

ALICE ADAMS

by

Booth Tarkington

Revised Script

by

Dorothy Yost and Mortimer Offner

FADE IN

EXT. PARK - DAY

- 1 MED. SHOT. A large banner, fastened across the park entrance, reads:

75th Jubilee Year

SOUTH RENFORD

The Town with a Future

CAMERA STARTS TO PAN DOWN and slowly discloses the little park in the center of the town with people passing through it and cars being parked along the curbing. As CAMERA STARTS to PAN ACROSS the park,

DISSOLVE

EXT. BUSINESS STREET - DAY

- 2 MED. PANNING SHOT. A small building houses a newspaper office, and a sign on the front glass window reads:

SOUTH RENFORD NEWS

Circulation Ten Thousand

CAMERA PANS ON to the next building. A candy store occupies one side of this, and a doorway the other. Beyond the doorway is a dark flight of steps going up to the second floor, and above the portals is a sign reading:

SOUTH RENFORD BUSINESS COLLEGE

Stenography - Bookkeeping
Typing - Secretarial Work
Office Help Supplied

(CONTINUED)

The young man, who has been listening with a carefully veiled expression, hardly glances at the flowers and makes no move to take them out.

FLORIST

Two dollars a bunch. They're the first of the season...

ALICE

(moving quickly away)
Oh, yes -- well, they wouldn't go with my gown anyway...

(she gives a little, tinkling laugh)

I really should have come here earlier, when you had a better selection, but I had so many engagements -- well, I hardly see anything that will do -- thank you just the same...

And nodding brightly to the florist she walks briskly out as though too busy to linger long anywhere.

DISSOLVE

EXT. BELLEVIEW PARK - AFTERNOON

6 CLOSE SHOT. Violets are hiding in their leaves and Alice's hand seeks them out to pick them and put them in her hat which already holds a few.

DISSOLVE

EXT. BELLEVIEW PARK - AFTERNOON

7 CLOSE SHOT. The hat is almost full. The violets are getting fewer. Alice's hands move among the leaves, her feet advance a few steps -- stop -- and CAMERA PANS AHEAD to a sign reading:

Don't Pick
the Flowers

CAMERA PANS BACK TO Alice and UP TO her face. She stares at the sign, straightens, gets a little stab of pain in her back and reaches automatically around to rub it as her glance guiltily searches the landscape. Then she sees some one approaching.

8 MED. LONG SHOT. An old gardener, pushing a wheelbarrow in front of him, is headed directly toward Alice.

- 9 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice looks down at the violets, hesitates a panicky second, then shakes the flowers down and claps the hat on her head, letting it ride high for fear of crushing the stolen blossoms. Straightening with an air as casual as she can make it, she turns leisurely away.
- 10 MED. CLOSE TRAVELING SHOT. The plodding gardener glances up as he sees the young girl approaching.
- 11 MED. CLOSE TRAVELING SHOT. Alice, walking nonchalantly, comes forward, pulling her small bundles out of her coat pocket. She begins to smile as she approaches the gardener.

ALICE

Good afternoon...

- 12 CLOSE TRAVELING SHOT. Alice's smile fades as she suddenly becomes aware of a violet dangling down from under her hat right before her eyes. Her steps falter. Then, blowing quickly at the violet, she smiles brightly again and starts on.
- 13 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice passes the gardener, and he turns and looks after her. Slowly, his wrinkled, dour face breaks into a smile. He picks up his wheelbarrow, which he has halted while watching the girl, and pushes it on. CAMERA TRUCKS WITH him until he halts by the violet beds, looks down, bends over and picks a violet. Still smiling, he thrusts it into the buttonhole of his breast pocket, and then jogs on.

DISSOLVE

EXT. ADAMS' HOUSE - AFTERNOON

- 14 MED. FULL SHOT. This house, set back of a picket fence, is of that particularly unfortunate design erected in the first years of the twentieth century, when square pillars replaced Colonial columns and the second floor hung out over the porch lawn flaunting cupolas and gables side by side. The lawn about this house is ragged, and while there are some straggling bushes, there are no flowers.

Alice, now carrying her violet-filled hat, is just entering the gate, and nearly spills her precious burden as she lifts the sagging gate up to keep it from sticking against the walk, and lifts it again when she closes it behind her -- juggling with her hat the while. Then she turns toward the house -- hurrying a little.

DISSOLVE

DISSOLVE IN

INT. ADAMS' LOWER HALL - AFTERNOON

15

MED. SHOT. The hall is small and seems crowded, with hat rack, table and a grandfather's clock. Faded wallpaper in a vine design adds a cluttery touch to the slightly worn flowered carpet. A glimpse of living room and dining room can be had on each side of the hall, and it is from the dining room that Mrs. Adams emerges carrying a dish of soda crackers. Mrs. Adams is a woman in her middle forties, her face set in an habitual expression of futile protest, marring the prettiness which she must have once had in her youth. She is dressed in a gingham house gown and looks tired and "let down." She starts for the stairs just as the front door opens and Alice enters.

MRS. ADAMS

(brightening
a little)

Why, Alice -- what took you so long?

ALICE

(coming forward
and showing
the hat filled
with violets)

These. I picked them in Belleview Park -- a hundred and eighty-six of them. That's enough to make two lovely bouquets for tonight, Mother.

She is very bright and eager about them, but her Mother only looks at her and shakes her head commiseratingly.

MRS. ADAMS

Oh, you poor child --

ALICE

(quickly)

Never mind -- I got them --

(she turns away,
only to swing
back and ask)

How's Father?

MRS. ADAMS

(already on her
way upstairs)

Better today -- much better --

Alice nods and returns her attention to the violets, hurrying out toward the kitchen to put them in water.

INT. ADAMS' BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

16

MED. SHOT. This room is rather small and narrow and furnished with an imitation mahogany bedroom suite.

On one side of the bed is a small table holding a radio, and another table is on the opposite side with a bed lamp, books, magazines and medicines jumbled together.

Propped up by pillows in bed is Virgil Adams, a thin, worn, grey-haired man with wistful eyes and a gentle, friendly smile. The smile is not in evidence at the moment, for he is gazing distastefully down at a bowl of soup on a tray. His expression does not change as he glances up at his wife who enters, carrying the saucer of soda crackers, and assuming a forced cheerfulness supposed to be helpful to the invalid.

MRS. ADAMS

Is there anything else you want, Virgil? A little fruit --?

(she puts the
crackers on the
tray and stops to
gaze down into
the bowl there)

Why, Virgil! You're not eating your soup!

MR. ADAMS

(pushing the
bowl slightly
away)

Don't want it.

MRS. ADAMS

(pushing the
bowl back)

But you must eat it.

(she tucks the
napkin about
his chest and
uses an indulgent
tone as she adds)

You've got to get your strength back.

Adams throws her a suspicious look, which she disregards.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

You've got to get good and strong -- so you can fly around and find something really good to get into.

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

(looking at
her sharply)So that's it! Hinting at that
again!

Mrs. Adams has moved over to the window to readjust the
shades and shake out the curtains.

MRS. ADAMS

(feigning innocence)

Why, I'm not doing any hinting,
Virgil --(she turns to
gather up the
strewn papers
and magazines)But, of course, when you get well,
-- you mustn't go back to that old
hole again.

She doesn't look at him as she puts the magazines on the
table, moves the lamp a little to the right, and the
medicine glass a little to the left.

MR. ADAMS

(banging down
his soup spoon)Old hole, is it?! Let me tell
you that Lamb's is the best
wholesale drug company in the
state!

MRS. ADAMS

(dropping her
casual pose
and turning
to him quickly)I don't care what it is -- it's
just an old hole as far as you're
concerned, -- and if you don't
owe it to me to look for something
different, at least you owe it to
your children.

ALICE'S VOICE

(from the hall)

Mother!

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS
(straightening)
Yes! I'm coming.
(she moves towards
the door as she
speaks)
Look at your daughter, going to
a big party tonight and she's
got to wear a dress that's two
years old! How do you expect
her to get anywhere if ---

ALICE
(insistently)
Mother!

INT. UPPER HALL - LATE AFTERNOON

17 MED. SHOT. Alice has just come upstairs, carrying hat
and coat over her arm. As Mrs. Adams closes her
husband's door behind her, Alice beckons her nearer,
impatiently frowning.

ALICE
(in a low voice)
For heaven's sake, Mother!
Can't you wait until father's
up and around before you start
to nag him?

MRS. ADAMS
(reproachfully)
I don't nag him. Besides, I
think, Alice, that I ought to
know by this time how to handle
your father.

With that, she turns and starts down the stairs, her
very shoulder line showing the martyrdom of
misunderstanding. Alice watches her for a moment, shakes
her head, glances toward her father's room, straightens
and goes in to see him.

INT. ADAMS' ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

18 MED. SHOT - Adams looks up as the door opens and Alice
slips quietly in. At sight of his daughter, the worn,
tired face of the sick man lights up with a smile. Alice
tosses her hat and coat on a nearby chair and crossing
to him, sits down on the edge of the bed and brushes
back one of his straying grey locks.

ALICE
(tenderly)
Poor daddykins. Every time he's
better someone talks him into
getting mad and he has a relapse.
It's a shame.

(CONTINUED)

She picks up his tray, rises and carries it over to the chiffonier. Adams leans back and his face grows wistful and unhappy as he speaks.

MR. ADAMS

Well, -- it's kinda funny for a man who's been in business with Lamb & Company as long as I have, to hear it called an old hole, -- that's what your mother calls it. Why, it's a mighty pleasant place to work...

ALICE

(as she straightens
his pillow)

Yes, but father, it's just that mother feels they don't appreciate you there.

MR. ADAMS

Well, they've h'isted my salary every two years all the time I've worked for them, -- and they took Walter right on, soon as I asked them last year. And old Mr. Lamb has been wonderful to me, holding my job open while I've been sick all this time. Don't you think that looks as if they thought something of me?

ALICE

(touched)

Of course, dad.

MR. ADAMS

It's just that it's kind of funny when you think you've done pretty fairly well, and the men at the head of it seem to think so too -- it's kind of funny to have your mother think you're mostly a failure.

ALICE

(close to tears
and rising with
sudden decision)

You're not a failure, Dad, -- you're not. I'm going to talk to Mother.

MR. ADAMS

(alarmed)

You better not. I didn't mean to start anything.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(from the doorway;
smiling at him)
Don't worry -- you didn't.

She goes out, taking the tray with her.

INT. ADAMS' KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

19 MED. SHOT - The kitchen is old fashioned and badly in need of repair and especially paint. Mrs. Adams, an apron over her house dress, is preparing dinner and her every gesture is an unconscious protest against this form of work. She is just lifting down from the cupboard some chinaware for the table when Alice comes down the backstairs leading to the upper hall.

ALICE
(on her way down)
Mother -- don't you think we're both a little selfish, trying to make Father go out and look for something better? -- After all, we've got enough.

She arrives at the bottom of the stairs and crosses to the cupboard to continue getting out the materials for the table.

