

ACT I—SCENE 11

The tabs open to reveal the interior of a native hut. The scene is lit beautifully—a kind of setting for a jewel. After a moment MARY enters from the doorway L., stooping low as she enters, she crosses to C. Stands with her hands folded in front of her. CABLE follows her on a few seconds later and stands L. (Music continues under dialogue.)

CABLE. What's this?

MARY. You wait.

CABLE. There's nobody around here.

MARY. You wait, Lootellan.

CABLE [*Looks off to L., loosens shirt round his neck*]. What's going on—Mary?—[*He turns to MARY.*]

CABLE doesn't finish what he was about to say, a small figure has appeared in the doorway R. LIAT, a girl, about seventeen. Her black hair is drawn smoothly over her head. She wears a similar blouse and black trousers to MARY. She stands barefooted in the doorway for a moment, then enters and drops to D.R., her hands against her sides, she looks at CABLE with the honest curiosity and admiration of a child.

MARY [*Turning to CABLE with a smile*]. You like?

CABLE [*Not taking his eyes from the girl*]. Who is she?

MARY. Liat.

LIAT [*Nods her head and repeats in a small voice*]. Liat.

MARY. Is French name.

CABLE [*Stunned, still looking at the girl*]. Liat.

MARY. But she no French Girl. She Tonkinese like me.

MARY crossing R. to LIAT, takes LIAT's chin between finger and thumb and gently turns her face to front.

We ver' pretty people—No? . . .

Music stops.

MARY laughs quietly, then crosses back to C. The two young people continue to regard each other with silent interest—a longing interest.

CABLE [*To LIAT*]. Do you speak English?

MARY [*Crossing back to C.*]. Only a few word. She talk French. [*To*

LIAT—*Command.*] Francais!

Warn No. 1 Tabs.

Warn switchboard Cues 26 and 27.

LIAT [*Smiling shyly*]. Je parle Francais—un peu.

She holds up forefinger and thumb of L. hand, to show how little French she speaks.

CABLE [*Grinning, nearly as shy as she is*]. Moi, aussi—Un Peu.

He also holds up forefinger and thumb of R. hand, imitating her gesture, just as she did. They both laugh, and in a strange way, MARY feels that she has accomplished her wish. She looks from one to the other, nods, then quietly exits L.

She waddles to the door, and as she goes out, she lets the bamboo curtain roll down across the door, reducing the amount of light in the hut. There is a long moment of silence.

CABLE. Are you afraid of me?

LIAT looks puzzled. CABLE remembers she speaks little English.

Oh . . . er . . . avez-vous peur?

LIAT [*Her young face serious*]. Non.

CABLE takes one step towards her, LIAT backs closer to the wall.

Oui!

CABLE stops, and looks at her, worried and hurt. Her expression changes, first to pity, then to frank adoration.

. . . Non.

LIAT slowly starts to walk towards CABLE.

Music No. 28

“YOUNGER THAN SPRINGTIME”

CABLE gathers LIAT in his arms. She reaches her small arms up around his neck, pushing his shirt off his shoulders as she does so. The lights fade slowly as they embrace, and the No. 1 Tabs close.

PASSAGE OF TIME:

As LIAT starts to walk to CABLE.

Cue 26 Switchboard and Close
No. 1 Tabs slowly.

During this passage of time, two native couples are seen passing behind the No. 1 Tabs from R. to L. The first couple are MARCEL, PAMELA—Small boy. They walk on with the tabs. Following are 1ST MUSCLE MAN and JANET. Both native girls carry baskets of fruits and flowers on their heads. They exit with the tabs into 2nd part of scene. During this interlude—Props raise the bamboo curtain on hut doorway L.

On bar of interlude music.

Cue 27 Switchboard and open
No. 1 Tabs.

LIAT'S HUT No. 2:

As the No. 1 Tabs open again CABLE is seen standing C. with his back resting against the C. post, he is looking off stage to L. LIAT is seated on floor R. gazing up at him. CABLE'S shirt is set on floor C., just U.S. of LIAT.

CABLE [*As if trying to fathom something he cannot understand*]. But you're just a kid . . . How did that Bloody Mary get a kid like you to come here and . . . I don't get it! [*He sits on floor L. of LIAT.*]

Warn Mike O.P. (Bell)

Cette vieille femme . . . votre amie?

LIAT. Ma mere.

CABLE. Your mother! Bloody Mary is your mother! [*Gesture pointing offstage to L.*]

LIAT throws herself into CABLE'S arms and tries to kiss him. He pushes her down away from him, looks at her in amazement.