

# MONOLOGUES

## Monologue #1

**Blanche:** Well, Stella--you're going to reproach me, I know that you're bound to reproach me--but before you do--take into consideration--you left! I stayed and struggled! You came to New Orleans and looked out for yourself. I stayed at Belle Reve and tried to hold it together! I'm not meaning this in any reproachful way, but all the burden descended on my shoulders.

You are the one that abandoned Belle Reve, not I! I stayed and fought for it, bled for it, almost died for it! ....

I, I, I took the blows in my face and my body! All of those deaths! The long parade to the graveyard! Father, mother! Margaret, that dreadful way! So big with it, it couldn't be put in a coffin! But had to be burned like rubbish! You just came home in time for the funerals, Stella. And funerals are pretty compared to deaths. Funerals are quiet, but deaths--not always. Sometimes their breathing is hoarse, and sometimes it rattles, and sometimes they even cry out to you, "Don't let me go!" Even the old, sometimes, say, "Don't let me go." As if you were able to stop them! But funerals are quiet, with pretty flowers. And, oh, what gorgeous boxes they pack them away in! Unless you were there at the bed when they cried out, "Hold me!" you'd never suspect there was the struggle for breath and bleeding. You didn't dream, but I saw! Saw! Saw! And now you sit there telling me with your eyes that I let the place go! How in hell do you think all that sickness and dying was paid for? Death is expensive, Miss Stella! And old Cousin Jessie's right after Margaret's, hers! Why, the Grim Reaper had put up his tent on our doorstep! Stella. Belle Reve was his headquarters! Honey--that's how it slipped through my fingers! Which of them left us a fortune? Which of them left a cent of insurance even? Only poor Jessie--one hundred to pay for her coffin. That was all, Stella! And I with my pitiful salary at the school. Yes, accuse me! Sit there and stare at me, thinking I let the place go! I let the place go? Where were you! In bed with your--Polack!

## Monologue #2

**Blanche:** I loved someone, too, and the person I loved I lost.

He was a boy, just a boy, when I was a very young girl. When I was sixteen, I made the discovery--love. All at once and much, much too completely. It was like you suddenly turned a blinding light on something that had always been half in shadow, that's how it struck the world for me. But I was unlucky. Deluded. There was something different about the boy, a nervousness, a softness and tenderness which wasn't like a man's, although he wasn't the least bit effeminate looking--still--that thing was there.... He came to me for help. I didn't know that. I didn't find out anything till after our marriage when we'd run away and come back and all I knew was I'd failed him in some mysterious way and wasn't able to give the help he needed but couldn't speak of! He was in the quicksands and clutching at me--but I wasn't holding him out, I was slipping in with him! I didn't know that. I didn't know anything except I loved him unendurably but without being able to help him or help myself. Then I found out. In the worst of all possible ways. By coming suddenly into a room that I thought was empty--which wasn't empty, but had two people in it... the boy I had married and an older man who had been his friend for years. Afterwards we pretended that nothing had been discovered. Yes, the three of us drove out to Moon Lake Casino, very drunk and laughing all the way. We danced the Varsouviana! Suddenly in the middle of the dance the boy I had married broke away from me and ran out of the casino. A few moments later--a shot!

I ran out--all did!--all ran and gathered about the terrible thing at the edge of the lake! I couldn't get near for the crowding. Then somebody caught my arm. "Don't go any closer! Come back! You don't want to see!" See? See what! Then I heard voices say--Allan! Allan! The Gray boy! He'd stuck the revolver into his mouth, and fired--so that the back of his head had been--blown away!

It was because--on the dance-floor--unable to stop myself--I'd suddenly said--"I saw! I know! You disgust me!" And then the searchlight which had been turned on the world was turned off again and never for one moment since has there been any light that's stronger than this--kitchen--candle...

## STANLEY KOWALSKI:

### Monologue

**STANLEY:** Lie Number One: All this squeamishness she puts on! You should just know the line she's been feeding to Mitch--He thought she had never been more than kissed by a fellow! But Sister Blanche is no lily!

