

NELLIE,

Wonder why I feel
Jittery and jumpy!
I am like a schoolgirl,
Waiting for a dance.

EMILE [*Crosses to D.S. of truck, brandy glass in each hand.*]

Can I ask her now?
I am like a schoolboy!
What will be her answer?
Do I have a chance.

Music No. 7

(Unspoken thoughts)

EMILE holds position on track for two bars, then crosses L. to NELLIE, slowly, not taking his eyes off her. He hands NELLIE the glass in his R. hand, they touch glasses on the first music crescendo, both raise glasses to lips and drink. EMILE is first to lower glass, Nellie follows suit, EMILE leans to her as if he is about to kiss her. Music stops and continues in tremolo, Emile crosses R. level with coffee table, he speaks as he crosses.

In peacetime, the boat from America comes once a month. The ladies—
[Turns to NELLIE.]—the wives of the planters—[NELLIE nods understanding his meaning.]—often go to Australia during the hot months. It can get very hot here. [*Music stops.*]

NELLIE. It can get hot in Little Rock too. [*Realising she has dropped a brick, NELLIE takes a quick sip of Brandy.*]

EMILE [*Puzzled by her answer.*]. It can?

NELLIE. Ah—huh. [*Takes another quick sip.*]

EMILE [*Turns R. places his glass on tray, clears his throat and tries again.*]. I have many books here. [*Eases to C.*] Marcel Proust? [*She doesn't understand him.*] Andre Gide? [*Tries again, eases to her L.*] Did you study French in school.

NELLIE. Oh, yes.

EMILE. Ah! Then you can read French?

NELLIE. No! I can conjugate a few verbs.

EMILE. Aah! [*Crosses R. to C. as if to say, Well that's something.*]

NELLIE [*Sits on small bench L.*]. I bet you read a lot.

EMILE [*Stops, turns and looks at NELLIE.*]. Out here, one becomes hungry to learn everything. [*Crosses L. stops C.*] Not to miss anything. [*Crosses to slightly U.S. of NELLIE L.*] not to let anything [*Pause.*] good [*Pause.*] pass by.

NELLIE is unable to take her gaze off him, he leans almost as if to kiss her.

NELLIE [*Puts brandy glass on D.S. end of bench.*]. Yes?

EMILE. One waits so long for what is good—and when at last it comes . . . [*Deeper emotion in his voice.*] . . . one cannot risk to lose . . . [*Almost kissing her.*] . . . SO . . . [*Crosses U.L. behind her, she looks down.*] so one must speak and act quickly, [*Music starts.*]

Music No. 8

(Introduction to "Some Enchanted Evening")

even—even if it seems almost foolish to be so quick . . . I know it is only two weeks. [*Crossing down behind her.*] There was a dinner given at your Officers' Club. Wasn't it?

NELLIE. Yes it was.

EMILE [*R. foot up on bench behind NELLIE.*]. And that is the way things happen sometimes. Isn't it Nellie.

NELLIE. Yes it is . . . Emile.