MRS. ADAMS
(on a note of irritation)
Enough? I suppose you have a limousine to go to the dance tonight -- I suppose you've only to call the florist and order up some orchids --

ALICE
(trying to be bright and gay in spite of her mother)
Not orchids --

She crosses to the sink where she has placed the flowers in a basin of water in which a piece of ice is floating.

INT. KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

20 CLOSE SHOT - Alice rearranges the flowers as she goes on.

ALICE
Violets, mother - the first of the season -- picked fresh today.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS' VOICE

I suppose you picked yourself a
new dress, too.

Alice's cheerful attitude falters, but only for an
instant. Then she straightens determinedly.

INT. ADAMS' KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

- 21 MED. SHOT - Alice picks up a stack of plates and starts
toward the swinging door leading into the dining room.

ALICE

My organdie dress looks almost
new, with those new flounces
you put on it.

INT. ADAMS' DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

- 22 MED. SHOT - The dining room has a sideboard with glass
doors showing cups hanging on hooks and an assortment of
best china. A cut glass punch bowl and matching cups
adorns the exposed middle shelf with doilies under them.
The room is paneled in oak half way and is topped by a
plate rail holding hand painted plates of various sizes.
The table is round and the chairs have imitation leather
seats.

MRS. ADAMS' VOICE

(through
swinging door)

What's Mildred Palmer going to
wear tonight?

Again Alice's busy hands slow their task - she hesitates,
then answers as casually as she is able.

ALICE

I don't know -- her maize
georgette, probably --

She starts back to the kitchen.

INT. ADAMS' KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

- 23 MED. SHOT - Alice enters while her mother is busy at the
stove.

ALICE

-- the one she brought back from
Paris ---

(CONTINUED)

Mrs. Adams looks up to make some remark but at that moment the SOUND of the front door is heard slamming shut.

MRS. ADAMS

There's your brother --

ALICE

(turning quickly
to her Mother
and lowering her
voice on an
anxious note)

Mother, are you sure Walter's
going to take me to the dance
tonight?

MRS. ADAMS

Why, of course -- why shouldn't
he?

ALICE

(shrugging)
You know Walter. He may have
one of his mysterious dates
down town ---

MRS. ADAMS

Now don't worry, Alice -- you
just leave him to me ---

WALTER'S VOICE

(from dining room)
Isn't supper ready?

MRS. ADAMS

(putting on a
bright smile and
moving toward
the door)
Now, Walter ---

INT. ADAMS' DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

24 MED. SHOT - Walter, a nice kid boy about nineteen is
standing just inside the hall door, hat in hand,
frowning at the table as his mother enters.

MRS. ADAMS

-- there's no hurry --

Alice has followed her Mother in carrying a handful of
silver.

WALTER

(shifting impatiently)
Is for me -- I got a date.

(CONTINUED)

He crosses to the table, chooses a pickle from a dish there and begins to munch on it -- not seeing the panic-stricken look Alice sends her mother. The latter makes a surreptitious, but soothing gesture, then turns brightly to Walter.

MRS. ADAMS

I'm so glad you remembered the
Palmer dance, dear - I've laid
out your clothes ---

WALTER

(who has started
for the hall door,
now stops to
interrupt roughly)
I told you a week ago I wasn't
goin' to that ole dance!
(he starts again
for the door)

MRS. ADAMS

(hurrying after him)
But Walter ---

WALTER

Don't Walter me. I'm no
society snake. I'm just as
liable to go to that Palmer
dance as I am to eat a couple
of barrels of broken glass.

He flings himself out of the room and Mrs. Adams fairly runs after him, leaving Alice clutching the sugar bowl, real fear creeping into her eyes. The door closes and Mrs. Adams' voice can be heard indistinctly, then ---

WALTER'S VOICE

(raised in
anger)

Let her get somebody else to
take her -- she ought to be
able to get one man, anyhow, I
should think -- she tries hard
enough.

Very carefully Alice sets the sugar bowl on the table, but her lips are trembling.

MED. SHOT. Mrs. Adams is making hushing gestures, trying to get him to lower his voice.

MRS. ADAMS

Now Walter...

WALTER

(turning from
her impatiently)

I haven't got any time to argue.
I'll grab a bite to eat down
town.

He picks his soft hat up from a chair where he has tossed it, and starts for the front door, but here Mrs. Adams corners him. Catching his arm she turns him around and speaks in a tense whisper.

MRS. ADAMS

You can't do this, Walter --
you can't! It's more than I can
bear to see her disappointed
when she's planned it for days.
Why, she spent hours in Bellevue
Park this afternoon gathering
• violets to wear because she --
she can't afford to -- to buy a
decent bouquet --
(she fumbles
for her handkerchief,
the tears brimming)
-- like the other girls -- and
now -- you act this way --

She finds the handkerchief. Walter, whose first attitude has been rather like the stag at bay, has gradually relaxed, his defiance changing into a scowl -- and then into sullen acceptance. He glares at his mother, looks toward the door, glances back at Mrs. Adams and suddenly flings his soft hat against the wall.

WALTER

Oh, blub!

MRS. ADAMS

(looking up eagerly)
That's a good boy, darling.
You'll never be sorry...
(she puts her
hand lovingly
on his arm,
but he pulls
away)

(CONTINUED)

25 (CONTINUED)

WALTER

Aw, cut it out!

(he slouches
toward his hat,
then turns back)

If I take her, will you pay for
the taxi?

MRS. ADAMS

(anxiously)

Oh, Walter. I haven't any money.
Couldn't you -- just this once?

WALTER

No, I couldn't...

(he pauses, frowns,
then growls)

But I'll get somethin' for her
to ride in.

As he starts to remove his topcoat and crosses to pick
up his hat where he has flung it, while Mrs. Adams
returns to the dining room.

INT. ADAMS' DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

26 MED. SHOT. Alice, on the verge of tears, is moving the
knives and forks around the table, her hands
automatically occupied. Mrs. Adams hurries in, smiling,
but the girl does not look up.

MRS. ADAMS

(closing the
door behind her)

It's all right, dear. Walter
will be glad to take you.

ALICE

(with her back
to her mother)

He sounded like it.

DISSOLVE

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

27 MED. SHOT. This is a small room with, perhaps, a bay
window giving it depth. The furniture is an inexpensive
suite of white enamel, the curtains and bedspread are
dotted Swiss, the wall-paper flowered and the lamps with
silk shades.

(CONTINUED)

There is a framed picture of Mr. and Mrs. Adams on the wall and another along the line of Maxfield Parrish's girl in the swing. In between have been hung by thin silk cords two large pieces of white cardboard on which Alice has pasted cut-out advertisements -- Lucky Strike Cigarette type showing a smartly dressed couple in evening clothes, and a young man and woman either dancing or leaning against the rail of a yacht. These are hung on either side of the dressing table, where Alice is now standing, attired in the almost new organdie, ready for the party. She turns around several times to get the effect from all sides -- and then pauses to listen as soft music is heard from the radio in Mr. Adams' room down the hall. This reminds her that she must tell her father goodnight and catching up the second bouquet of violets (she is wearing the first as a corsage) she hurries out.

INT. ADAMS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

28 MED. SHOT. Mr. Adams is propped up in bed listening to the quietly tuned radio, the lamp beside him making a pool of light on the coverlid in which his hands keep time vaguely to the music. The door opens and Alice enters, swaying toward the bed on eager feet.

ALICE

I've come to say goodnight,
Daddy dear.

MR. ADAMS

(gazing at her)

Well, well, well. You look
mighty fine -- mighty fine.

Mrs. Adams enters and stands back, gaining compensation for her work from praises of Alice. The girl, meanwhile leans over and brushes the violets across her father's nose.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

(wagging a
finger).

Why, Alice, who's your beau?

Mrs. Adams snaps out of the beaming attitude and her lips tighten, but Alice only laughs.

(CONTINUED)

(archly)
 Never you mind. He treats me
 pretty well, doesn't he?
 (and then,
 swiftly, to
 forestall questions)
 I must get my cape --

She hurries out of the room, leaving her father
 smilingly gazing after her.

MR. ADAMS

(innocently)
 to his wife)
 Who is takin' her to th' party?

MRS. ADAMS

(comes forward,
 lowering her
 voice, her lips
 a thin line of
 disapproval)
 Walter's taking her. And it's
 a shame a girl as pretty as
 Alice has to depend on her
brother to take her out, when
she might have any man in town
 if she only had some money to
 buy decent clothes.

MR. ADAMS

(becoming truculent)
 What's wrong with th' dress
 she's got on?

MRS. ADAMS

You would say that. You know
 what I mean -- she isn't run
 after like the other girls
 because she's poor and hasn't
 any background.

MR. ADAMS

Oh, my, my! Are you at that
 again?

MUSIC. Turning to the radio he impatiently tunes in
 louder so the music drowns his wife's next words. He
 knows she is speaking for her lips move vehemently.

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

29

MED. CLOSE SHOT (MUSIC) - Alice, at the dressing table
 is tying the ribbons of a thin silk cape and inspecting
 herself in the mirror, while the music from her father's
 radio tunes down to a distant murmur. Leaning forward
 she adjusts the side leaves to see both profiles, wets
 the tips of her fingers and arches her eyebrows, then
 tilts back her head and smiles. Suddenly sweeping to
 her feet, she steps back and assumes a gay pose.

(CONTINUED)

29 (CONTINUED)

ALICE

(murmuring
archly to an
imaginary escort)

Just two dances -- that's all
you may have...

She turns to an equally imaginary figure slightly to her right and smiles with slow, affected charm. Then shakes her finger in gay reproof.

ALICE (cont'd)

You naughty boys! Why don't
you dance with the other girls?

WALTER'S VOICE

(mockingly
imitating hers)

You naughty boys...

30 MED. SHOT. Alice turns quickly to find her brother's head sticking in at the door. The rest of him is attired for the party.

WALTER

Why don't you get one of those
guys you're talkin' to, to take
you t'night instead of draggin'
me...

ALICE

(still keeping
up her gay
attitude)

Now you know you just love to
escort your little...

WALTER

Hey! Take it easy -- this is
me -- Walter... Come on - let's
scram...

He pulls his head back into the hallway and Alice hurries across to her dressing table to collect her gloves, the new vanity purchased that day, handkerchief and bouquet of violets.

INT. UPPER HALL - NIGHT

31 MED. SHOT. Mrs. Adams is just coming from her husband's room, wearing a martyred expression, but with a determined line around her lips. Alice hurries out of her room at the same time and the mother brightens at sight of the young girl.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS
You look lovely, Alice --
you'll be the belle of the
party tonight...

Alice reaches her Mother and they both start downstairs.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - NIGHT

32 MED. CLOSE SHOT - CAMERA ON A BOOM. Mrs. Adams and her
daughter descend the steps, talking.

ALICE
I hope I look nice enough not
to have to dance with that fat
Frank Dowling. All I want is
for him to ask me just once --
so I can treat him the way the
other girls do.

33 MED. SHOT. By this time they have reached the bottom of
the stairs and Alice pauses for a last glance at the
mirror in the hat rack.