Our supply-man down at the plant has been going through Laurel for years and he knows all about her and everybody else in the town of Laurel knows all about her. She is as famous in Laurel as if she was the President of the United States, only she is not respected by any party! This supply-man stops at a hotel called the Flamingo. She's stayed there too.

This is after the home-place had slipped through her lily white fingers! She moved to the Flamingo! A second class hotel which has the advantage of not interfering in the private social life of the personalities there! The Flamingo is used to all kinds of goings-on. But even the management of the Flamingo was impressed by Dame Blanche! In fact they were so impressed by Dame Blanche that they requested her to turn in her room-key--for permanently! This happened a couple of weeks before she showed here.

Sure, I can see how you would be upset by this. She pulled the wool over your eyes as much as Mitch's!

Honey, I told you I thoroughly checked on these stories! Now wait till I finish. The trouble with Dame Blanche was that she couldn't put on her act any more in Laurel! They got wised up after two or three dates with her and then they quit, and she goes on to another, the same old line, same old act, same old hooley! But the town was too small for this to go on forever! And as time went by she became a town character. Regarded as not just different but downright loco--nuts.

And for the last year or two she has been washed up like poison. That's why she's here this summer, visiting royalty, putting on all this act--because she's practically told by the mayor to get out of town! Yes, did you know there was an army camp near Laurel and your sister's was one of the places called "Out-of-Bounds"? Well, so much for her being such a refined and particular type of girl. Which brings us to Lie Number Two.

She didn't resign temporarily from the high school because of her nerves! No, siree, Bob! She didn't. They locked her out of that high school before the spring term ended--and I hate to tell you the reason that step was taken! A seventeen-year-old boy--she'd gotten mixed up with!

And when the boy's dad learned about it and got in touch with the high school superintendent. Oh, I'd like to have been in that office when Dame Blanche was called on the carpet! I'd like to have seen her trying to squirm out of that one! But they had her on the hook good and proper that time and she knew that the jig was all up! They told her she better move on to some fresh territory. Yep, it was practically a town ordinance passed against her!

## **MONOLOGUE FOR WOMEN AUDITIONING FOR ROLES OTHER THAN BLANCHE:**

*(STELLA:)* Oh, Stan! I'm taking Blanche to Galatoire's for supper and then to a show, because it's your pok'r night. I put you a cold plate on ice. I'm going to try to keep Blanche out till the party breaks up because I don't know how she would take it. So we'll go to one of the little places in the Quarter afterwards and you'd better give me some money. Blanche is soaking in a hot tub to quiet her nerves. She's terribly upset. She's been through such an ordeal. *[hesitantly]* Stan, we've--lost Belle Reve! Oh, it had to be--sacrificed or something. When she comes in be sure to say something nice about her appearance. And, oh! Don't mention the baby. I haven't said anything yet, I'm waiting until she gets in a quieter condition. And try to understand her and be nice to her, Stan. She wasn't expecting to find us in such a small place. You see I'd tried to gloss things over a little in my letters. And admire her dress and tell her she's looking wonderful. That's important with Blanche. Her little weakness!

## **MONOLOGUE FOR MEN AUDITIONING FOR ROLES OTHER THAN STANLEY:**

*(MITCH:)* It's dark in here. I don't think I ever seen you in the light. That's a fact! I've never seen you in the afternoon. You never want to go out in the afternoon. Not Sunday afternoon. I've asked you to go out with me sometimes on Sundays but you always make an excuse. You never want to go out till after six and then it's always some place that's not lighted much. What it means is I've never had a real good look at you, Blanche. Let's turn the light on here. So I can take a look at you good and plain! *[slowly and bitterly]* I don't mind you being older than what I thought. But all the rest of it--Christ! That pitch about your ideals being so old-fashioned and all the malarkey that you've dished out all summer. Oh, I knew you weren't sixteen any more. But I was a fool enough to believe you was straight.

**MEN - Group: Stanley, Mitch, Steve, Pablo (etc)**

THE POKER NIGHT at the Kowalski apartment.

