke of everything--it cheers me up.

106 ROCKY: Yeah, he's some kidder! Remember how he woiks up
107 dat gag about his wife, when he's cockeyed, cryin' over
108 her picture and den springin' it on yuh all of a sudden
109 dat he left her in de hay wid de iceman? [laughs] What's
110 happened to him? Yuh could set yer watch by his
111 periodicals before dis. Always a coupla days before
112 Bess's birthday party, and now he's only got tonight to
113 make it. Dis dump is like de moigue wid all dese bums
114 passed out.

115 NARRATOR: Willie jerks and twitches in his sleep.

116 WILLIE [mumbling from his dream]: It's a lie! It's a
117 lie!

ROCKY [frowning]: Jeez I've seen him bad before but never this bad. Look at dat get-up. Sold his suit and shoes at Solly's two days ago. Solly give him two bucks and a bum outfit. Yesterday, he sells de bum one back to Solly fer four bits and gets dese rags to put on. Now he's through. Solly's final edition he wouldn't take back fer nuttin'.

LARRY: It's a great game, the pursuit of happiness.

ROCKY: De Boss dunno what to do about him. She called up Willie's old lady's lawyer like she always does when Willie gets licked. Yuh remember dey used to send somebody down to bring him somewheres to dry out? This time the lawyer says the old lady's off Willie for keeps--that he can go to hell.

LARRY: I think he's knocking on the door right now.

WILLIE [yelling in his nightmare]: It's a God-damned lie! [begins to sob]

ROCKY: Hey you! Cut out de noise!

NARRATOR: Proprietor Bess Hope opens one eye over her spectacles.

BESS HOPE: Who's that yellin'?

ROCKY: Willie, Boss. De Brooklyn boys is after him again.

BESS HOPE: Well, why don't you give the poor bugga a drink to keep him quiet? Bejeez, can't I get a wink of sleep in my own back room.

ROCKY [indignantly to Larry in a low voice]: Listen to that blind and deaf old gal, will yuh? She give me strict orders not to let Willie have no more drinks, no matter what--

NARRATOR: Bess puts her hand to her ear.

BESS HOPE: What's that? I can't hear you. [Then drowsily irascible] You're a cockeyed liar. Never refused a drink to anyone needed it bad in my life! Told you to use your judgement. You're too busy thinking up ways to cheat me. Oh, I ain't as blind as you think--I can still see a cash register bejeez!

ROCKY [grins at her affectionately]: Sure, Boss. [flatteringly] Swell chance of foolin' you!

156 BESS HOPE: I'm wise to ya. Bejeez, you're a burglar not
157 a barkeep. Laughin' behind my back, tellin' people you
158 throw money up in the air and whatever sticks to the
159 ceilin' is my share! A fine crook you are--you'd steal
160 the pennies off your dead mother's eyes!

161 ROCKY: Aw, Boss...

162 BESS HOPE [more drowsily]: I'll fire ya, bejeez, if you
163 think you can play me for an easy mark. No one ever
164 played Bess Hope for a sucker!

165 ROCKY [aside to Larry]: No one but everybody.

166 BESS HOPE [eyes shut again--mutters]: Least you could do
167 is keep things quiet--

168 NARRATOR: Soon, Bess is asleep again.

169 WILLIE [pleading]: Give me a drink, Rocky--Bess said it
170 was all right.

171 ROCKY: Den grab it--it's right under your nose.

172 NARRATOR: With twitching hands, Willie takes the bottle,
173 tilts it to his lips and gulps down the whiskey.

174 ROCKY [sharply]: When--when! [grabs bottle] I didn't say
175 take a bath!

176 LARRY: Leave him be, poor devil. A half pint in one swig
177 will fix him for a while--if it doesn't kill him.

178 ROCKY: Aw right--it ain't my booze.

179 JOE: Whose booze--gimme some. Where's Hickey? What
180 time's it, Rocky?

181 ROCKY: Time you begun to sweep up de bar.

182 JOE: I was dreamin' Hickey come in, crackin' one of his
183 drummer's jokes, wavin' a big bankroll and we was all
184 goin' be drunk for two weeks. [Suddenly his eyes go
185 wide.] Wait a minute--I got an idea--say, Larry, how
186 'bout dat young guy came to look you up last night and
187 rented a room? Where's he at?

188 LARRY: In his room--asleep. Anyway, he's broke.

189 JOE: Dat what he told ya? Me and Rocky knows different.
190 Had a roll--didn't he--when he paid his room rent--
191 I seen it.

ROCKY: Yeah, he flashed it like he forgot and den tried to hide it quick.

LARRY: Huh...

ROCKY: I figgered he don't belong, but he said he was a friend of yours.

LARRY: He's a liar--I wouldn'ta known him if he hadn't told me who he was. His mother and I were friends years ago. [Hesitates--then lowers voice] You've read in the papers about that bombing on the Coast where several people got killed? Well, the one woman they pinched, Rosa Parritt, is his mother. They'll be coming up for trial soon, and they have no chance--she'll get life, I'm sure. I'm telling you this so you'll know why the boy acts a bit strange, and not jump on him. He must be hit hard--he's her only kid.

ROCKY [nods--then thoughtfully]: So why ain't he out dere stickin' by her?

LARRY [frowns]: Maybe there's a good reason.

ROCKY [after a pause, understandingly]: Sure, I get it. [then wonderingly] But, den what kind of sap is he to hang on to his right name?

LARRY [irritably]: I'm tellin' ya I don't know anything and I don't want to know. To hell with the Movement and everybody connected to it!

JOE: If dere's one ting more'n annuder I cares nuttin' about, it's the Movement. [chuckles--reminiscently] Reminds me of an ahgument me and a guy has the udder night. He's drunk and I'm drunker. He says, "Socialist and Anarchist, we ought to shoot dem dead." I says, "Hold on, you talk 's if Anarchists and Socialists was de same." "Dey is," he says. "Dey's both no-good bastards." "No, dey ain't," I says. "De Anarchist drinks but never buys, and if he do get a nickel, he blows it on bombs, and wouldn't give you nothin'. But de Socialist, if he gets ten bucks, he's bound by his religion to split it wid ya fifty-fifty." So don't shoot no Socialists while I'm around. Of course, if dey's broke, den dey's no-good bastards, too.

LARRY: By God, Joe, you've got all the beauty of human nature and the practical wisdom of the world in that one story.

233 ROCKY: Larry ain't de on'y wise guy in dis dump, hey,
234 Joe?

235 [Sound of footsteps]

236 NARRATOR: Rocky turns as Parritt appears from the hall.
237 Glancing around defensively, Parritt sees Larry then
238 comes forward.

239 PARRITT: Hello, Larry.

240 NARRATOR: He nods to Rocky and Joe.

241 PARRITT: Hello.

242 LARRY [without cordiality]: What's up?

243 PARRITT: Couldn't sleep. Thought I might as well see if
244 you were around.

245 LARRY [not friendly]: Sit down and join the bums then.

246 [Parritt sits]

247 PARRITT: I get you--but, hell, I'm just about broke.
248 [Brief pause] Oh, I know you guys saw-- You think I got
249 a roll--well, you're wrong, I'll show ya. [Takes out
250 small wad of dollar bills] It's all ones--and I've got
251 to live on it till I get a job. [Then defensively]
252 You think I fixed up a phony, don't you? Why the hell
253 would I? You don't get rich doing what I've been doing.
254 Ask Larry--you're lucky in the Movement if you have
255 enough to eat.

256 ROCKY: What's de song and dance about--we ain't said
257 nuttin'.

258 PARRITT: Just don't want you to think I'm a tight-wad--
259 I'll buy a drink if you want one.

260 JOE: If? When I don't want a drink, you call de morgue,
261 tell dem come take Joe's body away, 'cause he's sure
262 enuf dead. Gimme de bottle quick, Rocky, before he
263 changes his mind!

264 NARRATOR: Rocky passes him a bottle and glass. Pouring a
265 brimful drink, Joe tosses it down and passes the bottle
266 and glass to Larry.

267 ROCKY: What're you having?

268 PARRITT: Nothing--I'm on the wagon. What's the damage?

269 ROCKY: Fifteen cents.

555 Enough to wake the dead, Till he heard a damsel [rap,
556 rap, rap], On a window right over his head."

557 BESS HOPE [with fuming irritation]: Bejeez Rocky--can't
558 you keep that crazy bastard quiet?

559 WILLIE: "Oh, come up," she cried, "my sailor lad, And
560 you and I'll agree, And I'll show ya the prettiest [rap,
561 rap, rap], That ever you did see."

562 NARRATOR: Rocky shakes Willie by the shoulder roughly.

563 ROCKY: What d'yuh tink dis dump is, a dump?

564 BESS HOPE: Go on--lock him in his room!

565 ROCKY: Come on, Bum!

566 WILLIE: No, please, Rocky--I'll go crazy up in that room
567 alone! Please, Bess--let me stay--I'll be quiet!

568 BESS HOPE [immediately relents--indignantly]: What the
569 hell you doing to him, Rocky? I didn't tell you to
570 beat up the poor guy--leave him alone, long as he's
571 quiet.

572 WILLIE: Thanks, Bess--you are an esteemed lady.

573 BESS HOPE [to Ed & Mac]: Leave it to that Dago to keep
574 order and it's like bedlam in a cathouse. [brief pause]
575 And you two barflies are a hell of a help to me, ain't
576 ya? Eat and sleep and get drunk--all you're good for,
577 bejeez! Well, you can take that "I'll-have-the-same"
578 look off your mugs--there ain't gonna to be no more
579 drinks on the house til hell freezes over!

580 MAC [winking at each other]: Sure, Bess.

581 ED: That's right.

582 BESS HOPE: Yeah, grin--wink, bejeez! Fine pair of slobs
583 to have glued on me for life!

584 THE CAPTAIN: Have I been drinking at the same table with
585 a bloody Kaffir?

586 JOE [grinning] Hello, Captain--you comin' up for air?
587 Kaffir--who's he?

588 THE GENERAL: Dot's a nigga, Joe--dot's joke on him. He's
589 still plind drunk, the bloody Limey chentlemen! A great
590 mistake I missed him at the pattle of Modder River.
591 Vit mine rifle I shoot damn fool Limey officers py da

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.]

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

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

992 ROCKY: A lotta difference, get me?

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

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

998 ROCKY: I'm a bahtender--everyone knows me knows dat.
999 And I treat ya goils right, don't I? [brief pause]
1000 I'm wise yuh hold out on me, but I know it ain't much,
1001 so what the hell, I let yuh get away wid it. I tink
1002 yuh're a coupla good kids. Yuh're aces wid' me, see?

1003 PEARL: Yuh-re aces wid us, too--ain't he, Mahgie?

1004 MARGIE: Sure.

1005 NARRATOR: Rocky beams and takes glasses to the bar.

1006 MARGIE [whispers]: Yuh sap, don't yuh know enough not to
1007 kid him on dat? Serves ya right if he beat yuh up!

1008 PEARL: Jeez I'll bet he'd give yuh an awful beatin', too
1009 once he started. Ginnies got awful tempers.

1010 MARGIE: Anyway we wouldn't keep no pimp, like we was
1011 reg'lar old whores.

1012 PEARL: No we're tarts--dat's all.

1013 ROCKY [rinsing glasses] Cora got back around three.
1014 Woke up Chuck and dragged him outa de hay to go get
1015 chop suey. [disgustedly] Imagine him standin' for dat!

1016 MARGIE: Bet dey been sittin' around kiddin' demselves
1017 wid dat old dream about gettin' married and settlin'
1018 down on a farm. Jeez when Chuck's on de wagon, de never
1019 lay off dat dope!

1020 PEARL: Yeah, Chuck wid a silly grin on his ugly mug and
1021 Cora gigglin' like she was in grammah school and some
1022 tough guy'd just told her babies wasn't brung down de
1023 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 waiting 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.]

1060 PARRITT: If I'd known this was a hooker hangout,
1061 I'd never have come here.

1062 LARRY: A bit down on the ladies, aren't you?

1063 PARRITT: I hate every bitch that ever lived! They're all
1064 alike! [catching himself--guiltily] You can understand,
1065 can't you--it was getting mixed up with a tart that made
1066 me have that fight with Mother? [then, with a resentful
1067 sneer] But what the hell does it matter to you? You're
1068 in the grandstand--you're through with life.

1069 LARRY: And don't you forget it! I don't want to know a
1070 damned thing about your business.

1071 CORA: Who's de guy wid Larry!

1072 ROCKY: A tightwad--to hell wid him.

1073 PEARL: Say, Cora, wise me up--which end of a cow is de
1074 horns on?

1075 CORA: Ah, don't bring dat up--I'm sick of hearin' about
1076 dat farm.

1077 ROCKY: You got nuttin' on us!

1078 CORA: Me and dis overgrown tramp has been scrappin'
1079 about it. He says Joisey's de best place, and I says
1080 Long Island because we'll be near Coney. And I says to
1081 him, how do I know yuh're off of periodicals for good?
1082 I don't give a damn how drunk yuh get the way we are,
1083 but I don't wanta be married to no soak.