34 CLOSE SHOT. Alice gazes at her reflection with wistful
hope.

ALICE
(softly)
I hope somebody new will be
there -- somebody who is tall
and dark -- and romantic --
somebody I've dreamed of all
my life...

She is interrupted by the SOUND of a loud and raucous
honking from the car outside -- and turns, flustered,
certainly startled back to normalcy.

35 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mrs. Adams is just coming forward with
an old rain coat which has once belonged to either Mr.
Adams or Walter.

MRS. ADAMS
Here, dear -- put this on ...

ALICE
(staring at coat)
I won't need that in a taxi,
Mother.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(flustered)

You will to -- to get in and out,
and you can leave it in the...

(she catches
herself on the
verge of a revelation
and hastily adds)

It's begun to rain a little,
dear -- and you'll need it
anyway...

(before Alice
can protest further,
she flings the coat
around her shoulders
and hurries her
toward the door,
saying)

Have a good time, dearie...

ALICE

I mean to...

(she pauses to
kiss her Mother
and repeats with
determined emphasis)

I mean to...

Then the SOUND of Walter honking impatiently again,
Alice hurries out.

EXT. ADAMS' HOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

36 Alice, the coat over her shoulders and holding up her
long skirts, hurries through the rain from the house to
the sidewalk. As she looks up, her face falls. Walter
is waiting at the wheel of a Model T Ford roadster, -- a
dilapidated wreck, the engine already boiling.

ALICE

What on earth is this, Walter?

WALTER

Borrowed it from a friend of
mine -- can't kick at the price...
Well, are you goin' to get in?

ALICE

(as she does so,
shaking her head)

Oh, Walter.

Alice sighs as she settles herself in the seat, and the
car starts with a jerk that snaps both their heads back.

DISSOLVE

EXT. PALMER HOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

- 37 The Model T Ford swings in between two massive ornamental posts flanking a driveway leading up in a sweeping crescent to the well-lit house beyond.

INT. FORD - NIGHT

- 38 Alice, suddenly realizing where they are, clutches her brother's arm.

ALICE

(in a panic)

Walter! We mustn't go in here!

WALTER

(stopping the car)

What's the matter?

ALICE

(desperately)

Go back, go back! Leave this awful car outside!

Walter glares at her and starts to back up. There is a SOUND of crashing bumpers.

EXT. PALMER HOUSE - NIGHT - RAIN

- 39 Walter has backed into a long, sleek, foreign-made coupe. The young man at the wheel honks warningly. Another car drives up behind, completely blocking Walter's attempted agress.

INT. FORD - NIGHT

- 40- Walter cranes his neck to look out, then turns back to
42 Alice.

WALTER

Now see what you've done. I'll have to drive around anyway.

He starts the car forward with another neck-breaking jerk.

ALICE

(in an agony of self-consciousness)

Did he see us?

WALTER

Did who see us?

ALICE

I don't know.

EXT. PALMER HOUSE - NIGHT

- 43 MED. SHOT. A liveried doorman is just stepping back from a town car which speeds smoothly on down the drive. The Ford clatters up and the doorman, surprised but alert to duty, steps forward.

INT. FORD - NIGHT

- 44 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice scrooges down in the seat and turns her face away.

EXT. PALMER HOUSE - NIGHT

- 45 MED. SHOT. The car swings on by the doorman who stands with outstretched hand in the act of opening a door which has suddenly removed itself. He recovers his poise as a coupe of a foreign make drives up and halts.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

- 46 MED. SHOT. Walter finds a parking place and starts to back in.

INT. FORD - NIGHT

- 47 MED. CLOSE SHOT. While Walter is engaged in parking, Alice is glancing anxiously through the back window.

WALTER

(belligerently)

Well, do you want to go home?
You bet I'm willing.

ALICE

(hastily)

No! Leave the car here.

WALTER

Sit still till I lock her so's
none of these millionaires'll
run off with her.

He turns the key in the lock and gets out, leaving Alice hastily powdering her nose.

WALTER'S VOICE

Cripes, it's wet...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT
MED. CLOSE SHOT - toward back of car. Walter is picking his way across a streaming gutter. He reaches the curbing and then notices that a length of garden hose is hanging out of the back of the Ford. Hastily he stuffs it in. Then moves forward to open the door for his sister. CAMERA PANS WITH him.

ALICE

(getting out)

Wait...

She takes off the raincoat and hands it to him.

WALTER

What's the idea?

ALICE

Never mind...Leave this with your things in the men's dressing room, as if it were an extra one of your own.

And then, before Walter can protest, she starts running toward the house.

EXT. PALMER HOUSE - NIGHT

MED. SHOT. An elderly gentleman, his wife and a young girl, the latter swathed in furs, are getting out of a limousine...Mr. and Mrs. Lamb and their granddaughter, Henrietta. The doorman touches his cap respectfully as they pass and the limousine drives on. Racing up behind it, under a fine drizzle, Alice and Walter arrive.

ALICE

(running up the
steps and laughing
airily)

Joke on us! Our car broke down
outside!

DOORMAN

Beg pardon, Miss?

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

50

MED. LONG SHOT. The hall is imposing and dignified, with high ceilings and pale walls, on one of which hangs a fine painting above a console table with a marble vase of flowers. To the left of the entrance is a cloakroom for the gentlemen. Lovely gowned girls are descending the steps from their retiring room on the second floor. These steps are on the left. There are four, and then a small platform where a low couch has been placed against the wall. Then there are four more steps, curving to the right, and another platform, where a floor vase of flowers is just visible. Under the stairs, but not seen in this shot, is a small bar, and at the far end of the hall, more chairs are grouped around a low table. On the right, huge iron-grilled doors open onto a platform which, in turn, leads down three steps into a huge drawing room. Gay music comes from this direction and on the platform can be glimpsed Mildred and her mother and father, greeting newly arriving guests.

Alice and Walter enter, and he turns left, while she starts toward the stairs.

WALTER

Look here...

(and as Alice
retraces a step)

I suppose you want me to dance
the first dance with you.

ALICE

If you please, Walter.

(she smiles at
him, adding)

I'll be right down.

She hurries toward the stairs, nodding and smiling brightly at two girls who are descending. They offer indifferent smiles in return and one looks back at her. Then they join their escorts, moving toward the drawing room.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

51

LONG SHOT - FROM platform. In f.g. Mildred, a tall, statuesque girl, magnificently gowned, is receiving with her father and mother, both elderly, handsome people, with the assurance of long years of wealth behind them. Beyond can be seen the drawing room, where couples are already dancing. At the far end, long doors open out onto a balcony and here the Negro musicians are stationed. (MUSIC)

(CONTINUED)

On the left, in the center of the wall, a low, black marble fireplace has a very tall mirror, framed in black and silver above it, reflecting the passing dancers and also a marble cornucopia spilling out marble fruit onto the mantel shelf. On each side hang a couple of fine tapestries. Around the walls are placed chairs and sofas from the various rooms in the house to accommodate the chaperons, and there are several tables on the right hand side for those who prefer to play bridge.

(NOTE: The decorations of the house should be a nice blending between Italian and the better type of moderne, giving a sense of dignity, wealth, and at the same time avoiding extremes.)

Mildred and her parents, in f.g., are just greeting a rich but slightly overdressed elderly woman, her daughter, who is decidedly plump, and her son, also inclined toward stoutness, whose face is set in a perpetual childish pout.

MILDRED

Mrs. Dowling...
(she passes her
onto her mother)
And Ella -- so glad you could come...
(she passes her on)
Good evening, Frank...

FRANK

(smiling)
Good evening, Mildred...

Meanwhile Mr. and Mrs. Palmer have been heard murmuring greetings. The Dowlings pass on and a smartly turned out couple approach. Mildred greets them with a charming smile.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

52

MED. FULL SHOT. Groups are arriving, couples passing in and out as the MUSIC stops. Walter is smoking and waiting for Alice. She comes down the steps, making her descent as she had practised at home. Walter sticks his cigarette in a nearby vase and steps forward to meet her.

WALTER

Come on. Nobody's watchin' you.

Alice ignores his remark, takes his arm and starts toward the Palmers.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

We must speak to Mildred and
Mr. and Mrs. Palmer.

WALTER

Speak to them? I haven't got a
thing to say to them.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

53 MED. SHOT toward platform. Voices and laughter are
heard as they enter. Alice comes brightly and eagerly
forward, with Walter lagging behind her. Mildred turns
and smiles mechanically, but Alice takes her outstretched
hand in both of hers. Walter stands by, scarcely
suppressing a yawn.

ALICE

(to Mildred)

You didn't wear the maize
georgette -- that's what I
thought you were going to --
but you look simply darling,
and those pearls...

Mildred's smile becomes even more frozen, and she passes
Alice on toward her mother.

MILDRED

You know my father and mother --

Alice is flustered for an instant. Walter shakes hands
perfunctorily with Mildred.

MRS. PALMER

Good evening, Alice.

MR. PALMER

Miss Adams ---

ALICE

Fine, thank you... My -- my
brother...

MR. AND MRS. PALMER

Good evening.

WALTER

How d'you do.

Walter yawns as he follows Alice toward the dance floor.

54 MED. SHOT toward steps. Alice pauses on the first step, unconsciously touching her hair, resettling her dress, little gestures which reveal her own uncertainty, though the bright smile remains, and her eyes start searching -- searching. Walter comes up behind her. The MUSIC begins again.

WALTER

(wearily)

Well, come on...

She turns to him with a brilliant look, as though the handsomest man in the room had just asked her, and they start away.

55 LONG SHOT. The dancers are circling the room. Alice and Walter are in f.g., and both are dancing exceptionally well, even if Walter's steps are a little extravagant.

56 CLOSE SHOT. Alice and Walter are dancing, the boy with a blase, slightly bored expression, the girl smiling delightfully, but looking at each passing couple, nodding once, and giving an artificial little laugh.

ALICE

It's wonderful -- and the mystery is where you ever learned to do it.

WALTER

You probably think there's no other place to dance in this town but these frozen-faced joints.

ALICE

Frozen-faced? Why, everyone's having a splendid time. Look at them.

WALTER

Oh, they holler loud enough... You don't call that Palmer family frozen-faced, I suppose?

ALICE

Certainly not. They're just dignified -- and I don't like you to talk that way about them, Walter.

(CONTINUED)

WALTER
(scornfully)
They passed you on like you had
something catching.

ALICE
Why, Walter! Mildred's my
intimate friend.

WALTER
Poor you!

ALICE
(quickly,
to change
the subject)
Look, Walter -- there's Henrietta
Lamb. Isn't her dress too divine?

Walter turns Alice around to glimpse the party
mentioned.

57 MED. SHOT. Henrietta is in f.g., a slender girl, not
pretty, but ultra-smart-looking, dancing with a
distinguished-looking man.

WALTER'S VOICE
(lowered, but
still contemptuous)
She's too bony.

58 CLOSE SHOT. Alice and her brother execute a couple
of quick whirls..

WALTER
And she dances like she was
doing herself a favor.