**STEVE:** Anything wild this deal?

**PABLO:** One-eyed jacks are wild.

**STEVE:** Give me two cards.

**PABLO:** You, Mitch?

**MITCH:** I'm out

**PABLO:** One.

**MITCH:** Anyone want a shot?

**STANLEY:** Yeah. Me.

**PABLO:** Why don't somebody go to the Chinaman's and bring back a load of chop suey?

**STANLEY:** When I'm losing you want to eat! Ante up! Openers? Openers! Get y'r ass off the table, Mitch. Nothing belongs on a poker table but cards, chips and whiskey. *[He lurches up and tosses some watermelon rinds to the floor.]*

**MITCH:** Kind of on your high horse, ain't you?

**STANLEY:** How many?

**STEVE:** Give me three.

**STANLEY:** One.

**MITCH:** I'm out again. I oughta go home pretty soon.

**STANLEY:** Shut up.

**MITCH:** I gotta sick mother. She don't go to sleep until I come in at night

**STANLEY:** Then why don't you stay home with her?

**MITCH:** She says to go out, so I go, but I don't enjoy it. All the while I keep wondering how she is.

**STANLEY:** Aw, for the sake of Jesus, go home, then!

**PABLO:** What've you got?

**STANLEY:** Spade flush.

**MITCH:** You all are married. But I'll be alone when she goes.--I'm going to the bathroom.

**STANLEY:** Hurry back and well fix you a sugar-tit.

**MITCH:** Aw, go rut. *[He crosses through the bedroom into the bathroom.]*

**STEVE** *[dealing a hand]:* Seven-card stud. *[Telling his joke as he deals]* This ole farmer is out in back of his house sittin' down th'owing corn to the chickens when all at once he hears a loud cackle and this young hen comes lickety split around the side of the house with the rooster right behind her and gaining on her fast.

**STANLEY** *[impatient with the story]:* Deal!

**STEVE:** But when the rooster catches sight of the farmer th'owing the corn he puts on the brakes and lets the hen get away and starts pecking corn. And the old farmer says, "Lord God, I hopes I never gits that hongry!" *[Steve and Pablo laugh.]*

**STELLA & BLANCHE:** (The first time Stella and Blanche see each other after Blanche arrives)

**STELLA** *[calling out joyfully]:* Blanche!

**BLANCHE:** Stella, oh, Stella, Stella! Stella for Star! *[She begins to speak with feverish vivacity as if she feared for either of them to stop and think.]* Now, then, let me look at you. But don't you look at me, Stella, no, no, no, not till later, not till I've bathed and rested! And turn that over-light off! Turn that off! I won't be looked at in this merciless glare! Come back here now! Oh, my baby! Stella! Stella for Star! I thought you would never come back to this horrible place! What am I saying? I didn't mean to say that. I meant to be nice about it and say--Oh, what a convenient location and such--Haa-ha! Precious lamb! You haven't said a word to me.

**STELLA:** You haven't given me a chance to, honey!

**BLANCHE:** Well, now you talk. Open your pretty mouth and talk while I look around for some liquor! I know you must have some liquor on the place! Where could it be, I wonder? Oh, I spy, I spy! *[She rushes to the closet and removes the bottle; she is shaking all over and panting for breath as she tries to laugh. The bottle nearly slips from her grasp.]*

**STELLA** *[noticing]:* Blanche, you sit down and let me pour the drinks. I don't know what we've got to mix with. Maybe a coke's in the icebox. Look'n see, honey, while I'm--

**BLANCHE:** No coke, honey, not with my nerves tonight! Where--where--where is--?

**STELLA:** Stanley? Bowling! He loves it. They're having a--found some soda!--tournament...

**BLANCHE:** Just water, baby, to chase it! Now don't get worried, your sister hasn't turned into a drunkard, she's just all shaken up and hot and tired and dirty! You sit down, now, and explain this place to me! What are you doing in a place like this?

