

WILLY/LINDA #1

START →

~~bedroom. Linda has been asleep. Most often jovial, she has developed an iron will in her objections to him. Her struggle is to spiritually subvert him, trying to insinuate guidance and her superior, calmer intelligence.~~

WILLY. *(Still in doorway to bedroom.)* It's all right, I came back.

LINDA. *(Getting up.)* Why? What happened? *(Slight pause.)* Did something happen, Willy?

WILLY. No, nothing happened.

LINDA. You didn't smash the car, did you?

WILLY. *(With casual irritation.)* I said nothing happened. Didn't you hear me?

LINDA. *(Crossing U.)* Don't you feel well?

WILLY. *(Enters bedroom.)* I'm tired to the death.

(Music fades out. Willy crosses D., sits on chair opposite C. of bed. Slight pause.)

I couldn't make it. I just couldn't make it, Linda.

LINDA. *(At his R., very carefully, delicately.)* Where were you all day? You look terrible.

WILLY. I got as far as a little above Yonkers. I stopped for a cup of coffee. ...Maybe it was the coffee.

LINDA. What?

WILLY. *(Pause—bewildered.)* I suddenly couldn't drive any more. The car kept going off onto the shoulder, y'know?

LINDA. *(Helpfully; taking off his coat.)* Oh. ...Maybe it's the steering again. I don't think Angelo knows the Studebaker.

WILLY. No, it's me, it's me. Suddenly I'm goin' sixty miles an hour and I don't remember driving the last five minutes, I'm... I can't seem to...keep my mind to it.

LINDA. Maybe it's your glasses. You never went for your new glasses.

WILLY. No, I see everything. I came back ten miles an hour. It took me nearly four hours from Yonkers.

LINDA. *(Resigned.)* Well, you'll just have to take a rest, Willy, you can't continue this way. *(Puts his coat on bed.)*

WILLY. I just got back from Florida. *(Starts taking off shoes.)*

LINDA. *(Helping with his shoes.)* But you didn't rest your mind. Your mind is overactive, and the mind is what counts, dear.

WILLY. I'll start out in the morning. Maybe I'll feel better in the morning. *(She puts on his slippers.)* These goddam arch supports are killing me.

LINDA. Take an aspirin. Should I get you an aspirin? *(Starts up toward bathroom v.)* It'll soothe you.

END

(Willy stops her. Puts his arm around her shoulder as she kneels at his R. knee.)

WILLY. *(With wonder.)* I was driving along, you understand? And I was fine. I was even observing the scenery. You can imagine, me looking at scenery, on the road every week of my life! But it's so beautiful up there, Linda, the trees are so green and the sun is warm. ...I opened the windshield and just let the warm air bathe over me. And then all of a sudden I'm off the road. ...I'm tellin' ya, I absolutely forgot I was driving. If I'd've gone the other way over the white line, I might've killed somebody. So I went on again...and five minutes later I'm back again, and I nearly... *(Presses two fingers against his eyes.)* I have such thoughts, I have such strange thoughts. *(Rises and goes v.)*

LINDA. *(Quickly follows after him.)* Willy, dear. Talk to them again. There's no reason why you can't work in New York.

WILLY. *(Proud.)* They don't need me in New York. I'm the New England man. I'm from New England.

LINDA. *(Comforting him.)* But you're sixty years old. They can't expect you to keep traveling every week.

WILLY. I'm going to send a wire to Portland — I'm supposed to see Brown and Harrison tomorrow morning at ten o'clock to show the line. Come to think of it, I could sell them! *(Crosses to middle of bed, puts on sleeve of coat.)*

LINDA. *(Gently stops his putting coat on.)* Why don't you go down to the place tomorrow and tell Howard you've simply got to work in New York? You're too accommodating, dear.

WILLY. If old Frank Wagner was alive I'da been in charge of New York.