1084 CHUCK: And I says, I'm off de stuff for life. Den she
1085 beefs we won't be married a month before I'll trow it in
1086 her face she was a tart. "Jeez, Baby," I tells her.
1087 "What de hell yuh tink I tink I'm marryin', a voigin?
1088 Why should I kick as long as yuh lay off it and don't do
1089 no cheatin' wid de iceman or nobody?

1090 NARRATOR: He kisses Cora and she kisses him.

1091 CORA: Aw, yuh big tramp!

1092 ROCKY: Can you two tie it? I'll buy yuh a trink, I'll do
1093 anythin'.

1094 CORA: No, dis rounds on me. I run into luck--dat's why I
1095 dragged Chuck outa bed to celebrate. It was a sailor--
1096 I rolled him. [she chuckles] Say, Chuck's kiddin' about
1097 the iceman reminds me--where de hell's Hickey?

ROCKY: Dat's what we was wonderin'.

CORA: He ought to be here--me and Chuck seen him.

ROCKY [excited]: You seen Hickey? [nudges Bess]

Hey, Boss, come to--Cora's seen Hickey.

NARRATOR: Bess is instantly awake and everyone--except Hugo and Parritt--begins to rouse hopefully.

BESS HOPE: Where'd you see him, Cora?

CORA: On de next corner--he was standin' dere. I kidded him, "How's de iceman, Hickey--how's he doing at your house?" He laughs and says, "Fine." And he says, "Tell de gang I'll be along in a minute--I'm just figurin' out de best way to save dem and bring dem peace."

BESS HOPE [chuckles]: Bejeez he's thought up a new gag! It's a wonder he didn't borrow a Salvation Army uniform and show up in that! Go out and get him, Rocky--tell him we're waitin' to be saved!

NARRATOR: Rocky goes out, grinning.

CORA: Yeah, Bess, he was only kiddin'--but he was...different somehow.

CHUCK: Sure, he was sober, Baby--we ain't never seen him when he wasn't on a drunk.

CORA [uncertain] Sure. Gee, ain't I dumb?

BESS HOPE: Sober? That's funny--he's always lapped up a good starter on his way here. Well, bejeez, he won't be sober long--he'll be good and ripe for my birthday party tonight at twelve. [chuckles with anticipation; to all] Listen--he's fixed some new gag to pull on us--we'll pretend to let him kid us, see--and we'll kid the pants off him.

ED: Sure, Bess!

MAC: Righto!

JOE: Dat's de stuff!

JIMMY: We'll fix him!

THE CAPTAIN: You bet your life!

THE GENERAL: O' course!

NARRATOR: Rocky appears in the rear doorway, his arm around Hickey.

ROCKY: Here's the old son of a gun!

NARRATOR: They all stand and greet him.

JIMMY: Hello, Hickey!

ED: If it ain't...

JOE: It sho is.

MAC: Hickey!

WILLIE: My boy!

THE CAPTAIN: How goes it old chum?

THE GENERAL: Velcome, Hickey.

NARRATOR: Even Hugo raises his head and blinks through his glasses.

HICKEY [jovially]: Hello, Gang! [He immediately puts on on entrance act.] "It's always fair weather, when good fellas get together!" [changing to bass and another tune] "And another little drink won't do us any harm!"
[The gang cheers.]

NARRATOR: Rocky grins and goes to get drinks. Hickey comes forward and doffs his cap affectionately to Bess.

HICKEY [smiling]: Hickey, at your service, fine lady.

BESS HOPE [blushing]: Bejeez Hickey, you old bastard, it's good to see you!

NARRATOR: As Hickey shakes hands with the gang, Rocky sets out whiskey glasses and a bottle on every table.

BESS HOPE: Sit down, Hickey--sit down.

[Hickey sits.]

BESS HOPE: Bejeez Hickey, it seems natural as rain to see your grinnin' mug. This dumb broad here was tryin' to tell us you'd changed, but you ain't changed a bit. How you been doin'? Bejeez you look like a million bucks.

ROCKY: Here's your key, Hickey--same old room.

1202 do ya? You know me better than that! Just because I'm
1203 through with the stuff don't mean I'm going Prohibition.
1204 Hell, I'm not that ungrateful--it's given me too many
1205 good times. I feel exactly like I always did--if anyone
1206 wants to get drunk, if that's the only way they can be
1207 happy and feel at peace with themselves, why the hell
1208 shouldn't they? Why I know all about that game from soup
1209 to nuts--I'm the guy that wrote the book. The only
1210 reason I've quit is-- Well, I finally had the guts to
1211 face myself and throw overboard the damned lying pipe
1212 dream that'd been making me miserable, and do what I had
1213 to do for the happiness of all concerned--and then all
1214 at once I found I was at peace with myself--and I didn't
1215 need booze any more. That's all there was to it.

1216 NARRATOR: They stare uneasily. He looks around and grins
1217 affectionately.

1218 HICKEY: But what the hell--don't let me be a
1219 wet blanket. Set 'em up again, Rocky--here. [pulls out
1220 a big roll and peels off a bill] Keep 'em comin' until
1221 this is killed--then ask for more.

1222 ROCKY: Jeez, a roll dat'd choke a hippopotamus! Fill up,
1223 youse guys.

1224 [They all pour drinks.]

1225 BESS HOPE: That sounds more like you, Hickey. That
1226 on-the wagon bull-- Cut out the act and have a drink,
1227 for Christ's sake.

1228 HICKEY: It's no act, Bess--but don't get me wrong--
1229 that don't mean I'm a teetotal grouch and can't be in
1230 the party. Hell, why d'you think I'm here except to have
1231 a party, same as I've always done, and help celebrate
1232 your birthday tonight? You've all been good pals to me,
1233 the best friends I've ever had. I've been thinkin' about
1234 you ever since I left the house--all the time I was
1235 walking over here--

1236 BESS HOPE: Walking? Bejeez you mean to say you walked?

1237 HICKEY: I sure did--all the way from the wilds of
1238 Astoria. Didn't mind it, either--I'm a bit tired and
1239 sleepy but otherwise I feel great. [Addressing Bess]
1240 That ought to encourage you, Bess--show you a little
1241 walk around the ward is nothing to be scared about.

1242 NARRATOR: As Hickey winks at the others, Bess stiffens.

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.

PEARL: He was hintin' to me and Mahgie.

MARGIE: Yeah, de lousy drumma.

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

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

MARGIE: Nuttin'.

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

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

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

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

CHUCK: Yeah!

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

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 broad, 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 walk on 'em from
 1570 here to Texas!

1571 CORA [starts moving toward her threateningly]: Yuh can't
 1572 talk 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!"

1702 ROCKY [preoccupied]: I know what's goin' to happen if he
1703 don't watch his step. I told him, "I'll take a lot from
1704 you, Hickey, like everyone else in dis dump, because
1705 yuh've always been a standup guy. But dere's tings
1706 I don't take from nobody, see? Remember dat, or you'll
1707 wake up in a hospital--or maybe worse, wid your wife and
1708 de iceman walkin' slow behind yuh."

1709 CORA [excitedly]: D'yuh suppose dat he did catch his
1710 wife cheatin'? I don't mean wid no iceman, but wid some
1711 guy.

1712 ROCKY: Naw dat's bunk--he ain't pulled dat gag or showed
1713 her photo 'round cuz he ain't drunk. And if he'd caught
1714 her cheatin' he'd be drunk, wouldn't he? He'd a beat her
1715 up and den gone on de woist drunk he'd evah pulled--like
1716 any other guy'd do.

1717 CHUCK: Dat's right--he'd be paralyzed.

1718 NARRATOR: Joe enters from the hall. There's a noticeable
1719 change in him--he walks with a tough, truculent swagger
1720 and his good-natured face is set in sullen suspicion.

1721 JOE [to Rocky--defiantly]: I's stood tellin' folks dis
1722 dump is closed for de night all I's goin' to. Let de
1723 Boss hire a doorman--pay him wages--if she wants one.

1724 ROCKY [scowling]: Yeah? De Boss's pretty damned
1725 good to ya.

1726 JOE [shamefaced]: Sure she is--I don't mean dat.
1727 Anyways, it's all right--I told de cop we's closed for
1728 de party--he'll keep folks away. [aggressively again]
1729 I want a big drink, dat's what!

1730 CHUCK: Who's stoppin' yuh? Yuh can have all yuh want on
1731 Hickey.

1732 NARRATOR: Joe's hand is on a bottle when Hickey's
1733 name is mentioned. After drawing his hand back, he
1734 grabs it defiantly.

1735 [Joe pours a big drink.]

1736 JOE: Aw right, I's earned all de drinks on him I could
1737 drink in a year for listenin' to his crazy bull. And
1738 here's hopin' he gets de lockjaw! [He drinks and pours
1739 out another.] I drinks on 'im but I don't drink wid him.
1740 No, suh, never no more!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PEARL: He coitinly has!

ROCKY: Cut it out, I told yuh!

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

NARRATOR: Hickey appears in the rear doorway--arms piled 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 watch 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, Poill?

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 was 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.

2296 like, I can't spend my life sitting here with you,
 2297 ruining my stomach with rotgut. I'm tapering off, and in
 2298 the morning I'll be fresh as a daisy. I'll have me a
 2299 private chat with the Commissioner. [with forced
 2300 enthusiasm] Man alive, from what the boys tell me,
 2301 there's sugar galore these days, and I'll soon be
 2302 ridin' around in a big red automobile--

2303 ED [derisively--in a Chinese accent]: One Lung Hop put
 2304 fresh peanut oil in lamp and cook Lieutenant nice fine
 2305 poppy! It Lieutenant night off!

2306 MAC [stung--pulls back a fist threateningly]:
 2307 One more crack like that and I'll [knock your]--!

2308 ED [putting up his fists]: Yeah? You start it--!

2309 ROCKY: Hey--are you guys nuts--it's de Boss's boithday
 2310 party--sit down and behave!

2311 ED [grumpily]: All right--only tell him to lay off me.

2312 MAC [grumpily]: And tell him to lay off me.

2313 NARRATOR: Hickey bursts in from the hall, excited.

2314 HICKEY: Everything all set? Fine--half a minute to go--
 2315 Bess's starting down with Jimmy. I had a hard time
 2316 getting them to move--they'd rather stay hiding up
 2317 there, kidding each other along. [He chuckles.]
 2318 Bess don't even wanna remember it's her birthday now!
 2319 [There's a noise from the stairs.] Here they come!
 2320 [urgently] Light the candles! Get ready to play, Cora!
 2321 Stand up, everybody! Get that champagne ready, boys!

2322 NARRATOR: Rocky and Chuck go behind the bar. Margie and
 2323 Pearl light the candles on the cake. Cora puts her hands
 2324 over the piano keys. Everybody at the table stands up--
 2325 Hugo the last, suddenly coming to and scrambling to his
 2326 feet. Bess and Jimmy appear from the hall, and Hickey
 2327 looks up from his watch.

2328 HICKEY: On the dot--it's twelve! [like a cheerleader]
 2329 Come on now, everybody:

2330 HICKEY/WILLIE/PEARL/MAGGIE/CORA/ROCKY/CHUCK/JOE/
 2331 THE CAPTAIN/THE GENERAL [spiritless except Hickey]:
 2332 Happy Birthday, Bess!

2333 [Cora begins playing.]

2449 HICKEY [ignoring this--with a kidding grin]: I'll bet
 2450 when you admit the truth to yourself, you'll confess you
 2451 were pretty sick of her hatin' you for getting' drunk.
 2452 I'll bet you were really damned relieved when she gave
 2453 ya such a good excuse. [pause] I know how it is, Jimmy.
 2454 [then losing his confidence and becoming confused]
 2455 I know how it is...

2456 LARRY [seizing on this with vindictive relish]:
 2457 Ha! So that's what happened to you, is it? Your iceman
 2458 joke finally came home to roost. [He grins tauntingly.]
 2459 You should have remembered there's truth in the old
 2460 saying you'd better look out what you call because in
 2461 the end it comes to you!

2462 HICKEY--[himself again--grins to Larry kiddingly]
 2463 Is that a fact. Well, well! Then you'd better watch out
 2464 how you keep calling for that Big Sleep! [abruptly
 2465 changing back to his jovial, master-of-ceremonies self]
 2466 But what are we waitin' for, boys and girls? Let's start
 2467 the party rollin'! [He shouts to the bar] Hey Chuck and
 2468 Rocky--bring on the big surprise! Bess, you sit at the
 2469 head of the table, here. Come on, girls, sit down.

2470 ROCKY [with forced cheeriness]: Real champagne, bums!
 2471 Cheer up! What is dis, a funeral? Jeez, mixin' champagne
 2472 wid Bess's redeye'll knock yuh paralyzed--ain't yuh
 2473 never satisfied?