**STELLA:** Now, Blanche--

**BLANCHE:** Oh, I'm not going to be hypocritical, I'm going to be honestly critical about it! Never, never, never in my worst dreams could I picture--Only Poe! Only Mr. Edgar Allan Poe!--could do it justice! Out there I suppose is the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir! *[She laughs.]*

**STELLA:** No, honey, those are the L & N tracks.

**BLANCHE:** No, now seriously, putting joking aside. Why didn't you tell me, why didn't you write me, honey, why didn't you let me know?

**STELLA** *[carefully, pouring herself a drink]:* Tell you what, Blanche?

**BLANCHE:** Why, that you had to live in these conditions!

**STELLA:** Aren't you being a little intense about it? It's not that bad at all! New Orleans isn't like other cities.

**BLANCHE:** This has got nothing to do with New Orleans. You might as well say--forgive me, blessed baby! *[She suddenly stops short]* The subject is closed!

**STELLA** *[a little drily]:* Thanks.

**BLANCHE** *[looking down at her glass, which shakes in her hand]:* You're all I've got in the world, and you're not glad to see me!

**STELLA** *[sincerely]:* Why, Blanche, you know that's not true.

**BLANCHE:** No?--I'd forgotten how quiet you were.

**STELLA:** You never did give me a chance to say much, Blanche. So I just got in the habit of being quiet around you.

**BLANCHE** *[vaguely]:* A good habit to get into... *[then, abruptly]* You haven't asked me how I happened to get away from the school before the spring term ended.

**STELLA:** Well, I thought you'd volunteer that information--if you wanted to tell me.

**BLANCHE:** You thought I'd been fired?

**STELLA:** No, I--thought you might have--resigned...

**BLANCHE:** I was so exhausted by all I'd been through my--nerves broke. *[Nervously tamping cigarette]* I was on the verge of--lunacy, almost! So Mr. Graves--Mr. Graves is the high school superintendent--he suggested I take a leave of absence. I couldn't put all of those details into the wire... *[She drinks quickly]* Oh, this buzzes right through me and feels so good!

**STELLA:** Won't you have another?

**BLANCHE:** No, one's my limit.

**STELLA:** Sure?

**BLANCHE:** You haven't said a word about my appearance.

**STELLA:** You look just fine.

**BLANCHE:** God love you for a liar! Daylight never exposed so total a ruin! But you--you've put on some weight, yes, you're just as plump as a little partridge! And it's so becoming to you!

**STELLA & STANLEY:** (Stella & Stanley discussing Blanche)

**STELLA:** And admire her dress and tell her she's looking wonderful. That's important with Blanche. Her little weakness!

**STANLEY:** Yeah. I get the idea. Now let's skip back a little to where you said the country place was disposed of.

**STELLA:** Oh!--yes...

**STANLEY:** How about that? Let's have a few more details on that subject.

**STELLA:** It's best not to talk much about it until she's calmed down.

**STANLEY:** So that's the deal, huh? Sister Blanche cannot be annoyed with business details right now!

**STELLA:** You saw how she was last night.

**STANLEY:** Uh-hum, I saw how she was. Now let's have a gander at the bill of sale.

**STELLA:** I haven't seen any.

**STANLEY:** She didn't show you no papers, no deed of sale or nothing like that, huh?

**STELLA:** It seems like it wasn't sold.

**STANLEY:** Well what in hell was it then, give away? To charity?

**STELLA:** Shhh! She'll hear you.

**STANLEY:** I don't care if she hears me. Let's see the papers!

**STELLA:** There weren't any papers, she didn't show any papers, I don't care about papers.

**STANLEY:** Have you ever heard of the Napoleonic code?

**STELLA:** No, Stanley, I haven't heard of the Napoleonic code, if I have, I don't see what it—

**STANLEY:** Let me enlighten you on a point or two, baby.

**STELLA:** Yes?

**STANLEY:** In the state of Louisiana we have the Napoleonic code according to which what belongs to the wife belongs to the husband and vice versa. For instance if I had a piece of property, or you had a piece of property—

**STELLA:** My head is swimming!

**STANLEY:** All right, I'll wait till she gets through soaking in a hot tub and then I'll inquire if she is acquainted with the Napoleonic code. It looks to me like you have been swindled, baby, and when you're swindled under the Napoleonic code I'm swindled too. And I don't like to be swindled.