As Alice and Walter swing by the balcony opening,
Walter looks up.

WALTER (cont'd)
(grinning)
Hi, Louie...!

Alice turns hopefully with a brilliant smile.
If her brother knows one of the guests --

59 MED. CLOSE SHOT. The Negro band leader exhibits a toothy grin.

LOUIE

What you doin' here, big boy?

60 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice's smile has faded into surprise, but her brother just keeps his feet moving to the MUSIC and seems inclined to stay and talk.

WALTER

Brought my sister. You're gettin' up in the big time yourself.

LOUIE

Yes -- sah!

Alice makes a move, urging Walter away and he dances on with her.

61 CLOSE (dancing) SHOT. Alice is still surprised and slightly embarrassed.

WALTER

That's Jazz Louie and his half-breed bunch!

At this moment the MUSIC stops and they pause. Walter joins the APPLAUSE perfunctorily.

62 MED. SHOT. Alice keeps looking around, smiling, trying to catch people's eyes, nodding when she can, and, for the most part, receiving only a passing glance or a vague smile in return. The MUSIC starts again and Walter swings her away.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

- 63 CLOSE (DANCING) SHOT - Walter's indifferent glance passes over the crowd around him.

WALTER
(dropping his voice
confidentially)
There's Frank and Ella Dowling.
Good thing that tub of a sister
comes with him -- else he'd have
no one else to dance with.

He circles Alice for her to see. At the mention of Frank's name a slightly desperate look creeps into Alice's eyes.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

- 64 MED. SHOT - Ella and Frank are dancing, or rather hopping around the floor.

WALTER'S VOICE
And vice versa.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

- 65 CLOSE (DANCING) SHOT - Walter's remark restores some of Alice's self-assurance.

ALICE
(glancing up
at him with
an indulgent
smile)
You mustn't forget to ask Ella
for a dance, -- and Henrietta
Lamb, and Mildred, too.

WALTER
Me?

(MUSIC)

The music stops and though there is a brief handclapping a little piano run announces a temporary halt. They start to move off the floor, CAMERA TRUCKS with them.

WALTER (cont'd)
I'm as liable to dance with
those sticks as I am to buy
a bucket of rusty tacks, and
eat 'em.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

66

MED. SHOT - Walter and Alice pause near some wall chairs. Beyond can be seen the chaperones.

WALTER

As soon as I get rid of you I'm going back to that room where I left my hat and coat and smoke myself to death.

He glances in that direction and Alice suddenly clutches his arm.

ALICE

(trying to smile)

Well, you mustn't -- you mustn't get rid of me too soon, Walter.

She straightens and looks about, her lips growing a little more set. Several couples pass, laughing merrily. Alice looks after them, her eyes wistful. A young man comes up and pauses to look around, as though in search of some one. Instantly Alice brightens and turns to her brother.

ALICE (cont'd)

You naughty old Walter. Aren't you ashamed to be such a wonderful dancer, and then only dance with little me?

As the young man glances toward Alice, she lends greater color to her impersonation of the lively belle by shaking her finger at her brother, flourishing her arms, and brushing his nose saucily with the bunch of violets in her hand.

ALICE (cont'd)

Why, you could go on the stage if you wanted to. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have people clapping their hands and shouting "Hurrah!"

The young man finds what he is looking for and starts to pass.

ALICE (cont'd)

(her voice
growing
slightly louder)

Hurrah for Walter Adams - Hurrah!

WALTER

(quietly and coldly)
Calm down.

(CONTINUED)

66 (CONTINUED)

ALICE

You would like it, you know you would. Just think, -- everyone shouting "Hurrah! Hurrah!"

The young man is gone. Walter looks down at Alice, scorn shading into pity.

WALTER

The place will be pulled if you yell any louder. Besides I'm no goat.

ALICE

(laughing)

Goat? What on earth --

WALTER

(with a gesture
of his thumb;
at the bunch
of violets)

I can't eat dead violets.

Alice's expression falters as she studies the bouquet and notes its pathetic withered look. She freshens it by rearranging the leaves, and makes an attempt to regain her poise as she glances up with a smile.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

67 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Everyone seems to know everyone else, except a few wall-flowers with their parents, and all are talking and laughing, moving back and forth from group to group. Alice in foreground is growing tense and strained, her brother restless. SOUND of the musicians are heard tuning up.

WALTER

Look here -- can't you flag one of these long-tailed birds to take you on for the next?

A girl in black velvet passes, conversing with a couple. She casts a quick glance at Alice.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

68 MED. CLOSE SHOT - The girl in black velvet turns back to her companions as they stroll by Alice.

GIRL IN BLACK VELVET

Oh, organdie! Nobody wears organdie for evening gowns except in mid-summer.

69

MED. CLOSE SHOT - Alice's face falls as she catches this remark. Walter shifts impatiently.

WALTER

Well, how long are we goin' to stand here? My feet are sprouting roots.

ALICE

(in a daze of unhappiness)

What, dear?

WALTER

(more gently)

I don't want to leave you high and dry, but I can't stand it.

ALICE

(clutching his arm frantically)

No, Walter!... You mustn't leave me.

(MUSIC)

Once more her eyes go searching... The MUSIC begins... and Walter is just about to resignedly move into place when Alice sees some one, relaxes, and faintly smiles, but only in relief.

ALICE (cont'd)

It's all right -- you can go now -- but come back soon...

Walter is astonished but immediately ducks just as Frank Dowling reaches Alice's side.

FRANK

(breathlessly)

C'n I have this dance, Alice?

ALICE

(giving him her most magnetic smile)

Why, you nice Frank Dowling!
How lovely!

He takes her in his arms and they start away.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

70

MED. SHOT. Mrs. Dowling is craning her neck as she searches the room. Ella, beside her, suddenly gives her an elbow poke and nods, and her mother turns to look in the direction indicated.

- 71 MED. FULL SHOT - Among the other dancers, Frank is gravely hopping around with Alice who is doing her best to remain graceful.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

- 72 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Ella Dowling sinks down rather disconsolately on a chair and her mother sits beside her. lips compressed in a decidedly disapproving line.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

- 73 MED. CLOSE (DANCE) SHOT - Alice pays no attention to Frank who is completely occupied in trying to count the beats of the music, his lips moving in a silent "One-two-three", "One-two-three". Alice tries to appear as little depressed as possible. As they dance by the hall Alice sees:

INT. HALL AND DRAWING ROOM -NIGHT

- 74 MED. SHOT - Mildred stands near the drawing room entrance. Her mother and father are no longer with her but she is surrounded by several importunate young men, she seems to be refusing to dance with any of them as her eyes turn several times in the direction of the front entrance.

Alice and Frank dance into the shot. At sight of Mildred, Alice snaps on her best smile.

ALICE

Your party's a grand success,
Mildred --

But just then Mildred has seen what she is looking for and she hurries off down the hall, Alice's speech dying on her lips as her eyes follow the retreating form of her hostess.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

- 75 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Near the door a tall, dark, romantic-looking young man is just turning away from the hands of a negro cloak-room attendant as Mildred hurries into the scene, hand outstretched.

MILDRED

(all attention)

Hello, Arthur! So happy you've
finally gotten here.

MED. CLOSE (Dance) SHOT. Alice still dancing with Frank catches this little scene from the dance floor and her eyes grew large.

ALICE
(her glance still
fixed down the
hall)
Who's that man, -- with Mildred?

FRANK
(turning his
head to look)
Why, that's this Arthur Russell.

ALICE
What Arthur Russell? I never heard
of him.

FRANK
Why, that's funny. Only last time
I saw you, you told me how awfully
well you knew Mildred Palmer.

ALICE
Why, certainly I do! She's my most
intimate friend.

FRANK
Oh...Well, he got here a couple of
days ago. He's some kind of cousin
of the Palmer family, -- second or
third, or something, -- and they say
he's got wads of money. He and
Mildred are supposed to be engaged.

ALICE
What nonsense! She's never even
mentioned him to me.

FRANK
Well, if they're not, they soon will
be... My sister says she talks about
him all the time. Ella says --

ALICE
Oh, never mind what Ella says! Let's
find something better to talk about
than Mr. Russell!

FRANK
(a little ruefully)
Well, I'm willing. What do you
want to talk about?

(CONTINUED)

But this liberal offer finds Alice unresponsive. She seemingly hasn't heard Frank's last remark as an expression of dreamy disappointment comes over her face. She is brought to as Frank stumbles and steps on her foot. Alice catches her underlip but says nothing as the clumsy Frank is seemingly unaware of his awkwardness. Just then the music stops. Frank is enthusiastic in his applause.

FRANK (cont'd)

That was great.

ALICE

Let's sit the rest of this out,
shall we?

(she manages a
smile on the
last words)

FRANK

(crestfallen)

All right. Let's go into the hall.
Don't look now, but Mother's trying
to get me to come and dance with
Ella - and I'm not going to.

Frank pouts like a baby as he leads Alice into the hall.

77 INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

MED. LONG SHOT (from the drawing room doors.) We see a table with punch bowl on it and other drinks. Three or four people are grouped around it, laughing and talking. Frank steers Alice toward two empty chairs on the other side of the staircase. She glances at the laughing, chatting group as she passes, but they pay her no attention.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

78 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Frank puts Alice in one chair, then seats himself with a sigh of relief. The music starts up again.

FRANK (cont'd)

Well, what do you want to talk
about?

(CONTINUED)

78 (CONTINUED)

ALICE
 (after a slight
 pause -- she has
 scarcely heard
 Frank's question)

Nothing, suppose we just sit.

Frank looks at her unable to make out this girl's queer moods. Alice glances at her bouquet again and discovers that it is not only withered but Frank has managed to mash it. With sudden animation she begins to prattle.

ALICE (Cont'd)
 Look at the orchestra, Frank --
 aren't they funny?

INT. PALMER DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

79 LONG SHOT - From Alice's point of view - of the orchestra doing their stuff. The drummer is going through some characteristic antics, and Skinny Sam conducts with typical colored gusto.

ALICE'S VOICE
 Someone told me they're called
 Skinny Sam and His Hotcha Stooges.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

80 MED CLOSE SHOT - Frank's eyes are turned toward the orchestra, smiling, as Alice utilizes this moment to drop her faded corsage over the arm of the chair.

ALICE
 Isn't that just carzy? Don't you
 love it? Do watch them, Frank.

And while he is watching, Alice pushes the violets away from her chair with a quick motion of her foot. Then she stops talking and looks up as Frank's eyes are still fixed on the orchestra.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

81- MED. SHOT - Mildred Palmer and Arthur Russell pass by on
 84 their way to the drinks table. Frank does not notice them for he is still craning his neck and grinning as he watches the antics of the orchestra. Mildred is all eyes for Arthur until a young man comes up and stops her, and as she turns to speak to him, Arthur notices Alice and the discarded corsage. He picks this up and returns it to her with an engaging smile. She has to take it, but before she can thank him Mildred turns and he moves on with her.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

85

MED. CLOST SHOT - Frank waits an instant for Alice to continue her prattle.