2474 NARRATOR: After he and Chuck finish filling up the
 2475 schooners, they grab the last two themselves and
 2476 sit down in the remaining chairs. As they do, Hickey
 2477 raises--schooner in hand.

2478 HICKEY: This time I'm going to drink with you all,
 2479 Larry--to prove I'm not teetotal because I'm afraid
 2480 booze would make me spill my secrets, as you think.
 2481 [brief pause] I don't need booze or anything else any
 2482 more but I wanna be sociable and propose a toast in
 2483 honor of our good friend, Bess, and drink it with ya.
 2484 [pause] Wake up our demon bomb-tosser, Chuck--we don't
 2485 want corpses at this feast.

2486 CHUCK [gives Hugo a shake]: Hey, Hugo, come up for air--
 2487 don't yuh see de champagne?

2488 HUGO [giggling]: Ve will eat birthday cake and trink
 2489 champagner beneath the villow tree!

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

than ever! Like Hickey says, it's going to be a new day!
This dump has got to be run like other dumps, so I can
make some money and not just split even. People has got
to pay what they owe me! I'm not runnin' a damned orphan
asylum for bums and crooks! Nor a God-damned hooker
shanty, either! Nor an Old Men's Home for lousy
Anarchist tramps that ought to be in jail! I'm sick of
being played for a sucker!

NARRATOR: They stare at her in stunned bewilderment--
yet she goes on as if she hated herself for every word,
but can't stop.

BESS HOPE: And don't think you're kiddin' me right now,
either! I know damned well you're giving me the laugh
behind my back, thinking to yourselves: that old, lyin',
pipe-dreamin' bitch, we've heard her bull about taking a
walk around the ward for years, she'll never make it--
she's yella, she ain't got the guts, she's scared you'll
find out--[She glares around almost with hatred] But
I'll show ya, bejeez! [Pause] I'll show you, too, ya
son of a bitch of a frying-pan-peddlin' bastard!

HICKEY [heartily encouraging]: That's the stuff, Bess!
Of course you'll show me--that's what I want you to do!

NARRATOR: Bess glances at him with helpless dread.
Dropping her eyes, she looks furtively around the table.
All at once she becomes miserably sorry.

BESS HOPE [her voice catching]: Listen, all o' ya!
Bejeez, forgive me--I lost my temper! I ain't feeling
well--I got a hell of a grouch on! Bejeez, you know
you're all as welcome here as the flowers in May!

ROCKY: Sure, Boss--you're always aces wid us, see?

NARRATOR: Hickey again rises to his feet.

HICKEY [with the convincing sincerity of one making a
confession of which he is genuinely ashamed]:
Listen, everybody--I know you're sick of my gabbin'--
but I think this is where I owe ya an explanation and an
apology for some of the rough stuff I've had to pull on
ya. I know how it must look--as if I was a damned
busybody, not only interferin' in your private business,
but sickin' some of ya onto one another. Well I have to
admit that's true, and I'm damned sorry about it. But it
had to be done. You know old Hickey--I was never one to
start trouble--but this time I had to--for your own

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.

Next to them sits Parritt, who stares straight ahead--
tense and strained.

Finishing his work, Rocky comes out from behind the bar
and drops wearily into a chair.

ROCKY: Nuttin' now till de noon rush from de Market--
I'm goin' to rest my fanny. [*irritably*] If I ain't a sap
to let Chuck talk me into workin' his shift. But I got
sick of arguin' wid 'im. I says, "Aw right, git married,
what's it to me?" Hickey's got de bot' of dem bugs.
[*bitterly*] Some party last night, huh? Jeez, what a
funeral! It was jinxed from de start, but his tellin'
about his wife croakin' put de K.O. on it.

LARRY: Yes, it wasn't a birthday party but a wake!

ROCKY: Him promisin' he'd cut out de bughouse bull about
peace--and den he went on talkin' and talkin'! And all
de gang sneakin' upstairs, leavin' free booze and eats
like dey was poison! Didn't do dem no good neider--he's
been hoppin' from room to room all night. And dis
mornin' he's got his Reform Wave goin' strong--did yuh
notice him drag Jimmy out foist ting to get his laundry
and his clothes pressed so he wouldn't have no excuse?
And he give Willie de dough to buy his stuff back from
Solly's. And all de rest been brushin' and shavin'
demselves wid de shakes.

LARRY [*defiantly*]: He didn't come to my room!
He's afraid I might ask him a few questions.

ROCKY [*scornfully*] Yeah? It don't look to me he's scared
of yuh. I'd say you was scared o' him.

LARRY [*stung*]: You'd lie, then!

PARRITT [*jerks round to look at Larry--sneeringly*]:
Don't let him kid you, Rocky--he had his door locked--
I couldn't get in, either.

ROCKY: Yeah, who d'yuh tink yuh're kiddin', Larry?
He's showed you up, aw right. Like he says, if yuh was
so anxious to croak, why wouldn't yuh hop off your
fire escape, huh?

LARRY [*defiantly*]: Because it'd be a coward's way out,
that's why!

PARRITT: He's all quitter, Rocky--he's a old yellow
faker!

2729 LARRY [turns on him]: You lyin' punk--remember what I
2730 warned you--!

2731 ROCKY [scowls at Parritt]: Yeah, keep outta dis, you!
2732 Where d'yuh get a license to butt in? Shall I give him
2733 de bum's rush, Larry? If you don't want him around,
2734 nobody else don't.

2735 LARRY [forcing an indifferent tone]: Na--let him stay--
2736 I don't mind him--he's nothing to me.

2737 ROCKY: A'right. [yawns sleepily]

2738 PARRITT [to Larry]: You're right--I have nowhere to go.
2739 You're the only one I can turn to.

2740 ROCKY [drowsily]: Yuh're a soft old sap, Larry--he's a
2741 no-good louse like Hickey--he don't belong. [yawns
2742 again] I'm all in--not a wink of sleep--can't keep my
2743 peepers open.

2744 NARRATOR: No sooner than Rocky's eyes close and his head
2745 nods, Parritt slinks over to the chair next to Larry.

2746 PARRITT--[bending toward him--in a low, ingratiating,
2747 apologetic voice] I'm sorry for riding you, Larry.
2748 But you get my goat when you act as if you don't give a
2749 damn what happens to me, and keep your door locked so I
2750 can't talk to you. [then hopefully] But that was to keep
2751 Hickey out, wasn't it? I don't blame you--I'm getting to
2752 hate him. I'm getting more and more scared of him--
2753 especially since he told us his wife was dead--it's that
2754 strange feeling he gives me that I'm mixed up with him
2755 somehow. I don't know why, but it started me thinkin'
2756 about Mother--as if she was dead. [with a strange
2757 undercurrent of something like satisfaction in his
2758 pitying tone] I suppose she might as well be--inside,
2759 I mean. It must kill her when she thinks of me. I know
2760 she doesn't want to, but she can't help it. After all,
2761 I'm her only kid. She used to spoil me and make a
2762 pet o' me--once in a while--when she remembered me.
2763 As if she wanted to make up for something--as if she
2764 felt guilty. So she musta loved me a little, even if she
2765 never let it interfere with her freedom. [with a strange
2766 pathetic wistfulness] Do you know, Larry, I once had a
2767 sneaking suspicion that maybe you were my father.

2768 LARRY [violently]: Ya damned fool--who put that
2769 insane idea in your head? Anyone in the Coast crowd

2770 could tell ya I never laid eyes on your mother till
2771 after you were born.

2772 PARRITT: Well I'd hardly ask them, would I? I know
2773 you're right though, because I asked her. She brought me
2774 up to be frank and ask her anything, and she'd always
2775 tell me the truth. [abruptly] But I was talkin' about
2776 how she must feel now about me--my bein' through with
2777 the Movement. She'll never forgive that--the Movement's
2778 her life--it must be the final knockout for her if she
2779 knows I was the one who [sold her out]--

2780 LARRY: Shut up, god damn you!

2781 PARRITT: It'll kill 'er--and I'm sure she knows it must
2782 have been me. [suddenly with desperate urgency] But I
2783 never thought the cops would get 'er--you've got to
2784 believe me--you've got to see what my reason was--
2785 I admit what I told you last night was a lie--about
2786 being patriotic and all that--but here's the real
2787 reason, Larry--the only reason--it was just for money--
2788 I got stuck on a whore and wanted dough to blow on her
2789 and have a good time--that's all I did it for--just
2790 money--honest!

2791 NARRATOR: Larry grabs him and shakes him.

2792 LARRY: God damn you, shut up! What the hell is it to me?

2793 ROCKY [startled awake]: What's goin' on here?

2794 LARRY [controlling himself]: Nothing--this gabby young
2795 punk was talking my ear off, that's all. He's a worse
2796 pest than Hickey.

2797 ROCKY [drowsily]: Yeah, Hickey...Say, what did yuh
2798 mean about him bein' scared you'd ask him questions?
2799 What questions?

2800 LARRY: Well, I feel he's hiding somethin'--you notice he
2801 didn't say what his wife died of.

2802 ROCKY [rebukingly]: Aw, c'mon--de poor guy--what are yuh
2803 gettin' at, anyway--yuh don't tink it's just a gag of
2804 his?

2805 LARRY: No I don't--I'm damned sure he's brought death
2806 here with 'im--I feel the cold touch of it on him.

2807 ROCKY: Aw, you got croakin' on de brain, Old Cemetery.
2808 [Suddenly Rocky's eyes widen.] Say! D'yuh mean yuh tink

2809 she committed suicide, 'count of his cheatin' or
 2810 sometin'?

2811 LARRY [grimly]: It wouldn't surprise me.

2812 ROCKY [scornfully]: But dat's crazy--jeez, if she'd done
 2813 dat, he wouldn't tell us he was glad about it, would he?
 2814 He ain't dat big a bastard.

2815 PARRITT--[speaks from his own preoccupation--strangely]
 2816 You know better than that, Larry--you know she'd never
 2817 commit suicide--she's like you--she'll hang on to life
 2818 even when there's nothing left but--

2819 LARRY [stung--turns on him viciously]: And how about
 2820 you? By God if you had any guts or decency [left in
 2821 you]--!

2822 PARRITT [sneeringly]: I'd take that hop off your
 2823 fire escape you're too yellow to take, right?

2824 LARRY [as if to himself]: No! Who am I to judge--
 2825 I'm done with judging.

2826 PARRITT [tauntingly]: You'd like that, wouldn't you?
 2827 Wouldn't you?

2828 ROCKY [irritably mystified]: What de hell's all dis
 2829 about? [to Parritt] What d'you know about Hickey's wife?
 2830 How d'yuh know she didn't [croak herself]--?

2831 LARRY [with forced belittling casualness]: He doesn't--
 2832 Hickey's addled the little brains he's got. Shove him
 2833 back to his own table, Rocky--I'm sick of him.

2834 ROCKY [to Parritt, threateningly]: Yuh heard Larry--
 2835 I'd like an excuse to give yuh a good punch in de
 2836 snoot--so move quick!

2837 [Parritt moves to another table.]

2838 ROCKY [going back to his train of thought]: Jeez, if she
 2839 committed suicide, yuh can understand how he'd go
 2840 bughouse and not be responsible for all de crazy stunts
 2841 he's pullin' here. [then puzzledly] But how can yuh be
 2842 sorry for him when he says he's glad she croaked, and
 2843 yuh can tell he means it? [with weary exasperation]
 2844 Aw, nuts--ya don't get nowhere tryin' to figger his
 2845 game. [face hardening] But I know dis--he better lay off
 2846 me and my stable! [He pauses--then sighs.] Jeez, Larry,
 2847 what a night dem two pigs give me! When de party went

2848 dead, dey pinched a coupla bottles and brung dem up ta
 2849 deir room and got stinko. I don't get a wink of sleep,
 2850 see? Just as I'd drop off--here--in my chair, dey'd come
 2851 down lookin' for trouble. Or else dey'd raise hell
 2852 upstairs, laughin' and singin', so I'd get scared dey'd
 2853 get de joint pinched and go up to tell dem to can it--
 2854 and every time dey'd gimme de same old ahgument--dey'd
 2855 say, "So yuh agree wid Hickey, do yuh, yuh dirty little
 2856 Ginny? We're whores, are we? Well, we agree wid Hickey
 2857 about you, see! Yuh're nuttin' but a lousy pimp!"
 2858 Den I'd slap 'em--not beat 'em up, like a pimp would--
 2859 just slap dem--but it don't do no good--dey'd keep at it
 2860 ovah and ovah. Jeez, I get de earache just tinkin' of
 2861 it! "Listen," dey'd say, "if we're whores we gotta right
 2862 to have a reg'lar pimp and not stand for no punk
 2863 imitation! We're sick of wearin' out our dogs poundin'
 2864 sidewalks for a double-crossin' bahtender, when all de
 2865 tanks we gets is he looks down on us. We'll find a guy
 2866 who really needs us to take care of him and ain't
 2867 ashamed of it. Don't expect us to woik tonight, 'cause
 2868 we won't, see? Not if de streets was blocked wid
 2869 sailors--we're goin' on strike and yuh can like it or
 2870 lump it!" [He shakes his head.] Whores goin' on strike!
 2871 Can yuh tie dat? [going on with his story] Dey says,
 2872 "We're takin' a holiday--we're goin' to beat it down to
 2873 Coney Island. An' maybe we'll come back and maybe we
 2874 won't. And you can go to hell!" Can you believe dat,
 2875 Larry?