**STELLA:** There's plenty of time to ask her questions later but if you do now she'll go to pieces again. I don't understand what happened to Belle Reve but you don't know how ridiculous you are being when you suggest that my sister or I or anyone of our family could have perpetrated a swindle on anyone else.

**STANLEY:** Then where's the money if the place was sold?

**STELLA:** Not sold--lost, lost! *[He stalks into bedroom, and she follows him.] Stanley! [He pulls open the wardrobe trunk standing in middle of room and jerks out an armful of dresses.]*

**STANLEY:** Open your eyes to this stuff! You think she got them out of a teacher's pay?

**STELLA:** Hush!

**STANLEY:** Look at these feathers and furs that she come here to preen herself in! What's this here? A solid-gold dress, I believe! And this one! What is these here? Fox-pieces! Genuine fox fur-pieces, a half a mile long! Where are your fox-pieces, Stella? Bushy snow-white ones, no less! Where are your white fox-pieces?

**STELLA:** Those are inexpensive summer furs that Blanche has had a long time.

**STANLEY:** I got an acquaintance who deals in this sort of merchandise. I'll have him in here to appraise it. I'm willing to bet you there's thousands of dollars invested in this stuff here!

**STELLA:** Don't be such an idiot, Stanley! *[He hurls the furs on the daybed. Then he jerks open small drawer in the trunk and pulls up a fist-full of costume jewelry.]*

**STANLEY:** And what have we here? The treasure chest of a pirate!

**STELLA:** Oh, Stanley!

**STANLEY:** Pearls! Ropes of them! What is this sister of yours, a deep-sea diver who brings up sunken treasure? Or is she the champion safe-cracker of all time! Bracelets of solid gold, too! Where are your pearls and gold bracelets?

**STELLA:** Shhh! Be still, Stanley!

**BLANCHE & STANLEY READING #2** (This is Stanley & Blanche's second encounter)

**BLANCHE** *[airily]*: Hello, Stanley! Here I am, all freshly bathed and scented, and feeling like a brand new human being!

**STANLEY**: That's good.

**BLANCHE** *[drawing the curtains at the windows]*: Excuse me while I slip on my pretty new dress!

**STANLEY**: Go right ahead, Blanche. *[She closes the drapes between the rooms.]*

**BLANCHE**: I understand there's to be a little card party to which we ladies are cordially not invited!

**STANLEY** *[ominously]*: Yeah? *[Blanche throws off her robe and slips into a flowered print dress.]*

**BLANCHE**: Where's Stella?

**STANLEY**: Out on the porch.

**BLANCHE**: I'm going to ask a favor of you in a moment.

**STANLEY**: What could that be, I wonder?

**BLANCHE**: Some buttons in back! You may enter! *[He crosses through drapes with a smoldering look.]* How do I look?

**STANLEY**: You look all right.

**BLANCHE**: Many thanks! Now the buttons!

**STANLEY**: I can't do nothing with them.

**BLANCHE**: You men with your big clumsy fingers. May I have a drag on your cig?

**STANLEY**: Have one for yourself.

**BLANCHE**: Why, thanks!... It looks like my trunk has exploded.

**STANLEY**: Me an' Stella were helping you unpack.

**BLANCHE**: Well, you certainly did a fast and thorough job of it!

**STANLEY**: It looks like you raided some stylish shops in Paris.

**BLANCHE**: Ha-ha! Yes--clothes are my passion!

**STANLEY**: What does it cost for a string of fur-pieces like that?

**BLANCHE**: Why, those were a tribute from an admirer of mine!

**STANLEY**: He must have had a lot of--admiration!

**BLANCHE**: Oh, in my youth I excited some admiration. But look at me now! *[She smiles at him radiantly]* Would you think it possible that I was once considered to be--attractive?