FRANK

(finally)
You certainly are a funny girl...
You say you don't want to talk
about anything and then you break
out and talk a blue streak and as
soon as I get interested in what
you're saying, you shut off...

ALICE

I know...I'm just queer, I guess.

FRANK

(shakes his head
slightly)
Well, what now... Talk or sit?

ALICE

(with almost a
charming smile)
Suppose we just sit some more.

Frank responds sheepishly to her smile and starts to smile himself when he is brought up by the sound of his mother's voice.

MRS. DOWLING'S VOICE

(calling in a
high pitch)
Frank -- Oh Frank!

Frank glances up, looks like he wants to duck, but it is too late. His mother descends upon him and all he can do is stumble to his feet.

MRS. DOWLING (cont'd)

(gaily)
Oh, Frank -- I just met Henrietta
Lamb, and she's promised to save
this dance for you -- if you come
right away...

She barely glances at Alice and starts to take her son's arm, but he pulls away.

FRANK

(angrily)
Now -- look here, mother! I
wish you'd understand that I can
ask for my own dances. I'm not
six years old.

(CONTINUED)

85 (CONTINUED)

He stands stubbornly glaring at her, and she becomes flustered.

MRS. DOWLING
Why, Frank -- I -- I just thought
I was doing you a favor...

When he shows no sign of relenting, she presses her lips together, blinks her eyes and lets a tremulous note creep into her voice.

MRS. DOWLING (cont'd)
It isn't very pleasant to be talked
to like that -- by your own son --
before strangers.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

86 CLOSE SHOT - Alice flinches slightly at the last word.

FRANK'S VOICE
Now, mother...

ALICE
(suddenly looking
up at him)
You'd better go, Frank -- really.

87 MED SHOT - Frank sends Alice a glance of agonized appeal, sees she is firm and turns reluctantly to his mother who is now beaming.

MRS. DOWLING
There, Miss Adams says so herself --

FRANK
(disgusted)
Oh, for goodness sake --
(and he follows
his mother away)

Alice, sure they are gone, glances at the bunch of dead violets she is carrying, then about her to see that the coast is clear -- and drops the forlorn bouquet behind one of the chairs. Now she rises -- takes a quick step forward, looking lost and a little panic stricken. She sees a group coming into the hall.

- 88 MED. SHOT - toward drawing room doors. Two couples and an elderly man, laughing and chatting, turn and make their way toward the bar.
- 89 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Alice quickly sits down, draws the nearest chair close to her, puts her hand over the arm, as though to keep it for an absent partner, and immediately assumes an expression of deep amusement, as though her companion had just left her, on an errand of her own devising -- evidently an amusing one, for Alice's smile threatens to break out into downright laughter. To heighten the impression that she is alone temporarily, and by choice, she crosses one knee over the other and keeps the foot swinging in time to the music.

GROUP

(voices)

Ad-libbing conversation come closer.

Alice glances up, casually, biting her lower lip a little to give the appearance of restraining inward mirth.

- 90 MED. SHOT - The group stop at the bar, glance casually toward Alice and begin to order their drinks.

GROUP (cont'd)

(ordering -- and then one says)

Nice party.

Mildred has a flair for these things.

The music's good, too.

Meanwhile, a couple, seeking a corner, pass headed for Alice.

- 91 MED. CLOSE SHOT - The couple, in passing the group have laughingly refused invitations to drink -- and are almost upon Alice before they see her.

YOUNG MAN

(stopping)

Oh -- sorry. Are these chairs taken?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
 (looking at him
 with serene
 amusement)
 Yes, they are. I'm just waiting
 for my escort to return...
 (again represses
 that impish smile)

YOUNG MAN
 (to girl)
 Come on -- we'll sit on the
 stairs...

They turn away.

92 MED. SHOT - The couple pass and the group at the bar trail back to the drawing room leaving the bartender -- and Alice -- alone. She drops her pose, looks quickly around, rises and, noticing that her violet corsage is also moribund, unfastens it and manages to get rid of it in the same way as the bouquet. She looks up -- the bartender has caught her at it -- and Alice wanders to the drawing room door.

93 INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT - The floor is more crowded now than before, and, in f.g., Mildred and Arthur Russell are dancing together. She is smiling up at him, but he keeps watching the crowd, nodding here and there toward friends.

INT. PALMER HALL - NIGHT

94 MED. SHOT - Alice, her amused smile glued on her face again, walks quickly toward the cloak room. A young man passes her.

YOUNG MAN
 (stopping her)
 What are you laughing at, Alicia?

ALICE
 (something so amusing)
 Never you mind.

YOUNG MAN
 Well, you wouldn't be laughing if you knew how close I came to killing you and your brother in the driveway tonight...What was the idea of backing up?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(taking it and
then hurrying on)
Oh, just an idea...

CAMERA FOLLOWS her as she comes up to a negro cloakroom attendant.

ALICE (cont'd)
I wonder if you know which of the
gentlemen is Mr. Walter Adams?

A peculiar look comes over the darky's face, one of stifled mirth which he represses.

ATTENDANT
Yes'm, I know him all right --
but I couldn't say 'sactly where
he is, Miss.

ALICE
Well, if you see him, please
tell him that his sister is --
is very anxious to speak to him.

ATTENDANT
I sho' will...

Alice moves on, and the Negro, abruptly clapping a hand over his mouth to stifle laughter, retires into the cloakroom.

INT. CLOAKROOM - NIGHT

95 MED. CLOSE SHOT. The attendant parts some coats hanging on a rack and looks between them. Glimpsed beyond is Walter, down on hands and knees shooting craps with another negro. The first attendant watches the play a moment and continues chuckling behind his hand.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

96 MED. SHOT. Alice comes slowly down the steps, dreading to be seen alone like this. She glances desperately around, then quickly resumes her bright pose as she decides on a definite plan of action and starts across to the side of the room.

97 MED. CLOSE SHOT. An elderly dowager is comfortably seated in a big chair, watching the dancing. Alice comes brightly up to her and sits down in the vacant chair by her side.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

May I come and talk to you,
Mrs. Dresser?

MRS. DRESSER

(not too cordial)

Why, yes -- but why aren't you
dancing?

ALICE

(with a little
laugh)

Oh, I have been -- I just want
a chance to catch my breath.

(she glances
happily toward
the floor, unaware
that the dowager's
eyes are appraising
her -- and seeing
through her)

I was just saying to my partner
that Mildred gives lovely parties.
She has quite a flair for this
sort of thing, don't you think?

MRS. DRESSER

Why -- yes -- it's very nice.

Her lack of enthusiasm makes Alice self-conscious. She
nervously touches her hair and arranges her skirts.

ALICE

(desperately
striving to
keep up the
conversation)

You know, I think you older women
are marvelous. I'd rather talk to
women like you than to girls of my
own age, any time.

(she beams upon
the dowager)

Mrs. Dresser has suddenly transferred her interest
elsewhere and is beginning to look positively sociable,
when Mildred and Arthur come up and pause before Alice.
She glances up, stares, then struggles to smile through
her surprise.

MILDRED

(politely)

Alice, -- this is Mr. Russell --
Miss Adams... He wants to ask
you for this dance.

(CONTINUED)

Mildred smiles charmingly and walks off.

RUSSELL

(engagingly)

Are you interested?

ALICE

(pulling herself
together)

Oh, yes.

(she turns to
the older woman)

Will you excuse me?

And as Mrs. Dresser nods, Alice rises and Arthur takes her and swings her away. The dowager raises her lorgnette to look after them.

98 MED. SHOT - Alice and Arthur are dancing beautifully together.

99 CLOSE (DANCING) SHOT - Alice is not acting now. She is trying to figure out how all this happened, and keeps glancing up at Arthur almost questioningly. Once their glances meet and he smiles.

ARTHUR

You're not a very talkative young lady, are you?

ALICE

Usually, yes.

ARTHUR

(teasingly)

Then why not now?

ALICE

Oh, when anyone dances as well as you do, conversation is scarcely necessary, is it?

ARTHUR

That depends on who's talking.

At this, Alice smiles up at him, and the instinctive desire to act out a romantic part returns to her.

- 100 MED. SHOT - Alice and Arthur dance by Henrietta Lamb and partner and Henrietta almost stops dancing to look after them.
- 101 CLOSE (DANCING) SHOT - Alice fairly blossoms. Tilting back her head at an attractive angle, she smiles up at Arthur. Then, the music stops. For an instant Alice looks confused. She was beginning to have such a nice time. The little piano run announces the end.

ALICE
(uncertainly)
Oh, I guess that's all.
(she feels like
Cinderella at
the stroke of
midnight)

ARTHUR
I wish we could dance this next
together, but I guess we're both
all booked up...Where's your
next -- do you see him anywhere?

ALICE
(a little
vaguely)
Oh, yes...
(hitting on it)
Well, as a matter of fact, I
promised to sit out this next
one -- with -- with my aunt...
So just take me back where you
found me.

They start walking toward Mrs. Dresser.

ARTHUR
Is your aunt as charming as her
niece?

Alice's pleasure in the compliment is suddenly squashed
by the realization that she can't let them meet.

ALICE
(stopping)
I wonder if you -- would do
something for me?

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

(grandly)
Anything.

ALICE

Will you see if you can find
my brother, Walter, for me?

102 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Frank, fairly pushing Ella ahead of him, passes Alice and Arthur. His head snaps around in surprise - and he stumbles.

ALICE

He may be in the smoking room -
if it isn't too much trouble.

ARTHUR

Certainly not....

And with a reassuring smile he starts away, as Alice moves toward Mrs. Dresser.

103 MED. SHOT - Mrs. Dresser, still seated in her chair, glances up without much enthusiasm as she sees Alice approach. Alice sits down beside her.

ALICE

(brightly)
We were having such an interesting
talk when I had to go and dance,
weren't we?

She glances again after Arthur, and, at the same time, the Dowager looks across the room.

MRS. DRESSER

There's my husband signalling
me...

Rising, with an indefinite nod in Alice's direction, she moves away. Alice glances up, realizing that she is being left alone. She looks to right and left.

104 MED. SHOT - Several vacant chairs are on each side of Alice, leaving her conspicuously isolated. She starts up to go away, then remembers that she must wait for Walter and sinks down again. A gay group approaches, and Alice instantly settles back.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

105

CLOSE SHOT - Alice, assuming a poise she is far from feeling, pretends that there is something amusing with the arm of her chair. (Or, she can be working with her slipper heel, sitting on the chair edge as though ready to be off the instant the trouble is adjusted.) The group passes on, and the MUSIC is heard starting again. Alice looks up, fighting to control a rising panic -- and then she sees Arthur making his way toward her. She relaxes, rises, and waits with a bright smile. Arthur comes up to her, followed by a sullen Walter.

ALICE

(gaily)

Oh, thank you. I know this disappearing brother of mine must have been terribly hard to find. And Mildred will never forgive me for keeping you so long...