2876 NARRATOR: But Larry hasn't heard--he's deep in thought.
 2877 Chuck enters from the rear doorway wearing his Sunday-
 2878 best suit. A straw hat with a gaudy band is in his hand
 2879 and he looks hot, uncomfortable and grouchy.

2880 CHUCK [glumly]: Hey, Rocky--Cora wants a sherry flip--
 2881 for her noives.

2882 ROCKY [turns indignantly]: Sherry flip! Christ, what's
 2883 she tink dis is, de Waldorf?

2884 CHUCK: Yeah, I told 'er, what would we use for sherry,
 2885 and dere wouldn't be no egg unless she laid one.
 2886 She says, "Is dere a law yuh can't go out and buy de
 2887 makin's, yuh big tramp?" [resentfully] To hell wid 'er--
 2888 she'll drink booze or nuttin'!

2889 ROCKY: Look at de bridegroom, Larry--all dolled up for
 2890 de killin'!

2891 CHUCK: Aw, shut up!

2892 ROCKY: One week on dat farm in Joisey, dat's what I give
 2893 yuh! Yuh'll come runnin' in here some night yellin' for
 2894 a shot of booze 'cause de crickets is after yuh!
 2895 [disgustedly] Jeez, Chuck, dat louse Hickey's coitinly
 2896 made a prize coupla suckers outa youse.

2897 CHUCK [unguardedly]: Yeah, I'd like to give him one sock
 2898 in de jaw--just one! [then angrily] Aw, what's he got to
 2899 do wid it--ain't we always said we was goin' to?
 2900 So we're goin' to, see--and don't give me no ahgument!
 2901 [pause] If on'y she'd cut out de beefin'--she don't
 2902 gimme a minute's rest--same old stuff ovah and ovah--
 2903 do I really wanna marry her? I says, "Sure, Baby, why
 2904 not?" She says, "Yeah, but after a week yuh'll be
 2905 tinkin' what a sap you was--yuh'll make dat an excuse to
 2906 go off on a periodical--and den I'll be tied for life to
 2907 a no-good soak, and de foist ting I know yuh'll have me
 2908 out hustlin' again, your own wife!" Den she'd bust out
 2909 cryin' and I'd get sore. "Yuh're a liar," I'd say.
 2910 "I ain't never taken your dough 'cept when I was drunk
 2911 and not workin'!" "Yeah," she'd say, "and how long will
 2912 yuh stay sober now? Don't tink yuh can kid me wid dat
 2913 I'm-on-the-wagon bull--I've heard it too often." Dat'd
 2914 make me sore and I'd say, "I wish I was drunk right now,
 2915 because if I was, yuh wouldn't be keepin' me awake all
 2916 night beefin'--and if yuh opened your yap, I'd knock de
 2917 stuffin' outa yuh!" Den she'd yell, "Dat's a sweet way
 2918 to talk to de goil yuh're goin' to marry." [He sighs
 2919 explosively.] Jeez, would I like to get a quart of
 2920 redeye under my belt!

2921 ROCKY: Why de hell don't yuh?

2922 CHUCK [instantly suspicious and angry]: Sure--you'd like
 2923 dat, wouldn't yuh? Yuh don't wanta see me get married
 2924 and settle down like a reg'lar guy--yuh'd like me to
 2925 stay paralyzed all de time, so I is like you, a lousy
 2926 pimp!

2927 ROCKY [face hardening]: Listen--I don't take dat
 2928 even from you, see!

2929 CHUCK: Don't make me laugh--I can lick ten of yuhs wid
 2930 one mit!

2931 ROCKY [reaching for his hip pocket] Not wid lead in your
 2932 belly, yuh won't!

2933 JOE: Hey you two--cut it out! You's ole friends--don't
2934 let dat Hickey make you crazy!

2935 CHUCK [turns on him]: Keep out of it, yuh black bastard!

2936 ROCKY: Stay where yuh belong, yuh doity dinge!

2937 NARRATOR: Joe springs from behind the counter--
2938 bread knife in his hand.

2939 JOE [snarling with rage]: You white sons of bitches--
2940 I'll rip your guts out!

2941 NARRATOR: As Chuck raises a bottle above his head--and
2942 Rocky jerks a small revolver from his pocket--Larry
2943 pounds hard with his fist on the table.

2944 LARRY: That's it--murder each other, you damned loons!
2945 With Hickey's blessing! Didn't I tell you he's brought
2946 death with him?

2947 NARRATOR: Startled by his interruption, their fury melts
2948 and they look deflated and sheepish.

2949 ROCKY: Aw right...

2950 CHUCK: Yeah...

2951 JOE: Okay...

2952 HUGO [giggles foolishly]: Hello, leedle peoples!
2953 Naffer mind--soon you will eat hot dogs beneath the
2954 willow trees. [abruptly in a haughty fastidious tone]
2955 But the champagner vas not properly iced. [with guttural
2956 anger] Gottamned liar, Hickey! Does zat prove I vant to
2957 be aristocrat? I love only the proletariat! I will
2958 lead them! I vill be like a Gott to zem! They will be my
2959 slaves! [He stops in bewildered self-amazement] I am
2960 very trunk, no, Larry? I talk foolish--I am so trunk,
2961 Larry, old friend--I do not know vhat I say?

2962 LARRY [pityingly]: You're raving drunk, Hugo--I've never
2963 seen you so paralyzed--lay your head down now and
2964 sleep it off.

2965 HUGO [gratefully]: Yes, I vill sleep--I am too crazy
2966 trunk.

2967 JOE [behind the lunch counter--brooding]: You's right,
2968 Larry--bad luck come in de door when Hickey come.
2969 I's an ole gamblin' man and I knows bad luck when I
2970 feels it! [then defiantly] But it's white man's

2971 bad luck--it can't jinx me! [pause--clears his throat--
2972 then stiffly]: De bread's cut, Rocky and I's finished my
2973 job. Do I get de drink I's earned?

2974 NARRATOR: Rocky gives him a hostile look but shoves a
2975 bottle and glass at him.

2976 [Joe pours a drink.]

2977 JOE [sullenly]: I's finished wid dis dump for keeps.
2978 [takes a key from his pocket and slaps it on the bar]
2979 Here's de key to my room--I ain't comin' back--I's goin'
2980 to my own folks where I belong--I don't stay where
2981 I's not wanted--I's sick and tired of messin' round
2982 wid white men.

2983 NARRATOR: Gulping down his drink, he looks around
2984 defiantly then smashes his whiskey glass on the floor.

2985 [Smashing glass.]

2986 ROCKY: What de hell--!

2987 JOE [with a sneering dignity]: I's on'y savin' you de
2988 trouble, White Boy. Now you don't have to break it,
2989 soon as my back's turned, so's no white man complains
2990 about drinkin' from de same glass.

2991 NARRATOR: Walking stiffly to the street door, he turns
2992 for a parting shot.

2993 JOE [boastfully]: I's tired of loafin' 'round wid a lot
2994 of bums--I's a gamblin' man--I's gonna get in a big
2995 crap game and win me a big bankroll. Den I'll open up my
2996 gamblin' joint for colored men. Den maybe I comes back
2997 here sometime to see de bums--maybe I throw a hundred
2998 dolla bill on de bar and say, "Drink it up," and listen
2999 when dey all pat me on de back and say, "Joe, you sure
3000 is white." But I'll say, "No, I'm black and my dough is
3001 black man's dough, and you's proud to drink wid me or
3002 you don't get no drink!" Or maybe I just says, "You can
3003 all go to hell--I don't lower myself drinkin' wid no
3004 white trash!" [Joe opens the door and turns back around]
3005 And dat ain't no pipe dream! I'll git de money for my
3006 stake, somehow, somewheres--if I has to get me a gun and
3007 stick up some white man, I gets it--you wait and see!

3008 [He swaggers out through the swinging doors.]

3009 CHUCK [angrily]: Can yuh beat de noive of dat dinge!
3010 Jeez, if I wasn't dressed up, I'd go out and mop up de
3011 street wid him!

3012 ROCKY: Aw, let him go, de poor old dope! He'll be back
3013 tonight askin' Bess for his room and bummin' me for a
3014 drink. [vengefully] Den I'll be de one to smash de
3015 glass--I'll loin him his place!

3016 NARRATOR: The street doors swing open and Willie enters:
3017 face shaved, wearing an expensive suit, good shoes and
3018 clean linen. Though he's completely sober, he looks sick
3019 and he has a mean case of the shakes. He heads for the
3020 bar.

3021 CHUCK: Another guy all dolled up! Got your clothes from
3022 Solly's, huh, Willie? [derisively] Now yuh can sell dem
3023 back to him tomorrow.

3024 WILLIE [stiffly]: No, I--I'm through with that stuff--
3025 never again.

3026 ROCKY [sympathetically]: Yuh look sick, Willie--have a
3027 drink to pick yuh up.

3028 WILLIE [clears his throat, nervously]: No thanks--the
3029 only way to stop is to stop--I'd have no chance if I
3030 went to the D.A.'s office smelling of booze.

3031 CHUCK: Yuh're really goin' dere?

3032 WILLIE [stiffly]: I said I was, didn't I? I just came
3033 back here to rest a few minutes--not because I needed
3034 any booze. I'll show that cheap drummer I don't have to
3035 have any Dutch courage--[guiltily] But he has been very
3036 kind and generous staking me. He can't help his
3037 insulting manner, I suppose.

3038 NARRATOR: He turns away from the bar.

3039 WILLIE: My legs are a bit shaky--I better sit down a
3040 while.

3041 NARRATOR: He goes and sits across from Parritt, who
3042 gives him a suspicious glance then ignores him.

3043 The Captain appears from the hall.

3044 CHUCK [mutter]: Here's anudder one.

3045 NARRATOR: The Captain looks spruced and clean-shaven--
3046 his ancient tweed suit is brushed and his frayed linen

is clean. Though full of a put-on self-assurance,
he's sick--and his face shows it.

THE CAPTAIN: Good morning, gentlemen. [clears throat]
A jolly fine morning, too.

NARRATOR: He approaches the bar.

THE CAPTAIN: An eye-opener? No, I think not--
not required, Rocky, old chum. Feel extremely fit, as a
matter of fact. Though can't say I slept much, thanks to
that interfering ass, Hickey, and that stupid bounder of
a Boer. [His face hardens.] I've had about all I can
take from that fellow--it's my own fault, of course, for
allowing a brute of a Dutch farmer to become familiar.
Well, it's come to a parting of the ways now, and
good riddance--which reminds me, here's my key. [Key
slapped on bar.] I shan't be coming back. Sorry to be
leaving good old Bess and the rest of you, of course,
but I can't continue to live under the same roof with
that fellow.

NARRATOR: He stiffens with hostility as The General
enters from the hall. He, too, has made an effort to
spruce up his appearance. But behind a forced swagger,
he is sick and feebly holding his booze-sodden body
together.

ROCKY [disgustedly]: So Hickey's kidded the pants offa
you, too? Yuh tink yuh're leavin' here, huh, Captain?

THE GENERAL [jeeringly] Ja! Dot's vhat he kids hisself.

THE CAPTAIN [ignores him--airily]: Yes, I'm leaving.
But that ass, Hickey, has nothing to do with it.
Been thinking things over. Time I turned over a
new leaf, and all that.

THE GENERAL: He's going ta get job--dot's what he says!

ROCKY: What at, for Christ sake?

THE CAPTAIN [keeping his airy manner]: Oh, anything--
I mean, not manual labor, naturally, but anything that
calls for a bit of brains and education--however humble.
Beggars can't be choosers. I'll see a pal of mine at the
Consulate. He promised any time I felt an energetic fit
he'd get me a post with the Cunard--clark in the office
or something of the kind.

THE GENERAL: Ja--at Limey Consulate dey say anything to get rid of him vhen he comes dere tronk! Dey're scared to call police because it would scandal in de papers make about Limey officer and chentleman!

THE CAPTAIN: As a matter of fact, Rocky, I only wish a post temporarily. Means to an end, you know--save up enough for a first-class passage home, that's the bright idea.

THE GENERAL: He sail back ta home, sweet home--dot's biggest pipe dream of all. What leetle brain the Limey has left, dot isn't in whiskey pickled, Hickey has made crazy!

CHUCK [feeling sorry for The Captain and turning on The General--sarcastically] Hickey ain't made no sucker outa you--you're too foxy, huh? I'll betcha tink yuh're gonna land a job, too.