**STANLEY**: Your looks are okay.

**BLANCHE**: I was fishing for a compliment, Stanley.

**STANLEY**: I don't go in for that stuff.

**BLANCHE**: What--stuff?

**STANLEY**: Compliments to women about their looks. I never met a woman that didn't know if she was good-looking or not without being told, and some of them give themselves credit for more than they've got. I once went out with a doll who said to me, "I am the glamorous type, I am the glamorous type!" I said, "So what?"

**BLANCHE**: And what did she say then?

**STANLEY**: She didn't say nothing. That shut her up like a clam.

**BLANCHE**: Did it end the romance?

**STANLEY**: It ended the conversation--that was all. Some men are took in by this Hollywood glamor stuff and some men are not.

**BLANCHE**: I'm sure you belong in the second category.

**STANLEY**: That's right.

**BLANCHE**: I cannot imagine any witch of a woman casting a spell over you.

**STANLEY**: That's right.

**BLANCHE**: You're simple, straightforward and honest, a little bit on the primitive side I should think. To interest you a woman would have to-- *[She pauses with an indefinite gesture.]*

**STANLEY** *[slowly]*: Lay... her cards on the table.

**BLANCHE** *[smiling]*: Well, I never cared for wishy-washy people. That was why, when you walked in here last night, I said to myself--"My sister has married a man!"--Of course that was all that I could tell about you.

**STANLEY** *[booming]*: Now let's cut the re-bop?

**BLANCHE** *[pressing hands to her ears]*: Ouuuuu!

**BLANCHE & STANLEY READING #1** (This is Stanley & Blanche's first encounter after her arrival)

**BLANCHE** [*drawing involuntarily back from his stare*]: You must be Stanley. I'm Blanche.

**STANLEY**: Stella's sister?

**BLANCHE**: Yes.

**STANLEY**: H'lo. Where's the little woman?

**BLANCHE**: In the bathroom.

**STANLEY**: Oh. Didn't know you were coming in town.

**BLANCHE**: I--uh--

**STANLEY**: Where you from, Blanche?

**BLANCHE**: Why, I--live in Laurel. [*He has crossed to the closet and removed the whiskey bottle.*]

**STANLEY**: In Laurel, huh? Oh, yeah. Yeah, in Laurel, that's right. Not in my territory. Liquor goes fast in hot weather. [*He holds the bottle to the light to observe its depletion.*] Have a shot?

**BLANCHE**: No, I--rarely touch it.

**STANLEY**: Some people rarely touch it, but it touches them often.

**BLANCHE** [*faintly*]: Ha-ha.

**STANLEY**: My clothes 're stickin' to me. Do you mind if I make myself comfortable? [*He starts to remove his shirt.*]

**BLANCHE**: Please, please do.

**STANLEY**: Be comfortable is my motto.

**BLANCHE**: It's mine, too. It's hard to stay looking fresh. I haven't washed or even powdered my face and--here you are!

**STANLEY**: You know you can catch cold sitting around in damp things, especially when you been exercising hard like bowling is. You're a teacher, aren't you?

**BLANCHE**: Yes.

**STANLEY**: What do you teach, Blanche?

**BLANCHE**: English.

**STANLEY**: I never was a very good English student. How long you here for, Blanche?

**BLANCHE**: I--don't know yet.

**STANLEY**: You going to shack up here?

**BLANCHE**: I thought I would if it's not inconvenient for you all.

**STANLEY**: Good.

**BLANCHE**: Traveling wears me out.

**STANLEY**: Well, take it easy. [*A cat screeches near the window. Blanche springs up.*]

**BLANCHE**: What's that?

**STANLEY**: Cats.... Hey, Stella! Haven't fallen in, have you? [*He grins at Blanche. She tries unsuccessfully to smile back. There is a silence*] I'm afraid I'll strike you as being the unrefined type. Stella's spoke of you a good deal. You were married once, weren't you? [*The music of the polka rises up, faint in the distance.*]

**BLANCHE**: Yes. When I was quite young.

**STANLEY**: What happened?

**BLANCHE**: The boy--the boy died. [*She sinks back down*] I'm afraid I'm-going to be sick! [*Her head falls on her arms.*]

**BLANCHE & MITCH      READING #2**      (It is about two A.M. Blanche & Mitch are returning from a night out )

**BLANCHE** *[stopping lifelessly at the steps]:* Well-- *[Mitch laughs uneasily.]*

**MITCH:** Well... I guess it must be pretty late--and you're tired.

**BLANCHE:** Even the hot tamale man has deserted the street, and he hangs on till the end. *[Mitch laughs uneasily again]* How will you get home?