ARTHUR

It was a pleasure, Miss Adams.

He is smiling, as though at some joke, and with a bow that includes both Alice and Walter, he moves away. Alice watches him go regretfully, her brother with a growing scowl.

WALTER

(turning
suddenly
on Alice)

Don't ever do that again --
un'nerstand?

ALICE

(surprised)

Do what?

WALTER

Send somebody to find me.

Alice smiles in spite of herself, and this increases Walter's annoyance.

WALTER (cont'd)

Well, he found me, all right --
shootin' dice with the boys in
the cloakroom.

Alice's head comes up with a jerk, and she gazes at her brother, growing horror in her eyes.

ALICE

Walter! Did he see you?

(CONTINUED)

WALTER

Unless he was blind.

Alice wilts visibly. This is the final blow. Russell, catching her brother shooting dice with the colored help!

ALICE

(desperately)

Walter, let's go home --

She starts right away, but he grabs her arm and pulls her back.

WALTER

We've stayed this long, and I'm goin' to wait and see what they've got to eat.

Alice turns to protest, but he takes her in his arms.

WALTER (cont'd)

C'me on. Let's dance.

Before she can argue about it, he swings her away.

106 MED. SHOT. Alice dances automatically, her head bent a little, all pretense and play-acting swept away in the face of this new humiliation.

CAMERA TRUCKS FORWARD, and couples begin to blur and whirl and to

DISSOLVE

INT. ADAMS HALL - NIGHT

107 MED. SHOT. The dim, overhead light only accentuates the shadows as Alice enters, wearing the raincoat about her shoulders. She takes her key out of the lock, slips the latch so her brother can get in when he returns, and hurries up the stairs.

INT. UPPER HALL - NIGHT

108 MED. SHOT. Mrs. Adams' door is partially open, and as Alice reaches the top of the stairs, she calls out softly.

MRS. ADAMS' VOICE

Did you have a good time, Alice?

(CONTINUED)

The girl's steps falter. A spasm of pain crosses her face, but she straightens with an effort and calls softly back:

ALICE

Lovely, mother...just lovely...

Then she almost sprints for her own room.

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

109 MED. SHOT. The bed lamp has been switched on, and the bed turned down. Alice enters and closes the door behind her, as though against pursuit. She stands for a moment tensely. Then the raincoat slips from her shoulders, and she turns, flings herself on the bed, and burying her face in the pillow, begins to sob.

INT. MRS. ADAMS' ROOM - NIGHT

110 CLOSE SHOT. Mrs. Adams, in a flannel nightgown, her hair in a plait, is just lying down again, when she hears Alice crying. She pauses on one elbow, listens, makes a move to get up, then realizes what has happened and that there is nothing she can do or say. A look of helpless sympathy comes into her eyes.

INT. ADAMS' ROOM - NIGHT

111 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice's soft, yet penetrating sobs have brought Mr. Adams' head up from the pillow. In the shadowed room he lies tensely listening, then sinks slowly back again and stares up at the ceiling. Alice is crying -- coming home from a big party -- and crying! His face ages with the worry lines that wrinkle his forehead, and he sighs.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. ADAMS' YARD - AFTERNOON

112 Under a tree in the back garden sits Mr. Adams, nicely bundled in blankets and leaning back against the pillows in his chair. Beside him, on a small bench or table, are a few papers and magazines, a water pitcher and glass. Mr. Adams has just dropped the newspaper to his lap and is in a kind of brown study, a faraway look in his eyes. He does not hear Alice, who has just emerged from the house and comes softly to him.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

(gently)
Hello, father -- what are you
thinking about?

She pushes aside the water things and sits on the bench
close to him. He smiles at her tenderly and a little
sadly.

MR. ADAMS

Oh, just planning --
(gazing into
the distance)
-- planning what to do when I'm
able to go to work again.

ALICE

But -- what are you talking about?

Her hand covers his, as she continues quickly.

ALICE (cont'd)

You're going back to your old
place at Lamb's, of course.

MR. ADAMS

(looking at her
and patting
her hand)
I heard you crying the other night
after the party.

ALICE

(she hadn't
known this)
Oh, that was nothing. Just nerves,
daddy.

MR. ADAMS

Never mind, Alice. I know what
was the matter.

ALICE

The only matter was I had a silly
fit. It did me good, too.

MR. ADAMS

How's that?

ALICE

Because I've decided to do
something about it, father.

(CONTINUED)

112 (CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

I guess it's my place to do something about it. Your mother's right, Alice -- you ought to have as much as any of these girls you go with.

ALICE

(with a protesting gesture)

Daddy, you're sweet -- but what I've been thinking -- well, I mean I ought to be something besides just a kind of nobody. I ought to --
(pauses)

MR. ADAMS

What, dearie?

ALICE

(half to herself)

Well -- there's one thing I'd like to do. I'm sure I could do it, too.

MR. ADAMS

What?

ALICE

(a little breathlessly)

I want to go on the stage -- I know I could act.

She sinks back, one hand on her heart, and waits for the reaction. It comes in the form of gentle, amused laughter. Alice stares and slowly sits erect.

ALICE (cont'd)

What's the matter?

113

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams is chuckling and shaking his head as over a good joke.

MR. ADAMS

I was just reminded of your Aunt Flora and your mother when they were young. They always used to spat about which one'd make the best actress.

114

CLOSE SHOT. Alice is shocked. Her Aunt Flora and her mother -- actresses!

MR. ADAMS' VOICE

(gentle, amused,
reminiscent)

Sometimes I'd have to go out
in the hall to laugh.

Alice winces at this. The very fact that he has said nothing about her makes his amused attitude more telling.

MR. ADAMS' VOICE (cont'd)

But then, I expect ninety per cent
of the women are sure they'd make
mighty fine actresses -- if they
ever got the chance.

Alice is embarrassed now, seeing herself in this new light, and realizing at once her folly.

115

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams is leaning back in his chair, gazing across the yard with an indulgent smile.

MR. ADAMS

Well, they enjoy thinkin' about it,
and it don't do anybody any harm.

He turns to his daughter and sees her crestfallen face.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

Why, what's the matter, Alice?

ALICE

(hastily)
Oh, nothing.

She straightens, smiles, and pats his hand, but there is a thoughtful look about her as she stares across the yard, murmuring:

ALICE (cont'd)

Maybe I could...

She hesitates and decides to try this new venture, turning briskly to her father.

ALICE (cont'd)

I've got to go downtown for a
while, dear.

(CONTINUED)

115 (CONTINUED)

He nods. She rises and starts away, only to return to give him an impulsive hug.

ALICE (cont'd)

Now, you just stop worrying.
You're going back to Lamb's, and
everything's going to be all
right. You'll see.

A wistful look comes into her father's eyes as he reaches up to pat her hand.

MR. ADAMS

You know, Alice, it's a pretty good
place -- Lamb's. Mighty nice boys
in our department, too. We have a
good deal of fun down there some
days.

ALICE

More than you do at home "some days,"
I expect.

MR. ADAMS

(hastily)
Now, I wouldn't say that...

But even as he speaks, a heavy step SOUNDS on the walk approaching them.

MR. LAMB'S VOICE

Well, well, Adams --

116 MED. SHOT. As Adams looks up eagerly, Mr. Lamb enters, some twenty years Adams' senior, but hale and hearty, and richly, if soberly, garbed.

ALICE

(stepping forward)
Why, Mr. Lamb, father and I were
just talking about you!

MR. LAMB

Well, you know, "Speak of the
devil" --

Meanwhile, Adams has been removing the blanket from about his knees and is starting to get up.

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

(seeing this)
Sit still -- what do you mean,
trying to be polite with me?
(pushes him
back, adding)
Don't you know you're as weak as
a cat?

MR. ADAMS

(smiling,
vastly pleased)
Oh, I'm not sick any more, Mr.
Lamb. I ought to be ready for
work in another ten days.

During this conversation, Alice has fetched a garden chair. Lamb thanks her with a smile and lowers himself into it.

MR. LAMB

(to Adams)
Now, don't hurry it, young fella,
just take your time. Of course,
we need you, but we don't need you
so bad we'll let you come down
before you're good and ready.

ALICE

(to Adams)
You see, dear?
(then turning
to Lamb)
We all appreciate your interest
in father, Mr. Lamb. He seems to
improve after every one of your
visits.

MR. LAMB

(heartily)
Well, that's fine!

ALICE

(to her father)
I'll have to be running along,
dear.

He nods and she pats his hand, then smiles at their visitor.

ALICE (cont'd)

Goodbye, Mr. Lamb.

She hurries away, and the old man looks after her.

MR. LAMB

(benevolently)
Nice girl -- and she's getting
prettier every day.

Then, turning to Adams, he leans forward and pats his knee.

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

Now, Adams, I want you to take
it easy. Remember, your place
will always be waiting for you--
whenever you want to come back.

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

But I don't like to feel that
my sal'ry's goin' on with me
not earnin' it.

MR. LAMB

(chuckling)

Now suppose you let me worry
about that. Goodness knows,
Adams, you've been with the
firm long enough to have some
privileges -- and I'm going to
see that you get them.

He nods his head emphatically and Adams beams as though
he has just been knighted by the king.

INT. ADAMS' LOWER HALL - AFTERNOON

117 MED. SHOT. Alice is standing by the mirror in the hall
rack adjusting her hat to a better angle, preparatory
to going out. Her mother is mopping down the steps and
the two have evidently been talking about Mr. Adams'
visitor.

ALICE

You know, Mother, I can't help
liking old Mr. Lamb. He seems
so honest and friendly.

MRS. ADAMS

(acidly)

He didn't say anything about
raising your father's salary,
did he?

(and then, before
Alice can reply)

No -- I'll bet he didn't.

(she puts more
emphasis on the
mop she is wielding
as she adds)

That's why I want Virgil to get
away from that place!

ALICE

(turning to her
impatiently)

But, Mother, what could Father
do -- at his age!

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(straightening
quickly)

He could do what I've been
wanting him to for twenty years...

(she breaks off
her sentence,
looks confused,
but goes right
on, saying on
a lower note)

...he's forbidden me to speak of
it, Alice -- but you may as well
know...

And then Mrs. Adams, like a fellow conspirator, crosses
the hall to stand close to her amazed daughter.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - AFTERNOON

118 CLOSE TWO SHOT. As Alice stares at her Mother, Mrs.
Adams glances around to make sure they are alone.
Then...

MRS. ADAMS

Your father has a secret formula
for making the best glue in the
world.

ALICE

(bewildered)

The best -- what?

MRS. ADAMS

Glue -- for sticking things
together. He and another man
invented it years ago when your
father first went to work at
Lamb's...

She turns away to automatically continue her own tasks.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - AFTERNOON

119 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mrs. Adams wields the mop as she goes
on with the story.

MRS. ADAMS

The other man's dead now, and
that formula belongs to your
father.

(she hesitates
and adds
trucculently)

At least it belongs to him as
much as anyone else.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - AFTERNOON

120

CLOSE SHOT. Alice cannot grasp the significance of her mother's words and now interrupts, slightly impatient.