THE GENERAL [bristles]: I am, ja. For me, it is easy--because I put on no airs of chentleman. I am not ashamed to vork vith my hands. I vas a farmer before de war ven ploody Limey's steal my country. [boastfully] Anyone I ask for job can see vith one look I have strength of ten mens!

THE CAPTAIN [sneeringly]: Yes, he gave an ample demonstration of this incredible strength last night when he helped move the piano.

CHUCK: Yuh couldn't even hold up your corner--it was your fault de damned box almost fell down de stairs.

THE GENERAL: My hands vas sweaty--could I help dot my hands slip? I could de whole veight of it lift! In old days in Transvaal, I lift loaded oxcart by de axle! So vhy shouldn't I get job? Dot longshoreman boss, Dan, he tell me any time I like, he take me on. And Benny from de Market he promise me same.

THE CAPTAIN: You remember, Rocky, it was one of those rare occasions when the Boer was buying drinks and Dan and Benny were stony--they'd bloody well have promised him the moon.

ROCKY: Yeah, yuh big boob, dem boids was on'y kiddin' yuh.

THE GENERAL [angrily]: Dot's lie! You vill see dis morning I get job! I'll show dot bloody Limey

3127 chentleman, and dot liar, Hickey! Und I need vork only
 3128 leetle vhile to save money for passage home. I need not
 3129 much money because I am not ashamed to travel steerage.
 3130 I don't put on first-cabin airs! [tauntingly] Und I can
 3131 go home to my country! Vhen I get dere, dey vill let me
 3132 come in!

3133 THE CAPTAIN [grows rigid--his voice trembling with
 3134 repressed anger]: There was a rumor in South Africa,
 3135 Rocky, that a certain Boer officer--if you call the
 3136 leaders of a rabble of farmers officers--kept advising
 3137 Cronje to retreat--not stand and fight--

3138 THE GENERAL: And I vas right--I vas right--he got
 3139 surrounded at Poardeberg--und had to surrender!

3140 THE CAPTAIN [ignoring him]: Good strategy, no doubt,
 3141 but a suspicion grew afterwards into a conviction among
 3142 the Boers that the officer's caution was prompted by a
 3143 desire to make his personal escape. His countrymen felt
 3144 extremely savage about it, and his family disowned him--
 3145 so I imagine there would be no welcoming committee
 3146 waiting on the dock, nor delighted relatives making the
 3147 veldt ring with their happy cries--

3148 THE GENERAL [with guilty rage]: All lies--you Gottamned
 3149 Limey--[trying to control himself] I also haf heard de
 3150 rumors of a Limey officer who, after de war, lost all
 3151 his money gambling vhen he vas tronk. Den they found out
 3152 it vas regiment money, too, he lost--

3153 NARRATOR: The Captain loses control and starts for him.

3154 THE CAPTAIN: You bloody Dutch scum!

3155 NARRATOR: Rocky leans over the bar and delivers a
 3156 straight-arm to the chest of The Captain.

3157 ROCKY: Cut it out!

3158 NARRATOR: Having grabbed The General, Chuck yanks him
 3159 back.

3160 THE GENERAL [struggling]: Let him come! I saw dem come
 3161 before--at Modder River waving deir silly swords,
 3162 so afraid they could not show off how brave they vas!--
 3163 and I kill them vith my rifle so easy! [vindictively]
 3164 Listen to me, Captain! Often vhen I am tronk and kidding
 3165 you I say sorry I missed you, but now, py Gott, I am
 3166 sober, and I don't joke, and I say it!

LARRY [gives a sardonic guffaw--with his comically crazy, intense whisper]: By God, you can't say Hickey hasn't the miraculous touch to raise the dead, when he can start the Boer War raging again!

NARRATOR: This interruption acts like cold water on the two adversaries--they uncoil, and Rocky and Chuck let go of them.

THE CAPTAIN [attempting a return of his jaunty manner, as if nothing had happened]: Well, time I was on my merry way to see my chap at the Consulate. The early bird catches the worm, and all that. Good-bye and good luck, everyone.

NARRATOR: He starts for the door to the street.

THE GENERAL: Py Gott, if dot Limey can go, I can go!

NARRATOR: He hurries after The Captain, who is about to push the swinging doors open when he hesitates, as though struck by paralysis, and The General has to jerk back to avoid bumping into him. For a second they stand there, one behind the other, staring over the swinging doors into the street.

ROCKY: Well why don't yuh beat it?

THE CAPTAIN [guiltily casual]: Eh? Oh just happened to think--hardly the decent thing to pop off without saying good-bye to ol' Bess--one of the finest, Bess is. And good old Jimmy, too--they ought to be down any moment.

NARRATOR: He pretends to notice The General for the first time and steps away from the door.

THE CAPTAIN [apologizing as to a stranger]: Sorry, I seem to be blocking your way out.

THE GENERAL [stiffly]: No, I vait to say bye to Bess and Jimmy, too.

NARRATOR: Both retire to barstools at opposite ends of the bar.

CHUCK: Jeez, can yuh beat dem simps!

NARRATOR: He spots Cora's drink on the bar.

CHUCK: Hell, I forgot Cora--she'll be trowin' a fit.

NARRATOR: He disappears with the drink into the hall.

ROCKY [in disgust]: Dat's right, wait on her and
spoil her, yuh poor sap!

NARRATOR: He shakes his head and begins to mechanically
wipe the bar.

Willie regards Parritt across the table with a
calculating eye.

WILLIE: [leaning over, in a low confidential tone.]
Look here, Parritt--I'd like to have a talk with you.

PARRITT [scowling defensively]: What about?

WILLIE [his manner becoming his idea of a crafty
criminal lawyer's] About the trouble you're in.
Oh, I know--you don't admit it--you're quite right--
that's my advice--deny everything--keep your mouth shut.
Make no statements whatsoever without first consulting
your attorney.

PARRITT: Say! What the hell--?

WILLIE: But you can trust me--I'm a lawyer, and it's
just occurred to me you and I ought to co-operate.
Of course I'm going to see the D.A. this morning about a
job on his staff. But that may take time--there may not
be an immediate opening. Meanwhile it would be a
good idea for me to take a case or two, on my own--
prove my brilliant record in law school was no
flash in the pan. So why not retain me as your attorney?

PARRITT: You're crazy--what do I want with a lawyer?

WILLIE: That's right--don't admit anything--but you can
trust me, so let's not beat around the bush--you got in
trouble out on the Coast--and now you're hiding out--
any fool can see that. [lowering his voice even more]
You feel safe here, and maybe you are, for a while--
but remember, they get you in the end--I know from my
father's experience--no one could have felt safer than
he did. When anyone mentioned the law to him, he nearly
died laughing. But--

PARRITT: You crazy mutt! [turning to Larry with a
strained laugh] Did you get that, Larry? This damned
fool thinks the cops are after me!

LARRY [bursts out with his true reaction before he
thinks to ignore him] I wish to God they were--and so
should you, if you had the honor of a louse!

PARRITT: 'Cha--and you're the guy who kids himself he's through with the Movement! You old lying faker, you're still in love with it! [In a low, insinuating, intimate tone]: I think I finally understand. It's really Mother you still love--isn't it?--in spite of the dirty deal she gave you. But hell, what did you expect? She was never true to anyone but herself and the Movement. But I understand how you can't help still feeling--because I still love her, too. [pleading in a strained, desperate tone] You know I do, don't you--you have to! You don't think I believed they would actually catch her, do you? You've got to believe me--I did it just to get a few lousy dollars to blow on a whore--no other reason, honest--there couldn't possibly be any other reason!

LARRY [trying not to listen, has listened too well]: For the love of Christ will you leave me in peace--I've told you you can't make me judge you--but if you don't shut up, you'll be sayin' something soon that will make you vomit your own soul like a drink of nickel rotgut that won't stay down! To hell with ya!

NARRATOR: He pushes back his chair, gets to his feet and goes to the bar.

LARRY: Set me up, Rocky. I swore I'd have no more drinks on Hickey, if I died of drought, but I've changed my mind! By God, he owes it to me, and I'll get blind to the world now if it was the Iceman of Death himself treating!

ROCKY: Aw, forget dat iceman gag--de poor lady's dead! [setting a bottle and glass before Larry] Gwan and get paralyzed! I'll be glad to see one bum in dis dump act natural.

NARRATOR: As Larry downs a drink and pours another, Ed appears from the hall. Sick, nerves shattered, eyes fearful, he, too, puts on an overly self-confident air as he saunters to the bar.

ED: Morning, Rocky. Hello, Larry. Glad to see Brother Hickey hasn't corrupted you to temperance. I wouldn't mind a shot myself. [Rocky shoves a bottle in front of him.] But--I remember the only breath-killer in this dump is coffee beans--the boss would never fall for that. No man who runs a circus would believe guys chew coffee beans because they like them. No, as much as I

need one after the hell of a night I've had-- [Scowls]
That son of a drummer--I had to lock him out. But I
could hear him through the wall doing his spiel to
someone all night long. He was still at it with Jimmy
and Bess when I came down just now. But the hardest to
take was that flatfoot Mac trying to tell me where
to get off! I had to lock him out, too.

NARRATOR: As he says this, Mac appears from the hall.
The change in his appearance and manner is identical to
Ed's and the others.

Mac: He's a liar, Rocky--it was me locked him out!

WILLIE: Come and sit here, Mac--you're just the man
I want to see--if I'm to take your case, we oughta have
a talk before we leave.

Mac [contemptuously]: You damned fool--ya think I'd have
your father's son for my lawyer? They'd take one look at
you and bounce us both out on our necks!

NARRATOR: Willie winces and shrinks down in his chair.

MAC: I don't need a lawyer, anyway. To hell with the
law! All I've got to do is see the right guys and get
'em to pass the word--they will, too--they know I was
framed. And once they've passed the word, it's as good
as done--law or no law.

ED: God, I'm glad I'm leaving this madhouse! [Key
unpocketed and slapped on bar.] Here's my key, Rocky.

Mac: And here's mine. [He too slaps key on bar.]
I'd rather sleep in the gutter than spend another night
under the same roof with that loon Hickey, and a lyin'
circus grifter!

NARRATOR: Ed spins on him furiously but Rocky leans over
and grabs his arm.

ROCKY: Take it easy now! [Rocky tosses the keys on the
shelf in disgust] You boids gimme a pain--it'd soive you
right if I didn't give de keys back to yuh tonight.

NARRATOR: They both turn on him resentfully, but there's
an interruption as Cora enters from the hall with Chuck
behind her. She is drunk, dressed in her gaudy best,
her face plastered with rouge and mascara, her hat on
but her hair disheveled.

3326 CORA [with a strained bright giggle]: Hello, everybody!
3327 Here we go! Hickey just told us, ain't it time we beat
3328 it, if we're really goin'--so we're showin' de bastard,
3329 ain't we, Honey? He's comin' right down wid Bess and
3330 Jimmy. Jeez, dem two look like dey was goin' to de
3331 electric chair! [with frightened anger] If I had to
3332 listen to any more of Hickey's bunk, I'd brain him.
3333 [She puts her hand on Chuck's arm.] Come on, Honey--
3334 let's get started before he comes down.

3335 CHUCK [sullenly]: Sure, anyting yuh say, Baby.

3336 CORA [turns on him belligerently]: Yeah? Well I say we
3337 stop at de foist reg'lar dump and yuh buy me a sherry
3338 flip--or four or five, if I want 'em!--or all bets is
3339 off!

3340 CHUCK: Aw, yuh got a fine bun on now!

3341 CORA: Cheapskate! I know what's eatin' you, Tightwad!
3342 Well, use my dough, den, if yuh're so stingy--yuh'll
3343 grab it all, anyway, right after de ceremony!

3344 NARRATOR: She hikes up her skirt and reaches inside her
3345 stocking.

3346 CORA: Here, yuh big tramp!

3347 CHUCK [knocks her hand away--angrily]: Keep your lousy
3348 dough! And don't show off your legs to dese bums when
3349 yuh're goin' to be married, if yuh don't want a sock in
3350 de kissah.

3351 CORA [pleased--meekly]: Aw right, Honey. [looking around
3352 with a foolish laugh] Say, why don't all you barflies
3353 come to de weddin'? [pause--miserably uncertain]:
3354 Well, we're goin', guys. [Long pause] Say, Rocky, yuh
3355 gone deef? I said me and Chuck was goin'.

3356 ROCKY [wiping the bar--with elaborate indifference]:
3357 I hoid ya. Well give my love to Joisey.

3358 CORA [tearfully indignant]: Ain't yuh goin' to wish us
3359 happiness, yuh doity little Ginny?

3360 ROCKY: Sure. Here's hopin' yuh don't moider each odder
3361 before next week.

3362 CHUCK [angrily]: Aw, Baby, what d'we care for dat pimp?

HICKEY [brushing the whiskey off his coat--humorously]:
I needed an alcohol rub anyway! But no hard feelings--
I know how he feels--I wrote the book. There was a day
when if anybody tried to force me to face the truth
about my pipe dreams, I'd have shot 'em dead. [He turns
to Bess--encouragingly] Well, ya brave old gal, Jimmy
made the grade--now it's up to you. If he's got the guts
to go through with it--

LARRY [bursts out]: Leave Bess alone, damn you!