**MITCH:** I'll walk over to Bourbon and catch an owl-car.

**BLANCHE** *[laughing grimly]:* Is that streetcar named Desire still grinding along the tracks at this hour?

**MITCH** *[heavily]:* I'm afraid you haven't gotten much fun out of this evening, Blanche.

**BLANCHE:** I spoiled it for you.

**MITCH:** No, you didn't, but I felt all the time that I wasn't giving you much--entertainment.

**BLANCHE:** I simply couldn't rise to the occasion. That was all. I don't think I've ever tried so hard to be gay and made such a dismal mess of it. I get ten points for trying!--I did try.

**MITCH:** Why did you try if you didn't feel like it, Blanche?

**BLANCHE:** I was just obeying the law of nature.

**MITCH:** Which law is that?

**BLANCHE:** The one that says the lady must entertain the gentleman--or no dice! See if you can locate my door-key in this purse. When I'm so tired my fingers are all thumbs!

**MITCH** *[rooting in her purse]:* This it?

**BLANCHE:** No, honey, that's the key to my trunk which I must soon be packing.

**MITCH:** You mean you are leaving here soon?

**BLANCHE:** I've overstayed my welcome.

**MITCH:** This it?

**BLANCHE:** Eureka! Honey, you open the door while I take a last look at the sky. I'm looking for the Pleiades, the Seven Sisters, but these girls are not out tonight. Oh, yes they are, there they are! God bless them! All in a bunch going home from their little bridge party.... Y'get the door open? Good boy! I guess you--want to go now.... *[He shuffles and coughs a little.]*

**MITCH:** Can I--uh--kiss you-goodnight?

**BLANCHE:** Why do you always ask me if you may?

**MITCH:** I don't know whether you want me to or not.

**BLANCHE:** Why should you be so doubtful?

**MITCH:** That night when we parked by the lake and I kissed you, you--

**BLANCHE:** Honey, it wasn't the kiss I objected to. I liked the kiss very much. It was the other little--familiarity--that I--felt obliged to--discourage.... I didn't resent it! Not a bit in the world! In fact, I was somewhat flattered that you--desired me! But, honey, you know as well as I do that a single girl, a girl alone in the world, has got to keep a firm hold on her emotions or she'll be lost!

**MITCH** *[solemnly]:* Lost?

**BLANCHE:** I guess you are used to girls that like to be lost. The kind that get lost immediately, on the first date!

**MITCH:** I like you to be exactly the way that you are, because in all my--experience--I have never known anyone like you.

*[Blanche looks at him gravely; then she bursts into laughter and then claps a hand to her mouth.]*

**MITCH:** Are you laughing at me?

**BLANCHE:** No, honey. The lord and lady of the house have not yet returned, so come in. We'll have a night-cap. Let's leave the lights off. Shall we?

**MITCH:** You just--do what you want to. *[Blanche precedes him into the kitchen.]*

**BLANCHE** *[remaining in the first room]:* The other room's more comfortable--go on in. This crashing around in the dark is my search for some liquor.

**MITCH:** You want a drink?

**BLANCHE:** I want you to have a drink! You have been so anxious and solemn all evening, and so have I; we have both been anxious and solemn and now for these few last remaining moments of our lives together--I want to create--joie de vivre! I'm lighting a candle.

**MITCH:** That's good.

**BLANCHE:** We are going to be very Bohemian. We are going to pretend that we are sitting in a little artists' cafe on the Left Bank in Paris! *[She lights a candle stub and puts it in a bottle.]* Le suis la Dame aux Camellias! Vous etes--Armand! Understand French?