ALICE

Well, even if it does -- what good is it? Can he sell it?

INT. ADAMS' HALL - AFTERNOON

121

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice's mother faces her, tense and forceful, but still keeping her voice down to discreet softness.

MRS. ADAMS

No -- but he could start up a factory and make glue, and sell that....!

ALICE

(beginning to laugh)

Oh, nonsense! Why, it would take more money than father ever saw to start a factory.

(she shakes her head indulgently)

I'm afraid you're just day-dreaming, darling -- but never mind....

(gives her mother an affectionate hug)

...I've a better idea...

MRS. ADAMS

What's that?

ALICE

(already moving toward the door)

Maybe I'll tell you later...

'Bye, dear...

And she hurries out, leaving her mother looking after her.

DISSOLVE

EXT. BUSINESS STREET - AFTERNOON

122

MED. CLOSE SHOT of sign above the dark doorway, glimpsed before in the opening of the story.

SOUTH RENFORD

BUSINESS COLLEGE

Stenography - Bookkeeping

Typing - Secretarial Work

Office Help Supplied

(CONTINUED)

CAMERA PANS down to street. Alice is standing in the sunlight before the door. The shadows from the narrow hallway leading one flight up are just a step beyond. She is reading the sign. For a long moment she gazes at the dark entrance, obviously gathering her courage together. Then, bracing herself, she takes a step forward.

ARTHUR'S VOICE

(eagerly)

Oh -- Miss Adams...

She turns, startled, and he hurries up to her, lifting his hat and smiling.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

This is a coincidence. I've been hoping I'd meet you.

ALICE

Why -- Mr. Russell...

Then, glancing over her shoulder, she realizes where he has found her, is flustered for an instant, then turns to him with a bright, amused smile, saying --

ALICE (cont'd)

I'm just embarking upon the most irksome duty.

(waves toward
the school)

I've got to hire a new secretary for my father. He's been quite ill, poor man, but now that he's better and going back to business, he'll need a second girl.

She has rushed out this explanation and, during it, Arthur has looked up at the college and then down at her, showing the proper expression of regret when she mentions her father's illness, and the equally proper one of relief when she says he is better.

ARTHUR

(coaxing)

Can't you let that wait until some other time?

ALICE

(hesitating and
then giving in
with a pretty
gesture of her
hands)

Very well. I could attend to it tomorrow. In fact, I will attend to it tomorrow.

ARTHUR

That's fine.

He puts on his hat again and they turn away.

80
EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - AFTERNOON

123 MED. LONG SHOT. Alice and Arthur walk forward together making a very attractive couple.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - AFTERNOON

124 MED. CLOSE (TRUCKING) SHOT. Alice glances at her reflection in the store window, touches her hair, re-settles her hat and reassures herself she is well turned out.

ARTHUR

You know, I've been thinking about you ever since Mildred's dance.

ALICE

(pleased, but
laughing)

Goodness!

(then she
remembers and
grows ruefully
serious as she adds)

I think I know what you've been thinking.

ARTHUR

(glancing at
her, amused)

Are you a mind reader?

ALICE

(nodding her head)

You've been thinking that I'm the sister of a professional gambler, I'm afraid.

ARTHUR

(chuckling)

Oh, then your brother told you.

Alice glances up to see how he really feels about the matter but he goes on reassuringly.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

Very original, I thought -- his amusing himself with the cloakroom attendants.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - AFTERNOON

125 MED. SHOT - Alice and Arthur start to cross the street pausing to let an automobile go by.

EXT. SECOND DOWNTOWN STREET - AFTERNOON

126 MED. CLOSE (TRUCKING) SHOT - Alice and Arthur step on the curbing and start walking again.

ALICE

(relieved)

Walter is original. He's a very odd boy, and I was afraid you'd misunderstand. He tells wonderful darky stories, and he'll do anything to get them to talk to him. We think he'll probably write about them some day. He's rather literary.

ARTHUR

(smiling)

Are you?

ALICE

I? Oh --

(she pauses,
lifting both
hands in a
charming gesture
of helplessness)

Oh, I'm just -- me!

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - AFTERNOON

127 MED. SHOT - a truck marked LAMB AND COMPANY loaded with boxes, slides to a halt at a Boulevard stop. Walter is standing on the back step, hanging on and whistling lustily. But the whistle dies into silence as he looks down the street.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - AFTERNOON

128 MED. LONG SHOT - Alice and Arthur are walking together. She is tossing her head and gesturing with her hands and he is listening with smiling interest.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - AFTERNOON

129 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Walter stares, then cynically smiles and starts whistling again, softly -- as the truck carries him out of scene.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - AFTERNOON

130 MED. CLOSE (TRUCKING) SHOT - Alice, silent a moment, again glances at her reflection in a window. As they turn a corner Arthur looks at her admiringly.

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR
(with enthusiasm)
You know -- you are different.

ALICE
(looking him
full in the
face)
From whom?

ARTHUR
(startled for
a moment, then
speaking with
comical rebuke
in his eyes)
Are you at your mind reading again?

ALICE
(with cool humour)
Yes.

They both laugh. Arthur is fascinated by this clever girl.

ARTHUR
You know, I thought you were
this sort of girl the first
moment I saw you.

ALICE
What sort of girl? Didn't
Mildred tell you what sort of
girl I am, when she asked you
to dance with me?

ARTHUR
She didn't ask me to dance with
you -- that was my idea.

ALICE
(smiling)
No, -- but -- who did she tell
you I was?

ARTHUR
She just said you were a Miss Adams.

ALICE
"A Miss Adams," -- I see. Well,
it certainly is unfortunate
that I am so different, -- from
Mildred.

ARTHUR
Why unfortunate?
(he is treading on
on dangerous
ground, and
knows it)

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

(quickly)

Because she's perfect -- why she's perfectly perfect. Oh yes, we all fairly adore her! She's like some big, noble, cold statue, -- way above the rest of us.

She gestures prettily with her hands and turns to find Arthur smiling, accepting the description indulgently.

ALICE (cont'd)

...and she hardly ever does anything mean or treacherous. Of all the girls I know I believe she's played the fewest really petty tricks.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - AFTERNOON

131 MED. SHOT - Alice and Arthur step down off the curb, and he draws her back just as a car swerves around the corner. Then they go on, crossing the street.

ARTHUR

(perplexed)

You say Mildred's perfect, but that she does do some --

ALICE

(interrupting
quickly with a
little laugh)

Men are so funny! Of course girls all do mean things sometimes. My own career's just one long, brazen smirch of them.

ARTHUR

(amused)

Not really. What, for example?

They reach the other side of the street and continue.

ALICE

(seriously)

Oh, the very worst kind -- most people bore me, particularly the men in this town -- and I show it. It's made me a terribly unpopular character! For instance, at the average party I'd a lot rather find a clever old woman and talk to her than dance with nine-tenths of these nonentities.

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

But you danced as if you liked it. You danced better than any other girl I --

ALICE

(interrupting
with a pretty
gesture)

Oh thank you, Mr. Russell. Well, I ought to dance well -- when I think of my dancing teachers -- all sorts of fancy instructors --
(shakes her head)

I suppose that's what daughters have fathers for though, isn't it? -- to throw money away on them.

She smiles up at the young man to find a comical look of alarm on his face.

ARTHUR

You don't, -- you haven't taken up -- ?

ALICE

(laughing merrily)

Oh, murder no! You mean break out in a piece of cheesecloth and run around a fountain thirty times?

(waves her arms
in the air as
though fluttering
a scarf)

And then --

(her arms go
through exaggerated
snaky motion "s")

ARTHUR

(laughing)

You are a mind reader.

ALICE

No, I've never had that particular mania. But you ought to have seen me when I had stage fever.

(her gesture
indicates that
she must have
been quite
impossible, as
she continues)

You know, every girl has a time in her life she's positive she's divinely talented as an actress (cont'd)

(CONTINUED)

131 (CONTINUED)

ALICE (cont'd)
 (laughs indulgently
 as at some
 quaint memory)
 I used to play Juliet all alone
 in my room...

Suddenly she stops and standing on a nearby picket fence
 base (or what have you) starts to recite, very badly.

ALICE (cont'd)
 "Oh, swear not by the moon,
 the inconstant moon,
 That monthly change in her
 circled orb,
 Lest thy love prove..."

She forgets the line, then snaps her fingers as though
 she had decided to stop on purpose, descends and turns
 to continue walking. Arthur falls in step behind her
 CAMERA TRUCKING BEFORE them.

ALICE (cont'd)
 Dad used to make such fun of me!
 Thank heaven, I was only fifteen;
 I was all over it by the next year.

ARTHUR
 You do it beautifully. Why didn't
 you finish the line?
 (and as Alice
 hesitates)
 "Lest that thy love prove likewise
 variable."

ALICE
 Juliet was saying it to a man,
 you know.
 (glancing up
 at him teasingly)
 She seems to have been worrying
 about his constancy pretty early
 in the affair.

ARTHUR
 (slightly flustered)
 Yes, I know.

There is a slight pause and then Alice looks up, and
 points ahead.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Well, don't look so serious.
 It isn't about you. Well, here's
 the foolish little house where I
 live. It's a queer little place
 but my father's so attached to it
 the family have about given up
 hope of getting him to build a
 real house farther out. He
 doesn't mind our being extravagant
 about anything else, but he won't
 let us alter one single thing
 about his precious little old
 house.

(laughs indulgently)

Their steps begin to slow down.

EXT. ADAMS' HOUSE - AFTERNOON

132 MED. SHOT - Alice and Arthur come up to the gate. She
 pauses and holds out her hand.

ALICE

Well -- Adieu!

ARTHUR

(taking her hand
 and holding it)

I -- couldn't come in for a
 little while.

ALICE

(quickly)

Not now.

(and then seeing
 his disappointment)

You can come --

She has lifted and opened the gate and passed in,
 closing it behind her.

ARTHUR

(from the other side)

When?

ALICE

Almost any time --

(walking slowly
 toward the house)

You -- you can come in the evening,
 if you like.

(this over her
 shoulder)

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

Soon?

ALICE

As soon --

(smiling back)

-- as soon as you like ----

She laughs, nods, and as Arthur puts on his hat and strides away, Alice looks after him, sighs, smiles and well pleased with the whole affair walks up the porch stairs into the house.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

- 133 MED. CLOSE SHOT. A typical mantel clock of the ten dollar variety is sounding the half hour on its journey between seven and eight. A mirror hanging above it reflects the center of the room where Alice is standing. At the chiming she turns to look up. (NOTE: Suggest that a clock be obtained with a quick, high, nervous note, rather than a deep, sonorous sound, as indicative of the atmosphere in the house.)

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

- 134 MED. SHOT. The room is exactly square with a self-patterned wallpaper, starched lace curtains at the square windows and a flowered carpet on the floor. A massive three-piece set takes up too much room, and the couch badly nudges a square piano set against the inner wall. The piano has a scarf across it and some framed photographs of relatives. Also two vases, one Japanese, the other flowered. Two more startling vases are on the mantel on each side of the clock, and there is a very big, massive one tucked into a corner on a table. This has artificial branches or those colored pampas plumes in it. A medium-sized table with a scarf on it is in the center of the floor.

