

BEN/WILLY

(Ben crosses L. to her, takes off hat.)

BEN. *(Gallantly.)* How do you do, my dear.

(She wipes hands on apron, then shakes hands.)

LINDA. *(As Willy crosses to Ben.)* Where have you been all these years? Willy's always wondered why you...

WILLY. *(Pulling Ben away from her impatiently, taking him D. R.)* Where is Dad? Didn't you know him? How did you get started?

BEN. Well, I don't know how much you remember...

WILLY. Well, when you left I was just a baby, of course, only three or four years old...

(Linda picks up basket, crossing slowly to C.)

BEN. Three years and eleven months.

WILLY. What a memory, Ben!

START

BEN. *(Putting hat on.)* I have many enterprises, William, and I have never kept books.

WILLY. I remember I was sitting under the wagon in... was it Nebraska?

BEN. It was South Dakota, and I gave you a bunch of wild flowers...

WILLY. Sure, the flowers. I remember you walking away down some open road...

BEN. *(Laughs.)* I was going to find Father in Alaska.

WILLY. Where is he?

BEN. At that age I had a very faulty view of geography, William. I discovered after a few days that I was heading due south, so instead of Alaska I ended up in Africa. *(Turns L. to Linda.)*

LINDA. *(Back up a step.)* Africa!

WILLY. The Gold Coast!

BEN. Principally diamond mines.

LINDA. *(Back up a step.)* Diamond mines!

BEN. Yes, my dear. But I've only a few minutes...

WILLY. No... Boys! Boys!!

(Boys: v. r. behind house, calling "Hup, Hup!" Young Biff and Happy appear, running from behind house. Willy is between boys and Ben.)

Listen to this. This is your Uncle Ben, a great man! ... Tell my boys, Ben!

(Happy flops on stomach, Biff kneels above him.)

BEN. Why, boys...when I was seventeen I walked into the jungle, and when I was twenty-one I walked out... *(He laughs.)* And by God I was rich! *(Walks L. to C. Linda backs up.)*

WILLY. *(To boys.)* You see what I been talking about? The greatest things can happen!

BEN. *(Crosses R. to Willy, glancing at his watch.)* I have an appointment in Ketchikan Tuesday week.

WILLY. *(Stops him.)* No, Ben, please... Tell about Dad. *(To boys.)* I want my boys to hear. I want them to know the kind of stock they spring from. All I remember is a man with a big beard...and I was in Mamma's lap...sitting around a fire...and some kind of high music. *(Music cue no. 7.)*

BEN. His flute. He played the flute...

WILLY. Sure, the flute, that's right!

BEN. *(Boasting.)* Father was a very great, and a very wild-hearted man. *(Biff rises slowly, crosses below Willy to Ben.)* We would start in Boston, and he'd toss the whole family into the wagon, and then he'd drive the team right across the country; through Ohio, and Indiana, Michigan, Illinois and all the western states. And we'd stop in the towns and sell the flutes that he'd made on the way. Great inventor, Father. With one gadget he made more in a week than a man like you could make in a lifetime. *(Crosses L. to L. C. Music fades out.)*

END

~~BEN. *(Shoving Biff toward Ben.)* That's just the way I'm bringing them up. Rugged, well liked, all around...~~

~~BEN. Yeah? Well *(To Biff.)* hit that, boy...hard as you can. *(He pounds his stomach.)*~~

~~BIFF. Oh, no, sir...~~

~~BEN. *(Takes a boxing stance.)* Come on, get to me! *(Laughs.)*~~

~~WILLY. Go to it, Biff; go ahead show him!~~

~~BIFF. Okay! *(He cracks his fists and starts in.)*~~

~~LINDA. *(To Willy.)* Why must he fight, dear? *(Puts basket down by porch steps, near door to kitchen.)*~~

~~BEN. *(Sparring with him.)* Good boy! Good boy!~~