HICKEY [grins at him]: I'd worry about myself if I was
you, Larry, and not bother about Bess--she'll come
through all right--I've promised her that. She doesn't
need anyone's bum pity--do you, Bess?

BESS HOPE [with a pathetic attempt at her old fuming
assertiveness]: No, bejeez--keep your nose out of this,
Larry. What's Hickey got to do with it? I've always been
going to take this walk, ain't I? Bejeez, you bums want
to keep me locked up in here like I was in jail! I've
stood it long enough! I'm free, and I'll do as I damn
well please, bejeez! You keep your nose out, too,
Hickey! You'd think you was boss of this dump, not me.
Sure, I'm all right! Why shouldn't I be? What the hell's
to be scared of, just taking a stroll around my own
ward.

NARRATOR: As she talks, she's been moving toward the
door--now she reaches it.

BESS HOPE: What's the weather like outside, Rocky?

ROCKY: Fine day, Boss.

BESS HOPE: What's that--can't hear ya--don't look fine
to me--looks 's if it'd pour down cats and dogs any
minute. My rheumatism--[She catches herself.] No, must
be my eyes--half blind, bejeez--makes things look black.
I see now it's a fine day--too damned hot for a walk,
though, if you ask me. Well, do me good to sweat the
booze out of me--but I'll have to watch out for the
automobiles--wasn't none of them around twenty years
ago--from what I've seen of 'em through the winda,
they'd run over ya as soon as look at ya--not that I'm
scared of 'em--I can take care of myself.

NARRATOR: She puts a reluctant hand on the
swinging door.

NARRATOR: She pushes the door open and strides blindly out into the street.

ROCKY [in amazement]: Jeez, she made it--I'd a given yuh fifty to one she'd never [go out]--

NARRATOR: He moves to the end of the bar to look out the window.

ROCKY [disgustedly]: Aw, she's stopped. I'll bet yuh she's comin' back.

HICKEY: Of course, she's coming back--so are all the others. By tonight they'll all be here again--that's the whole point.

ROCKY [excitedly]: No, she ain't neider--she's gone to de coib--she's lookin' up and down--scared stiff of automobiles--jeez, dey ain't more'n two an hour comes down dis street, de old scaredy pants!

NARRATOR: He watches as if it were a race he had bet on, oblivious to what happens in the bar.

LARRY [turns on Hickey with bitter defiance]: And now it's my turn, I suppose. What am I to do to achieve this blessed peace of yours?

HICKEY [grins at him]: Why, just stop lying to yourself, Larry.

LARRY: So when I say I'm finished with life--an' I'm tired of watching the stupid greed of the human circus--and that I'll welcome closing my eyes in the long sleep of death--you think that's a coward's lie?

HICKEY [chuckling]: What do you think, Larry?

LARRY [with increasing bitter intensity, as if he were fighting with himself more than Hickey]: I'm afraid to live, am I?--and even more afraid to die! So I sit here, with my pride drowned on the bottom of a bottle, keeping drunk so I won't see myself shaking in my boots with fright, or hear myself whining and praying: Dear Lord, let me live just a little longer at any price--if it's only for a few days more, or a few hours even, have mercy, Almighty God, and let me clutch greedily to my yellow heart this sweet treasure, this jewel beyond price--the dirty, stinkin' bit of withered old flesh which is my beautiful little life! [He laughs with a sneering, vindictive self-loathing, contempt and hatred.

3598 He then abruptly makes Hickey again the antagonist.]
3599 You think you'll make me admit that to myself?

3600 HICKEY [chuckling]: But you just did--didn't you?

3601 PARRITT: That's the stuff, Hickey--show the old yellow
3602 faker up--he can't play dead on me--he's got to help me!

3603 HICKEY: You've got to settle with him, Larry. Hell,
3604 he'll do as good a job as I could at making you give up
3605 that old grandstand bluff.

3606 LARRY [angrily]: I'll see the two of you in hell first!

3607 ROCKY [calls excitedly]: De Boss's startin' across de
3608 street! She's goin' to fool yuh, Hickey, yuh bastard!
3609 [He pauses, watching--then worriedly] What de hell's she
3610 stoppin' for--right in de middle of de street--yuh'd
3611 tink she was paralyzed or somethin'! [disgustedly]
3612 Aw, she's quittin'--she's turned back--jeez, look at de
3613 old gal travel--here she comes!

3614 NARRATOR: Bess comes lurching through the swinging doors
3615 and stumbles up to the bar.

3616 BESS HOPE: Bejeez, give me a drink quick--scared me out
3617 of my head! Bejeez, that fella oughta be pinched--it
3618 ain't safe to walk the streets! Bejeez, that ends me--
3619 never again--gimme that bottle!

3620 NARRATOR: She slops a glass full, drains it and pours
3621 another.

3622 BESS HOPE [to Rocky]: You seen it, didn't you, Rocky?

3623 ROCKY [scornfully]: Seen what?

3624 BESS HOPE: That automobile, you dumb Wop! Feller drivin'
3625 must be crazy--he'd a run right over me if I hadn't
3626 jumped. [ingratiatingly] Come on, Larry, have a drink--
3627 everybody have a drink--have a drink, Rocky--I know ya
3628 hardly ever touch it.

3629 ROCKY [resentfully]: Well, dis time I do touch it!
3630 [pouring a drink] I'm goin' to get stinko, see! And if
3631 yuh don't like it, yuh know what yuh can do! I gotta
3632 good mind to chuck dis job, anyways. [disgustedly]
3633 Jeez, Boss, I thought yuh had some guts! I was bettin'
3634 yuh'd make it and show dat bughouse preacher up.
3635 [He looks at Hickey--then snorts] Automobile, hell!

Who d'yuh tink yuh're kiddin'? Dey wasn' no automobile!
Yuh just quit--cold!

BESS HOPE [feebly]: Guess I oughta know! Bejeez, it almost killed me!

HICKEY [kindly]: Now, now, Bess--you've faced the test and come through--you're rid of all that nagging dream stuff now--you know you can't believe it any more.

BESS HOPE [appeals pleadingly to Larry]: Larry you saw it, didn't you--drink up--have another--have all you want--bejeez, we'll go on a grand old souse together--you saw that automobile, didn't ya?

LARRY [compassionately, avoiding her eyes]: Sure, I saw it, Bess--you had a narrow escape--by God, I thought you were a goner!

HICKEY [turns on him with a flash of indignation]: What the hell's the matter with you, Larry--you know what I said about the wrong kind of pity--leave Bess alone--you'd think I'd harm her--my oldest friend--what kind of a louse do you think I am? There isn't anything I wouldn't do for Bess, and she knows it! All I wanna do is fix it so she'll finally be at peace for the rest of her days! And if you'd only wait, why--! [He turns to Bess coaxingly]: Come now, Bess--it's all over and dead! Give up that ghost of an automobile.

BESS HOPE [beginning to collapse within herself--dully]: Yes, what's the use--now--all a lie--no automobile. But, bejeez, something ran over me! Must have been myself, I guess. [She forces a feeble smile--then wearily] Guess I'll sit down--feel all in--like a corpse, bejeez.

NARRATOR: She picks a bottle and glass from the bar, walks to the first table and slumps down in a chair. The sound of the bottle on the table rouses Hugo.

BESS HOPE [a flat, dead voice]: Hello, Hugo--coming up for air? Stay passed out, that's the right dope--there ain't any cool willow trees--except the ones that come in a bottle.

[He pours a drink and gulps it down.]

HUGO [with his silly giggle]: Hello, Bess, stupid proletarian monkey-face! I vill trink champagner beneath the--[with a change to aristocratic fastidiousness]

3677 But the slaves must ice it properly! [with guttural
3678 rage] Gottamned Hickey--peddler pimp for nouveau-riche
3679 capitalism! Vhen I lead the jackass mob to the sack of
3680 Babylon, I vill make them hang him to a lamppost the
3681 first one!

3682 BESS HOPE [spiritlessly]: That's right an' I'll help ya
3683 pull on the rope! Have a drink, Hugo.

3684 HUGO [frightened]: No, sank you--I am too trunk now--
3685 I hear myself say crazy sings. Do not listen, please--
3686 Larry vill tell you I haf never been so crazy trunk--
3687 I must sleep it off.

3688 NARRATOR: Starting to put his head on his arms, he stops
3689 and stares at Bess with growing uneasiness.

3690 HUGO: What's matter, Bess--you look funny--you look
3691 dead--what's happened? I don't know you--listen, I feel
3692 I am dying, too--because I am so crazy trunk--it is very
3693 necessary I sleep--but I can't sleep here vith you--
3694 you look dead.

3695 NARRATOR: In a panic, Hugo scrambles to his feet.
3696 Turning his back on Bess, he plops down at the next
3697 table--thrusting down his head on his arms like an
3698 ostrich in the sand.

3699 LARRY [to Hickey with bitter condemnation]: Another one
3700 who's begun to enjoy your peace!

3701 HICKEY: Oh, I know it's tough on him right now, same as
3702 it is on Bess--but that's only the first shock--
3703 I promise you they'll both be fine.

3704 LARRY: And you believe that! I see you do--you mad fool!

3705 HICKEY: Of course I believe it! I tell you I know from
3706 my own experience!

3707 BESS HOPE [spiritlessly]: Close that big clam o' yours,
3708 Hickey--you're a worse gabber than that nagging asshole
3709 Harry was.

3710 [She drinks her drink mechanically and pours another.]

3711 ROCKY [in amazement]: Jeez, did yuh hear dat?

3712 BESS HOPE [dully]: What's wrong with this booze--there's
3713 no kick in it.

3714 ROCKY [worried]: Jeez, Larry, Hugo had it right--
3715 she does look like she croaked.

3716 HICKEY [annoyed]: Don't be a damn fool--give her time--
3717 she's coming along fine. [He calls to Hope with a first
3718 trace of underlying uneasiness.] You're all right,
3719 aren't you, Bess?

3720 BESS HOPE [dully]: I want to pass out like Hugo.

3721 LARRY [turns to Hickey--with bitter anger]: It's the
3722 peace o' death you've brought her.

3723 HICKEY [for the first time loses his temper]: That's a
3724 lie! [controls this instantly and grins.] Well, well,
3725 you did manage to get a rise out of me that time. But
3726 you know it's damned foolishness--look at me--I've been
3727 through it--do I look dead? [pause] Just wait until the
3728 shock wears off and you'll see--she'll be a new person--
3729 like me. [He calls her coaxingly] How's it coming, Bess?
3730 Beginning to feel free, aren't you--relieved and not
3731 guilty any more.

3732 BESS HOPE [grumbles spiritlessly]: Bejeez, you must've
3733 been monkeyin' with the booze, too, you interferin'
3734 bastard--there's no life in it now! I want to get drunk
3735 and pass out--let's all pass out! Who the hell cares!

3736 HICKEY [lowering his voice--worriedly to Larry]: I admit
3737 I didn't think she'd be hit so hard--she's always been a
3738 happy-go-lucky slob--like I was. Course it hit me hard,
3739 too--but only for a minute--then it was as if a ton of
3740 guilt had been lifted off my mind--an' I saw that what'd
3741 happened was the only possible way for the peace of all
3742 concerned.

3743 LARRY [sharply]: What happened--tell us! And don't try
3744 to get out of it--I want a straight answer! [spitefully]
3745 I think it was something you drove someone else to!

3746 HICKEY [puzzled]: Someone else?

3747 LARRY [accusingly]: What did your wife die of? You've
3748 kept that a deep secret, I notice--for some reason!

3749 HICKEY [reproachfully]: You're not very considerate,
3750 Larry. But, if you insist on knowing, I guess there's
3751 no reason you shouldn't. It was a bullet through the
3752 head that killed Evelyn.

3753 [There is a moment of tense silence.]

3754 BESS HOPE [dully]: Who the hell cares--to hell with her
 3755 and that stupid old nag Harry.

3756 ROCKY: Christ, ya had de right dope, Larry.

3757 LARRY [revengefully]: You drove your poor wife to
 3758 suicide--I knew it! By God, I don't blame her--I'd
 3759 almost do as much myself to be rid of you! It's what
 3760 you'd like to drive us all to-- [Abruptly he's ashamed
 3761 of himself and pitying.] I'm sorry, Hickey--I'm a
 3762 rotten louse to throw that in your face.

