

BART

*(JASON is gone. He turns to Kerry)*

So Cinderella, Jules is here, is he!

KERRY

*(Flicks head toward bedroom)*

In there – telling her some things.

BART

Telling her...?

KERRY

It's contemptible – the way she's acted!

BART

Pipe down. And you want to watch your step in the things you say about her, Kid, for every word gets back.

KERRY

*(Passionately)*

You're all such cowards! Jules is the only one who's dared to stand up.

BART

*(Quietly)*

And Jules is out: he has nothing to lose. I have. So have you.

KERRY

Do you mean you're going to stay on after a trick like that?

BART

And what are you going to do?

KERRY

Get out, that's what. Today.

BART

And what's the point to your walkout?

KERRY

To show them what I think!

BART

A swell gesture! Do you think they care what you think?

KERRY

*(A little uneasily)*

I wish he'd come on. Jules threatened to - he said – Oh, Bart, you don't think he'll really kill her...

*(LILY's silver laughter cuts the air.)*

BART

*(Dryly)*

Well, at least it's a merry death.

KERRY

What – what's a nymphomaniac, Bart?

BART

*(Dryly)*

A woman who wants every man she sees.

KERRY

Oh...

*(The laughs chime again.)*

What's a man called if he - responds ...?

BART

*(More dryly)*

Normal.

KERRY

*(Flings about, hands clenched, desperate and helpless.)*

What does she do to them, Bart! Men always do what she wants! – It's unholy – it's a kind of witchcraft ...

BART

Just one letter wrong, my dear.

*(The laughter comes again)*

~~\*BEGIN CUT : ELOISE~~

~~*(Comes in from the bedroom for some White Rock in console, pauses on threshold, drawing doors after her.)*~~

~~Excusez moi – but Mlle Lily says you needn't wait any longer – she will go over your scene some other time. M. Jules is going to stay on to lunch with her ...~~

~~KERRY~~

~~And then – what?~~

~~ELOISE~~

~~She says he will, what you say – cue her; he run over her lines, she run over his.... END~~

~~CUT \*~~

KERRY

*(Hardly more than a whisper)*

And we were going to be married ...

BART

*(Genuinely startled.)*

What! Married – to Jules?

*(Strides toward the door.)*

I'll pull him out of there by the seat of his – neck, the damn fool!

KERRY

*(Lays her hand on his arm.)*

No – let her have him. She only wants him because he loves me –

*(Torn with pity for her own sorrow.)*

Juliet may have suffered, Bart –

*(Bart comes to at the end and regards her keenly.)*

-- but not like me! Romeo died –

BART

So I've been told.

KERRY

But at least he was faithful to his Juliet – he didn't desert her on the very eve of their wedding, when they'd only been engaged five minutes!

*(Turns a tragic face.)*

BART

What?

KERRY

We were going to run off – elope – this afternoon – and send them all wires from Atlantic City ... I've never been to Atlantic City...

*(In some strange way this climaxes her grief.)*

BART

*(Alert)*

You mean, he only asked you this morning – after he learned they'd let him out of the play? *(Drily)* Umm... very neat of him: he pays them back by taking you...

KERRY

You mean – he didn't really want – that he doesn't love – *(Pause, as she thinks back.)*

*(The words drop like round beads-- pause – then a sharp cry.)*

It's hideous, all of it. I'm through with it all - I'll never see either of them again – never!

BART

You're not through. You're going to go on playing as if nothing at all had happened.

KERRY

*(Stares)*

Go on playing Mona? With her there every night laughing at me? Opposite –

*(Catches her breath)*

- him? Never!

*(Starts to dash out. BART catches her arm)*

Let me go!

BART

If you want to quit, all right, but don't run out like this. Stick it out till we open then turn in your notice and give Jason time to find someone else.

KERRY

I can't.

BART

You chose the theatre – nobody made you; you came here of your own free will and begged to be taken in; now keep the theatre's law:

*(With biting bitterness)*

No matter what happens to you, the show goes on.

KERRY

*(Takes words at face value)*

But I don't care what happens to the show! My life is more important to me than any old play in this world!

BART

But what about the rest of us?

*(He gently tilts her chin and stands looking down at her, but her eyes do not meet his)*

Come on smile. Here's your chance to be a trouper! The curtain goes up!

*(With neat summation.)*

Ridi, Pagliacci -

KERRY

*(tears well, tears fall, sobs sobs, sobs.)*

I don't want to be a little "Laugh, clown, Laugh!" I don't want to be an actress! I want to go home!

BART

*(Drops beside her, an arm about her shoulders.)*

Have some pride! Show them you don't give a damn –

KERRY

*(Wails like a child.)*

But I do give a – what you said! And I haven't any pride! And I don't want to show anybody anything. I just want to – go h-h-ome...  
(*Her head is on his shoulder and she sobs in peace.*)

BART  
Cry it out, kid.

KERRY  
And you can call me “darling”, Bart – I understand now. It doesn't mean a thing –  
(*Over the top of her he's not so sure about that.*)  
- but it kinda helps ...

BART  
(*Quietly*) It's a helluva life, Kid – ‘darling’ ...

KERRY  
(*Gets up crosses to table and gets drink of “water” from carafe.*)  
It's so different from what I expected.

BART  
What's different?

KERRY  
All of it – everything and everybody!  
(*Drinks. Wild-eyed.*)  
Even the water's different!  
(*Breaks again.*)  
And I can't act and I'm miserable and I ruined the play and –

BART  
For the love of – now who fed you that stuff!

KERRY  
She did.

BART  
Lily? So that's it! And I thought it was love!

KERRY  
It is! It's both. It's everything. Love is gone, art is gone. And my second act speech – the one before the curtain comes down – that's gone too!  
end scene