

CARL. Yah. Fer hours. That's just the kinda fella I am.

*He saunters out R. now, whistling to show his nonchalance.
Will rises, crosses L. to counter.*

WILL. (To Grace.) Imagine! Goin' out fer a walk, a night like this.

GRACE. Well, it's really very good for one, Will. It really is.

*Cherie crosses L. to counter carrying coffee and doughnuts,
sits on stool and leans over counter to talk to Elma privately.*

CHERIE. He said he was gonna wake him up. Then he'll be in here pretty soon. You won't let on I said anything 'bout him, will ya?

Will sits near stove, reads newspaper.

ELMA. No. Cross my heart.

*Dr. Lyman is suddenly reminded of another poem, which he
begins to recite in full voice as he rises.*

DR. LYMAN.

"Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And Summer's lease hath all too short a date."

*Still behind counter, Elma hears Dr. Lyman, smiles fondly,
and calls to him across room.*

ELMA. Why, that's one of my favorite sonnets.

DR. LYMAN. It is? Do you read Shakespeare?

*Grace crosses to Dr. Lyman's table, which she clears, taking
dishes back to counter. Dr. Lyman is at counter.*

ELMA. I studied him at school, in English class. I loved the sonnets. I memorized some of them myself.

DR. LYMAN. (Sits on stool.) I used to know them *all*, by heart. And many of the plays I could recite in their entirety. I often did, for the entertainment and the annoyance of my friends.

He and Elma laugh together.

ELMA. Last fall I memorized the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. A boy in class played Romeo and we presented it for convocation one day.

DR. LYMAN. Ah! I wish I had been there to see.

Cherie feels called upon to explain her own position in regard to Shakespeare, as Elma resumes work behind counter. Grace crosses to sink, washes dishes.

CHERIE. Where I went to school, we din read no Shakespeare till the ninth grade. In the ninth grade everyone read *Julius Caesar*. I oney got as far as the eighth. I seen Marlon Brando in the movie, though. I sure do like that Marlon Brando.

DR. LYMAN. (*Now that Cherie has called attention to herself.*) Madam, where is thy Lochinvar?

CHERIE. (*Giggling.*) I don't understand anything you say, but I just love the way you say it.

DR. LYMAN. And I...understand *everything* I say...but privately despise the way I say it.

CHERIE. (*Giggling.*) That's so cute. (*A memory returns.*) I had a very nice friend once that recited poetry.

DR. LYMAN. (*With spoofing seriousness.*) Whatever could have happened to him?

CHERIE. I dunno. He left town. His name was Mr. Everett Brubaker. He sold second-hand cars at the corner of Eighth and Wyandotte. He had a lovely Pontiac car-with-the-top-down. He talked nice, but I guess he really wasn't any nicer'n any of the others.

DR. LYMAN. The others?

CHERIE. Well... ya meet quite a few men in the place I worked at, the Blue Dragon night club, out by the stockyards. Ever hear of it?

DR. LYMAN. No, and I deeply regret the fact.

CHERIE. You're just sayin' that. An educated man like you, you wouldn't have no use fer the Blue Dragon.

DR. LYMAN. (*With a dubious look.*) I wouldn't?

The front door swings open again and the two cowboys, Bo Decker and Virgil Blessing, enter. Their appearance now is rumpledly picturesque and they both could pass, at first glance, for outlaws.

Bo is in his early twenties, is tall and slim and good-looking in an outdoors way. Now he is very unkempt. He wears faded jeans that cling to his legs like shedding skin, his boots, worn