3763 HICKEY [quietly]: Oh, that's all right, Larry. But don't
 3764 jump to conclsions--I didn't say poor Evelyn committed
 3765 suicide--it's the last thing she'd a done, as long as
 3766 I was alive for her to take care of and forgive.
 3767 If you'd known her at all, you'd never get such a
 3768 crazy suspicion. [He pauses--then slowly] No, I'm sorry
 3769 to have to tell you...but Eveylyn was killed.

3770 NARRATOR: Larry stares at him with growing horror and
 3771 shrinks back along the bar away from him. Parritt's head
 3772 jerks up and looks at Larry frightened. Rocky's eyes pop
 3773 and Bess stares dully at the table, where Hugo gives
 3774 no signs of life.

3775 LARRY [shaken]: Then she was...murdered.

3776 PARRITT [springs to his feet--stammers defensively about
 3777 his mother]: You're a liar, Larry--you must be crazy to
 3778 say that to me--you know she's still alive!

3779 ROCKY [blurts out]: Moidered--who done it?

3780 NARRATOR: Larry's eyes are fixed with fascinated horror
 3781 on Hickey.

3782 LARRY [frightened]: Don't ask questions, you dumb Wop--
 3783 it's none of our damned business--leave Hickey alone!

3784 HICKEY--[smiles at him with affectionate amusement]:
 3785 Still the old grandstand bluff, eh Larry? Or is it some
 3786 more bum pity? [matter-of-factly to Rocky] The police
 3787 don't know who killed her yet, Rocky--but I expect they
 3788 will before long.

3789 NARRATOR: Moving to Bess, Hickey sits beside her--
 3790 his arm around her shoulder.

3791 HICKEY [affectionately coaxing]: Coming along fine--
 3792 aren't you, Bess--getting' over the first shock--

3833 ROCKY [shakes Joe by the shoulder]: Come on, yuh damned
3834 dinge--beat it--it's after hours. [pause] Aw, to hell
3835 wid it--I'm through wid dis lousy job, anyway! [He hears
3836 someone at rear and calls] Who's dat?

3837 NARRATOR: Chuck appears in the rear doorway. He's been
3838 drinking heavily--and brawling--his knuckles are raw and
3839 an eye is black. His straw hat is gone, his tie is awry,
3840 and his suit is dirty.

3841 ROCKY [indifferently]: Been scrappin', huh? On a
3842 periodical, ain't yuh?

3843 CHUCK: Yeah, ain't yuh glad! [truculently] What's it
3844 to yuh?

3845 ROCKY: Not a damn ting. But I'm on my feet holdin' down
3846 your job. Yuh said if I'd work your day, yuh'd relieve
3847 me at six, and here it's half past one A.M.--well,
3848 yuh're takin' over--get me?--no matter how plastered yuh
3849 are!

3850 CHUCK: Plastered, hell--I wisht I was--I've lapped up a
3851 gallon, but it don't hit me right. To hell wid de job--
3852 I'm goin' to tell Bess I'm quittin'.

3853 ROCKY: Yeah? Well, I'm quittin', too.

3854 CHUCK: I've played sucker for dat crummy blonde long
3855 enough, lettin' her kid me into woikin'. From now on
3856 I take it easy.

3857 ROCKY: I'm glad yuh're gettin' some sense.

3858 CHUCK: And I hope yuh're gettin' some--what a prize sap
3859 yuh been, tendin' bar when yuh got two good hustlers in
3860 yer stable!

3861 ROCKY: Yeah, but I ain't no sap now--I'll loin 'em, when
3862 dey get back from Coney. [sneeringly] Jeez, dat Cora
3863 sure played yuh for a dope, feedin' yuh dat marriage-on-
3864 de-farm hop!

3865 CHUCK [dully]: Yeah--Hickey got it right--a lousy
3866 pipe dream! It was her pulling sherry flips on me dat
3867 woke me up. All de way walkin' to de ferry, every
3868 ginmill we come to she'd drag me in. I got ta tinkin',
3869 Christ, what won't she want when she gets de ring on her
3870 fingah and I'm hooked? So I tells her at de ferry,
3871 "Kiddo, yuh can go to Joisey, or to hell, but
3872 count me out."

3873 ROCKY: She says it was her told you to go to hell,
3874 because yuh'd started hittin' de booze.

3875 CHUCK [ignoring this]: I was tinkin', too, Jeez, won't I
3876 look sweet wid a wife dat if yuh put all de guys she's
3877 been wid side by side, dey'd reach to Chicago. [Sighs
3878 gloomily.] Dat kind of dame, yuh can't trust 'em.
3879 De minute your back is toined, dey're cheatin' wid de
3880 iceman or sometin'. Hickey done me a favor, makin' me
3881 wake up. [Pauses--then pathetically] On'y it was fun,
3882 kinda, me and Cora kiddin' ourselves--[Suddenly his
3883 voice hardens with hatred.] Where is dat son of a bitch,
3884 Hickey? I want one good sock at da guy--just one!--and
3885 de next buttin' in he'll be doin' is in de moigue!
3886 An' I'll take my chances a gettin' de Chair!

3887 ROCKY: Leave Hickey alone--he ain't here now, anyway--
3888 he went out to phone, he said. I got a hunch he's
3889 beat it--but if he does come back, yuh don't know him,
3890 get me? [in a whisper.] De Chair, maybe dat's where he's
3891 goin'. I don't know nuttin', see, but it looks like he
3892 croaked his wife.

3893 CHUCK [with a flash of interest]: Yuh mean she really
3894 was cheatin' on him? Den I don't blame de guy--

3895 ROCKY: Who's blamin' him! When a dame asks for it--
3896 But I don't know nuttin' about it, see?

3897 CHUCK: Any of de gang wise?

3898 ROCKY: Larry is. And de Boss oughta be. I tried to wise
3899 up de rest of dem to stay clear of him, but dey're all
3900 so licked, I don't know if dey got it. [Pauses--then
3901 spitefully] I don't give a damn what he done to his
3902 wife, but if he gets de Hot Seat, I won't go inta
3903 no mournin'!

3904 CHUCK: Me, neider!

3905 ROCKY: Not after his trowin' it in my face I'm a pimp.
3906 What if I am--why de hell not? And what he's done to de
3907 Boss--jeez, de poor old gal is so licked she can't even
3908 get drunk. And all de gang--dey're all licked. I'm gonna
3909 feel sorry for de poor bums tonight when dey show up,
3910 one by one, lookin' like pooches wid deir tails between
3911 deir legs. Jimmy was de last--a copper brung him in--
3912 seen him sittin' on a dock cryin'! Copper thought he was
3913 drunk--but he was cold sober--he was tryin' to jump in

3914 but didn't have de noive, I figgah'd. Jeez, dere ain't
3915 enough guts left in de whole gang to swat a mosquita!

3916 CHUCK: To hell wid 'em--who cares--gimme a drink.

3917 [Rocky pushes a bottle toward him.]

3918 CHUCK: I see you been hittin' de redeye too.

3919 ROCKY: Yeah--but it don't do no good.

3920 [Chuck drinks.]

3921 JOE [mumbles in his sleep]:

3922 CHUCK [resentfully]: Dis doity dinge was able to get his
3923 snootful and pass out. Jeez, even Hickey can't faze a
3924 dinge! He ain't got no business in here after hours--
3925 why don't yuh chuck him out?

3926 ROCKY [apathetically]: Aw, to hell wid it--who cares?

3927 CHUCK [lapsing into the same mood]: Yeah, I don't.

3928 JOE [suddenly lunges to his feet dazedly--mumbles in
3929 humbled apology]: Scuse me, White Boys--scuse me for
3930 livin'--I don't want to be where I's not wanted.

3931 [He walks away.]

3932 CHUCK [in a callous, brutal tone]: I'm gonna collect de
3933 dough from Cora I wouldn't take dis mornin', like a
3934 suckah--before she blows it.

3935 ROCKY: I'm comin', too--I'm trough woikin' as a lousy
3936 bahtender.

3937 NARRATOR: As they approach Cora, Joe flops down next to
3938 The Captain.

3939 JOE [servilely apologetic]: If ya objects to my sittin'
3940 here, Captain, just tell me and I pulls my freight.

3941 THE CAPTAIN: No apology required, old chap--I should
3942 feel honored a bloody Kaffir would lower himself to
3943 sit beside me.

3944 CHUCK [his voice hard]: I'm waitin', Baby--dig!

3945 CORA [with apathetic obedience]: Sure. I been expectin'
3946 yuh--I got it right here.

3947 NARRATOR: Without looking at him, she passes him a
3948 roll of bills.

3949 CHUCK [suspiciously]: Huh!

3950 [Snatching it, he shoves it into his pocket.]

3951 CORA [with a tired wonder at herself rather than
3952 resentment toward him]: Jeez, imagine me kiddin' myself
3953 I wanted to marry a drunken pimp.

3954 CHUCK: Dat's nuttin', Baby--imagine de sap I'da been,
3955 when I can get your dough just as easy widout it!

3956 NARRATOR: Rocky pulls up a chair next to Larry.

3957 ROCKY [dully]: Hello, Old Cemetery. [Larry doesn't seem
3958 to hear. To Parritt] Hello, Tightwad--you still around?

3959 PARRITT [in a jeeringly challenging tone] Ask Larry--
3960 he knows I'm here all right--although he's pretending
3961 I'm not. He's trying to kid himself with that grandstand
3962 foolosopher stuff--but he knows he can't get away with
3963 it now! He kept himself locked in his room with a bottle
3964 of booze, but he couldn't make it work--he couldn't even
3965 get drunk--he had to come out! There must have been
3966 something there he was even more scared to face than
3967 Hickey and me! I guess he got lookin' at the fire escape
3968 and thinkin' how handy it was, if he was really sick o'
3969 life and only had the nerve to [die]--!

3970 NARRATOR: Larry's face tightens--but he pretends not to
3971 hear.

3972 PARRITT [tone becoming more insistent]: He's been
3973 thinking of me, too, Rocky--trying to figure out a way
3974 to get out of helpin' me! He doesn't want to be bothered
3975 understanding--but he understands all right. He used to
3976 love her too--so he thinks I ought to take a hop off
3977 the--you know!

3978 NARRATOR: Larry's hands have clenched into fists but he
3979 doesn't answer.

3980 PARRITT [breaking and starting to plead.] For God's
3981 sake, Larry, can't you say something? Hickey's got me
3982 all twisted up. Thinking of what he must've done has got
3983 me so I don't know any more what I did or why. I can't
3984 go on like this--I've got to know what I oughta do--

3985 LARRY [in a stifled tone]: God damn you--you trying to
3986 make me your executioner?

3987 PARRITT [starts frightenedly]: Execution? Then you
3988 do think [I did it]--?

3989 LARRY: I don't think anything!

3990 PARRITT [with forced jeering]: Because I sold out a lot
3991 of loud-mouthed fakers, who were cheatin' suckers with a
3992 phony pipe dream, and put 'em where they oughta be, in
3993 jail? [Forcing a laugh.] Don't make me laugh--I ought to
3994 get a medal! What an old sap you are--you must still
3995 believe in the Movement! [Nudging Rocky] Hickey's right
3996 about him, isn't he, Rocky--a no-good drunken old tramp,
3997 as dumb as he is, ought to take a hop off the fire
3998 escape!

3999 ROCKY [dully]: Sure, why don't he--or you--or me--
4000 what de hell's de difference?

4001 BESS HOPE: The hell with it!

4002 ED: Who cares?

4003 ROCKY: What am I doin' here wid youse two? [Pause] Oh,
4004 I got it now. [ingratiatingly] I was tinkin how you was
4005 bot' reg'lar guys--I tinks, ain't two guys like dem,
4006 saps to be hangin' round a bunch o' stew bums and
4007 wastin' demselves. Not dat I blame yuh for not woikin'--
4008 on'y suckahs woik--but dere's no percentage in bein'
4009 broke when yuh can grab good jack by making someone else
4010 woik for yuh, is dere? I mean, like I do. [Pause then
4011 persuasively] So what yuh tink, Parritt--yuh ain't a
4012 bad-lookin' guy--yuh could take some gal who's a good
4013 hustlah, an' start a stable easy--I could help yuh and
4014 wise yuh up to de inside dope on de game. [Pauses--then
4015 impatiently] Well, what about it--what if dey do call
4016 yuh a pimp--what de hell do you care--any more'n I do.

4017 PARRITT [vindictively]: I'm through with whores--I wish
4018 they were all in jail--or dead!

4019 ROCKY [disappointedly]: So yuh won't touch it, huh?
4020 Aw right, stay a bum! [He turns to Larry.] How about
4021 you, Larry--you ain't dumb--sure, yuh're old, but dat
4022 don't matter--dey'd fall for yuh like yuh was deir uncle
4023 or old man or sometin--dey'd like takin' care of yuh--
4024 and de cops 'round here, dey like yuh, too--yuh wouldn't
4025 have to worry where de next drink's comin' from, or wear
4026 doity clothes. [hopefully] Well, don't it sound good
4027 to yuh?