**MITCH** *[heavily]:* Naw. Naw. I--

**BLANCHE:** Voulez-vous coucher avec moi ce soir? Vous ne comprenez pas? Ah, quelle dommage!--I mean it's a damned good thing.... I've found some liquor. Just enough for two shots without any dividends, honey...

**MITCH:** Thats--good.

**BLANCHE & MITCH READING #1** (This is the first time Blanche & Mitch meet at the end of the poker game.)

**BLANCHE** [*softly*]: Hello! The Little Boys' Room is busy right now.

**MITCH**: We've--been drinking beer.

**BLANCHE**: I hate beer.

**MITCH**: It's--a hot weather drink.

**BLANCHE**: Oh, I don't think so; it always makes me warmer. Have you got any cigs?

**MITCH**: Sure.

**BLANCHE**: What kind are they?

**MITCH**: Luckies.

**BLANCHE**: Oh, good. What a pretty case. Silver?

**MITCH**: Yes. Yes; read the inscription.

**BLANCHE**: Oh, is there an inscription? I can't make it out. [*He strikes a match and moves closer*] Oh! [*reading with feigned difficulty*] "And if God choose, I shall but love thee better--after--death!" Why, that's from my favorite sonnet by Mrs. Browning!

**MITCH**: You know it?

**BLANCHE**: Certainly I do!

**MITCH**: There's a story connected with that inscription.

**BLANCHE**: It sounds like a romance.

**MITCH**: A pretty sad one.

**BLANCHE**: Oh?

**MITCH**: The girl's dead now.

**BLANCHE** [*in a tone of deep sympathy*]: Oh!

**MITCH**: She knew she was dying when she give me this. A very strange girl, very sweet--very!

**BLANCHE**: She must have been fond of you. Sick people have such deep, sincere attachments.

**MITCH**: That's right, they certainly do.

**BLANCHE**: Sorrow makes for sincerity, I think.

**MITCH**: It sure brings it out in people.

**BLANCHE**: The little there is belongs to people who have experienced some sorrow.

**MITCH**: I believe you are right about that.

**BLANCHE**: I'm positive that I am. Show me a person who hasn't known any sorrow and I'll show you a superficial-- Listen to me! My tongue is a little-thick! You boys are responsible for it. The show let out at eleven and we couldn't come home on account of the poker game so we had to go somewhere and drink. I'm not accustomed to having more than one drink. Two is the limit--and three!

[*She laughs*] Tonight I had three.

**MITCH**: [*to the other poker players*] Deal me out I'm talking to Miss--

**BLANCHE**: DuBois.

**MITCH**: Miss DuBois?

**BLANCHE**: It's a French name. It means woods and Blanche means white, so the two together mean white woods. Like an orchard in spring! You can remember it by that.

**MITCH**: You're French?

**BLANCHE**: We are French by extraction. Our first American ancestors were French Huguenots.

**MITCH**: You are Stella's sister, are you not?

**BLANCHE**: Yes, Stella is my precious little sister. [*catching herself*] I call her little in spite of the fact she's somewhat older than I. Just slightly. Less than a year. Will you do something for me?

**MITCH**: Sure. What?

**BLANCHE**: I bought this adorable little colored paper lantern at a Chinese shop on Bourbon. Put it over the light bulb! Will you, please?

**MITCH**: Be glad to.

**BLANCHE**: I can't stand a naked light bulb, any more than I can a rude remark or a vulgar action.

**MITCH** [*adjusting the lantern*]: I guess we strike you as being a pretty rough bunch.

**BLANCHE**: I'm very adaptable--to circumstances.

**MITCH**: Well, that's a good thing to be. You are visiting Stanley and Stella?

**BLANCHE**: Stella hasn't been so well lately, and I came down to help her for a while. She's very run down.

**MITCH**: You're not--?

**BLANCHE**: Married? No, no. I'm an old maid schoolteacher!

**MITCH**: You may teach school but you're certainly not an old maid.

**BLANCHE**: Thank you, sir! I appreciate your gallantry!

**MITCH**: So you are in the teaching profession?

**BLANCHE**: Yes. Ah, yes...