LARRY [with sardonic pity]: No, it doesn't sound good,
Rocky--I mean, the peace Hickey's brought ya. It isn't
contented enough, if you have to make everyone else a
pimp, too.

ROCKY [pushes his chair back and gets up, grumbling]:
I'm a sap to waste time on yuh--a stew bum is a stew bum
and yuh can't change him. [Pauses] But like I was sayin'
to Chuck--if anyone asks, yuh don't know nuttin',
get me--yuh never even hoid he had a wife. [His voice
hardens.] Jeez, we all oughta git drunk and stage a
celebration when dat bastard goes to de Chair.

LARRY [vindictively]: By God, I'll celebrate with you
and drink long life to him in hell! [then guiltily and
pityingly] No, the poor mad devil--[then with angry
self-contempt] Ah, pity again--the wrong kind! He'll
welcome the Chair!

PARRITT [contemptuously]: And what are you so damned
scared o' death for--I don't want your lousy pity.

ROCKY: Christ, I hope he don't come back--we don't know
nuttin' now--we're on'y guessin'--but if de bastard
keeps on talkin'--

LARRY [grimly]: He'll come back--he'll keep on talkin'--
he's got ta--he's lost his confidence that the peace
he's sold us is the real McCoy, and it's made him uneasy
about his own. He'll have to prove it to us--

NARRATOR: Suddenly Hickey can be seen in the
rear doorway. He's lost his beaming salesman's grin
and he looks uneasy, baffled, resentful.

HICKEY: That's a damned lie, Larry--I haven't lost my
confidence a bit--why should I? [boastfully] Whenever
I've made up my mind to sell someone something I knew
they ought to want, I've sold 'em! [He suddenly looks
confused--haltingly] I mean--it isn't kind of you,
Larry, to make that crack when I've been doing my best
to help [set them free]--

ROCKY [threatening]: Keep away from me--I don't know
nuttin' about yuh, see?

NARRATOR: As Rocky retreats behind the bar, Hickey sits
next to Larry.

HICKEY [with a strained attempt at his old affectionate
jollyng manner.] Well, well--how are you coming along,

BESS HOPE: What did you do to this booze--that's what we'd like to hear. Bejeez, ya done something--there's no life or kick in it now. Ain't that right, Jimmy?

JIMMY [in a lifeless voice]: Yes--quite right--it was all a stupid lie--my nonsense about tomorrow. Naturally, they would never give me my position back--I would never dream of asking them--it would be hopeless. I didn't resign--I was fired for drunkenness--and that was years ago. I'm much worse now--and it was absurd of me to excuse my drunkenness by pretending it was my wife's adultery that ruined my life. As Hickey guessed, I was a drunkard before that--long before. I discovered early that living frightened me when I was sober. I don't know why I married Marjorie--I can't even remember now if she was pretty--she was a blonde, I think, but I couldn't swear to it--I had some idea of wanting a home perhaps--but, of course, I much preferred the nearest pub. Why Marjorie married me, God knows--she soon found I much preferred drinking all night with my pals to being in bed with her. So, naturally, she was unfaithful. I didn't blame her--I really didn't care--I was glad to be free--even grateful to her, I think, for giving me such a good tragic excuse to drink as much as I damn well pleased.

NARRATOR: He stops like a mechanical doll that has run down. No one gives any sign of having heard him and a pall of heavy silence falls over the gang.

A pair of men quietly approach the bar. One pulls back his coat to show his badge.

DETECTIVE #1: Guy named Hickman here?

ROCKY: Tink I know de names of all de bums in here?

DETECTIVE #2: Listen, you--this is murder--don't be a sap--it was Hickman himself phoned in and said we'd find him here, around two.

ROCKY [dully]: So dat's who he phoned to. [He shrugs his shoulders.] Aw right, if he asked for it. He's dat one dere. And if yuh want a confession all yuh got to do is listen--he'll be tellin' all about it soon--yuh can't stop de bastard talkin'.

HICKEY [suddenly bursts out] I've got to tell ya--your being the way you are now gets my goat--it's all wrong--it puts things in my mind--about myself--it makes me

4615 HICKEY [as he is walked towards the rear--insistently]:
 4616 All I want ya to see is I was out of my mind when I
 4617 laughed at her! I was a rotten raving lunatic or I
 4618 couldn't have called her a [bitch]--Why, Evelyn was the
 4619 only thing on God's earth I ever loved. I'd have killed
 4620 myself before I'd ever hurt her!

4621 BESS HOPE [calls after him]: Don't worry, Hickey--they
 4622 won't give you the Chair--we'll testify you was crazy--
 4623 crazy as a bedbug--won't we, gang?

4624 CORA/ROCKY/CHUCK [yell]: Dat's right!

4625 THE GENERAL [yell]: Dat's right!

4626 WILLIE/ED/MAC [yell]: We won't testify.

4627 THE CAPTAIN/JIMMY [yell]: Don't worry, Hickey.

4628 [From the hall comes the slam of the street door.]

4629 BESS HOPE [with genuine sorrow]: He's gone--the poor
 4630 crazy bastard! Bejeez, I need a drink.

4631 NARRATOR: The gang all grab their glasses.

4632 BESS HOPE [hopefully]: Bejeez, maybe it'll have the
 4633 old kick, now he's gone.

4634 NARRATOR: She drinks--and they all follow suit.

4635 ROCKY: Yeah, Boss--maybe we can get drunk now.

4636 NARRATOR: They all sit still--with hopeful expectancy--
 4637 waiting for the effect of the booze.

4638 LARRY--[his voice full of pain and pity--in a whisper,
 4639 aloud to himself] May the Chair bring him peace at last,
 4640 the poor tortured bastard!

4641 PARRITT [leans toward him--in a strange low insistent
 4642 voice]: Yes, but he isn't the only one who needs peace,
 4643 Larry--I can't feel sorry for him--he's lucky--he's
 4644 through, now--it's all decided for him. I wish it was
 4645 decided for me--I've never been any good at deciding
 4646 things--even about selling out. It was the tart the cops
 4647 got after me who put it in my mind. You remember what
 4648 Mother's like, Larry--she makes all the decisions--she's
 4649 always decided what I had to do--she doesn't like anyone
 4650 to be free but herself.

4651 NARRATOR: He pauses, as if waiting for Larry to comment
 4652 --but he ignores him.

That's kind. I knew you were the only one who could understand my side of it.

NARRATOR: He gets to his feet and turns toward the hall.

HUGO [bursts into his silly giggle]: Hello, leedle Parritt, leedle monkey-face--don't be a fool--buy me a trink!

PARRITT [puts on an act of dramatic bravado--forcing a grin]: Sure, I will, Hugo! Tomorrow! Beneath the willow trees!

NARRATOR: He walks into the hallway with a careless swagger then disappears.

HUGO [after Parritt stupidly]: Stupid fool! Hickey make you crazy, too. [He turns to the oblivious Larry--with a timid eagerness] I'm glad, Larry, zey take that crazy Hickey away to asylum--he makes me have bad dreams--he makes me tell lies about myself--he makes me want to spit on all I have ever dreamed. Yes, I am glad zey take him to asylum--I don't feel I am dying now. He was selling death to me, that crazy salesman. I sink I have a trink now, Larry.

[He pours a drink and gulps it down.]

BESS HOPE [jubilantly]: Bejeez, gang, I'm feeling the old kick--or I'm a liar! It's putting life back in me! Bejeez, if all I've lapped up begins to hit me, I'll be paralyzed before I know it! It was Hickey kept it from us--Bejeez, I know how that sounds, but he was crazy, and he got all of us as bughouse as he was. Bejeez, it does strange things to ya, having to listen day and night to a lunatic's pipe dreams--pretending you believe 'em, to kid him along and doing any crazy thing he wants to humor him. It's dangerous, too--look at me pretending to go for a walk just to keep him quiet. I knew damned well it wasn't the right day for it. The sun was broiling and the streets full of automobiles. Bejeez, I could feel myself getting sunstroke, and an automobile damn near ran over me.

NARRATOR: She appeals to Rocky--afraid of the result, but daring it.

BESS HOPE: Ask Rocky--he was watching. Didn't it, Rocky?

ROCKY [a bit tipsily but earnestly]: De automobile, Boss? Sure, I seen it! Just missed yuh! I thought yuh

was a goner. [Assuming the old kidding tone of the gang, but hesitantly, as if still a little afraid.] On de woid of a honest bahtender!

BESS HOPE [her old self]: Huh! Bar-robber is more like it. You and Chuck ought to have cards in the Burglars' Union!

[The gang laughs eagerly]

BESS HOPE: Bejeez, it's good to hear someone laugh again! All the time that bastard--I mean--poor old Hickey was here, I didn't have the heart--Bejeez, I'm getting drunk and glad of it! [She cackles. Bottle being picked up.] Come on, gang--it's on the house.

[Many drinks are poured.]

BESS HOPE [sentimental]: Poor old Hickey--we mustn't hold him responsible for anything he's done--we'll forget that--and only remember him the way he was before--the kindest, biggest-hearted drummer who ever wore shoe leather.

CORA/ROCKY/CHUCK: Dat's right, Bess!

THE GENERAL: Vhat's all!

JIMMY/THE CAPTAIN/WILLIE: Finest drummer!

ED/MAC/JOE: Best scout!

BESS HOPE: Good luck to you in Matteawan, Hickey! Come on, bottoms up!

[They all drink.]

NARRATOR: At his table--his hands tensely gripping the edge--sits Larry, listening intently.

LARRY [cannot hold back an anguished exclamation]: Christ! Why don't he [jump for god's sake]--!

HUGO [beginning to be drunk again--peers at him]: Why don't he what? Don't be a fool--Hickey's gone--he vas crazy. Have a trink. [then as he receives no reply--with vague uneasiness] What's matter with you? You look funny. What you listen for, Larry?

CORA [tipsily]: Well, I thank Gawd me and Chuck did all we could to humor de poor nut. Jeez, imagine us goin' off like we really meant to git married, when we ain't even picked out a farm yet!

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 Hello, 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]: Hello, leedle Bess!
4829 Hello, 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.] Hello, dere,
4847 Sweethearts! Jeez, 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.

LARRY [arguing to himself in a shaken, tortured whisper]: It's the only way out for him! For the peace of all concerned, like Hickey said! [snapping] God damn his yellow soul--if he doesn't soon, I'll go up and throw him off!--like a dog with its guts ripped out you'd put down out of misery!

NARRATOR: He is slowly rising from his chair when from outside the window comes the sound of something hurtling down, followed by a muffled, crunching thud.

LARRY [gasps then shudders]:

NARRATOR: Dropping back in his chair, Larry buries his face in his hands.

BESS HOPE [wonderingly]: What the hell was that?

ROCKY: Aw, nuttin'. Someting fell off de fire escape-- a mattress, I'll bet. Some of dese bums've been sleepin' on de fire escapes.

BESS HOPE [an excuse to beef--testily]: They've got to cut it out! Bejeez, this ain't a fresh-air sanitorium--mattresses cost money.

ED: Now don't start crabbin', Bess. Let's drink up.

NARRATOR: Bess grabs her glass, and they all drink.

LARRY [in a whisper of horrified pity]: Poor devil! [A long-forgotten faith returns to him for a moment and he mumbles] God rest his soul in peace. [

NARRATOR: Larry finally opens his eyes.

LARRY [with bitter self-derision]: Ah, the damned pity--the wrong kind, like Hickey said! By God, there's no hope--life's too much for me--I'll be a weak pitying fool looking at both sides of everything till the day I die! [with an intense bitter sincerity] May that day come soon!

NARRATOR: He pauses startled. Then--with a sardonic grin...

LARRY: By God, I'm the only real convert to death Hickey made here. From the bottom of my coward's heart, I mean that now!

4922 BESS HOPE [calls effusively] Hey there, Larry! Come over
4923 and get paralyzed! What the hell you douin', just sittin'
4924 there?

4925 NARRATOR: But Larry doesn't reply. Almost immediately,
4926 she forgets him and turns back to the gang.

4927 BESS HOPE: Bejeez, let's sing! Let's celebrate. It's my
4928 birrthday party! Bejeez, I'm oreyeyed!

4929 HUGO [singing]: Dansons la Carmagnole! Vive le son! Vive
4930 le son! Dansons la Carmagnole! Vive le son des canons!

4931 [The gang howls derisively.]

4932 HUGO: Capitalist svine! Stupid bourgeois monkeys!
4933 [declaiming] "The days grow hot, O Babylon!"

4934 WILLIE/ED/JOE/THE CAPTAIN/THE
4935 GENERAL/JIMMY/MAC/CORA/ROCKY/CHUCK [taking it up]: 'Tis
4936 cool beneath thy willow trees!

4937 [They pound their glasses on the table.]

4938 NARRATOR: In his chair--staring straight ahead--
4939 oblivious to all the racket, sits Larry.

4940 [The gang roars with boisterous laughter.]

4941 HUGO [giggles]:

4942 THE END