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

- 135 MED. CLOSE SHOT - toward table. Here Alice is arranging a bouquet of inexpensive flowers, spreading them out and trying to make them look as generous as possible. She is dressed in a pretty gown of the "afternoon" type and has taken especial pains with her hair. Her pleasure over the flowers is marred by the vase which is pretty awful. She thinks of changing vases, has the flowers half out but glances around the room and sees there isn't any better and, with a sigh, replaces them.

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

136

MED. SHOT. Mrs. Adams appears in the doorway, rolling down her sleeves from dishwashing. She looks at the bouquet approvingly.

MRS. ADAMS

Those flowers brighten up the room a whole lot, Alice.

ALICE

(pleased)

I thought they'd be nice to --

(she catches

herself back

from the mention

of any expectations

and hastily adds)

-- well, to brighten up the room.

As she speaks, the clatter of Walter's steps are heard coming down stairs.

WALTER'S VOICE

I'm goin' out, Mom....

It is a careless announcement of a definite action -- then he appears at the door a moment, stops and stares.

WALTER

Hello! Where's the funeral?

ALICE

(annoyed)

Walter, don't be vulgar.

She moves to the piano and begins changing the music, putting away the popular pieces and getting out semi-classical ones.

WALTER

Well, what's the big idea?

(gestures toward

the flowers,

then grins)

Oh, I gotcha. That Russell guy,

eh? I saw you with him all right....

ALICE

(occupied in

arranging the

new selection

of music on

the piano)

You mean down town yesterday,

Walter?

(CONTINUED)

WALTER

(mimicking
her tone)Yes, I mean "down town yesterday,
Walter."

He lounges into the room and sits down on the arm of the nearest chair, as he continues.

WALTER (cont'd)

I passed you close enough to
pull a tooth, but you never saw
me. You were too busy keepin'
your hands goin'.

(pantomimes
a burlesque
imitation of
Alice's gestures)

I never did see anybody so busy
as you get, Alice, when you're
towin' a barge.

Alice sends him a haughty look and bangs back the lid of the piano keys. Meanwhile, Mrs. Adams has moved over to the couch and begins plumping up the pillows. She is not at all displeased at Walter's teasing Alice over what she fondly thinks is a new beau.

MRS. ADAMS

Well, what of it, Walter? If
you happen to see your sister
on the street when some nice
young man is being attentive to
her.....

WALTER

(interrupting)

Whoa, Sal! You got the parts
mixed. It's little Alice that
was "being attentive."

(turns to his
sister with a
mischievous grin)

What you doin' walkin' as close
as all that to your dear old
sweet friend Mildred's steady?

MRS. ADAMS

Why, Walter!

137

CLOSE SHOT. Alice looks over at her brother with superior scorn.

ALICE

(impersonally)

Yes, you really are vulgar,
Walter.

138

CLOSE SHOT. Walter begins spinning a quarter on the palm of his hand.

WALTER

Get out. I heard all about this Russell down at the shop. He's supposed to be tied up with Mildred and when ole Palmer dies this Russell will be his son-in-law and all he'll haf to do'll be to barely lift his feet and step into the ole man's shoes.

139

MED. SHOT. Walter rises and thrusts the coin back into his trousers.

WALTER

You better lay off there, Alice....That frozen-faced Palmer bunch will rule you off the track soon as they see your colors.

Alice loses her attitude of superior unconcern and turns on him sharply.

ALICE

What's this all about? Simply because you met me down town with a man I never saw but once....

WALTER

Yeah, but I've seen you start before, you know.

(he shrugs,
then says)

Well, good luck. You'll be needing it.

And goes out into the hall where, an instant later, the front door is heard to slam.

ALICE

(indignantly)

Walter must be going with some really dreadful people, Mother. All this talk about horse racing -- and everything.

MRS. ADAMS

(drifting toward
the door)

Oh, I'm sure Walter's a good boy.

(she pauses and
looks back at

Alice thoughtfully)

Is it true that this young man Russell is engaged to Mildred Palmer?

(CONTINUED)

139 (CONTINUED)

ALICE

Well, I don't know for certain....

She sits down at the piano, careful to spread out her skirts.

ALICE (cont'd)

He didn't seem like an engaged man to me. Anyhow -- not so terribly.

She begins to play....and her mother goes out of the room.

140 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice plays just well enough to get by if the runs are not too difficult, and when they are, she skips them. She pauses in the middle of a piece to readjust the light, plays a moment longer and rises.

141 MED. SHOT. Alice goes to the mirror, touches up her hair, bites her lips to make them a little redder and returns to the piano. On the way, she draws two chairs cozily together and rearranges the flowers. Then she sits down again and begins once more to play, swaying on the stool and looking as soulful and romantic as possible.

142 CLOSE SHOT. The clock on the mantel is approaching the hour of eight.

LAP DISSOLVE

The clock, showing the time to be ten. It begins to chime.

143 MED. SHOT. Alice, standing before the mantel, gazes at the clock and turns away, shoulders drooping, a look of bitter disappointment on her face. Then, hearing footsteps padding down the stairs, she runs to a chair, snatches up a book and begins to read. Her mother, in flannel nightgown and wrapper, looks cautiously in.

MRS. ADAMS

Hadn't you better come to bed, dear?

ALICE

(pretending a
start of surprise)

Why -- I didn't know it was so late....I got so interested in this book....

She rises briskly and puts the book on the table, pushing the chair into place.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(gently)

You mustn't mind, dear.

ALICE

Mustn't mind what?

She pauses for an instant by the flowers, touches them, then essays a laugh which quavers out, as she adds:

ALICE (cont'd)

What utter nonsense.

She starts quickly for the door while CAMERA TRUCKS UP TO A CLOSE SHOT of the flowers.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - EVENING

144 CLOSE SHOT. The flowers on the center table are beginning to droop.

DISSOLVE

The flowers, quite wilted now. Alice's hands take them out of the vase.

145 MED. SHOT. Alice, in a simple house dress, somberly carries the flowers to the squat, ugly fireplace and throws them in. The room is lit by the overhead, which gives it a harsh, garish look. Papers and magazines are strewn about, a chair moved up to a lamp and an ash tray full of cigarette butts. Mrs. Adams, rolling down her sleeves from dish washing, appears in the doorway.

MRS. ADAMS

Never mind cleaning up, Alice.

We can do that in the morning.

(glances about

and shakes

her head)

Your father can mess things up

quicker than any man I ever saw...

She turns away on the last word, leaving Alice alone. The young girl stands in the middle of the floor, looking around her. She has given up all hope -- and there is a vacancy within her which leaves her futile and drifting. Finally she picks up the empty vase and carries it out.

EXT. ADAMS' FRONT PORCH - EVENING

146

MED. SHOT. Moonlight fills the end of the porch where the hammock and chairs are. Alice comes out, closing the door behind her, and carries the vase to the railing where she spills out the water. Here she pauses and looks up at the moon. It might just as well not be there for all the good it does her. As she stands there a moment, the front door opens, and Walter comes out, on his way down town. She hardly glances at him, but turns to put the vase on an old wicker table until she is ready to go in. Walter starts to pass, stops, glances at his sister, is about to go, then changes his mind and comes back.

WALTER

Say -- I got no date tonight.
Take you to the movies if you
care to go.

ALICE

(shaking her
head and answering
with quiet weariness)
No, thank you, Walter.

WALTER

(cheerfully)
Oh, come on. Give me a chance
to show you a better time than
we had up at that frozen-faced
joint. I'll get you some
chopsuey afterwards.

Alice has settled herself listlessly in the hammock, and her attitude shows an indifference to everything, an inertia too great to overcome.

ALICE

No, thanks just the same, Walter.

WALTER

Okay -- as the barber says,
"The better the advice, the
worse it's wasted!"

Then he goes down the steps whistling. The latch of the front gate is heard to click and his whistle and footsteps die into silence.

147

MED. SHOT. A limousine, lighted inside and filled with young girls and their escorts going to a party, passes by.

148

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice follows the progress of the machine with her eyes, but there is no change of expression on her face and she does not stop the little rhythmic swinging. A radio half a block up the street begins to play a popular, romantic song, and there comes a burst of gay laughter in the distance, girls' and boys' voices mingled. This, too, fades, and only the music remains. Then steps are heard outside.

149

MED. SHOT. A young couple stroll by, their arms about each other, passing from moonlight into tree shadow where they pause and kiss -- then moving on.

150

MED. CLOSE (TRUCKING) SHOT. Alice's swinging stops. She looks after the lovers and suddenly decides to go into the house. Rising quickly she starts forward, forgetting the vase. CAMERA TRUCKS BEFORE her. Reaching the front door, she is about to go in when the front gate clicks again. She turns.....

EXT. ADAMS' HOUSE - EVENING

151

MED. SHOT. Arthur Russell is just opening the gate. It sticks and he runs into it -- steps back, skirts and starts to lock it again as he smiles toward Alice.

ARTHUR

Good-evening, Miss Adams.

He removes his hat and starts up the walk.

EXT. ADAMS' FRONT PORCH - EVENING

152

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice recovers from the first shock and glances hastily over her shoulder. She remembers the condition of the living room and quickly closes the door.

ARTHUR'S VOICE

What luck to find you alone,
Miss Adams!

He comes up to her and holds out his hand.

ALICE

I'm glad it happened so, Mr. Russell.
(hesitates, wondering
how to excuse her not
inviting him in, then
brightens)
Let's stay out here, shall we?

MED. SHOT - Alice loads him toward the moon-filled end of the porch.

ALICE

(laughing)

Or do you think it's too provincial to sit on the front porch with a girl?

She sits down in the hammock and motions him to a chair.

MED. CLOSE SHOT - Arthur sits down, placing his hat on the wicker table by the vase.

ARTHUR

(enthusiastically)

I think it's the very best of our institutions.

(leans forward and

looks at her

earnestly)

Do you know I've spent two evenings wanting to come, Miss Adams, instead of doing what I was doing.

ALICE

(unconsciously

touching her hair

to see if it is

all right)

What was that, Mr. Russell?

ARTHUR

(smiles wryly)

Dinners... large and long dinners.

ALICE

How wonderful! I suppose you were the guest of honor?

ARTHUR

Yes - that's why I had to go. Mr. Palmer gave one...he seemed to think I should be shown to the principal business men of the city.

(there is a

faint note of

amusement in

his tone)

And Mildred gave the other...

ALICE

(sharply)

Oh, did she?

(recovers quickly

and laughs)

She wanted to show you to the principal business women I suppose.

155

CLOSE SHOT - Alice leans back against the cushions until the moonlight aureoles her hair.

ALICE (cont'd)

Well, you have been in a social whirl, Mr. Russell -- and I envy you. Father's illness has simply tied me to the house and everyone has to come here -- that is, if they want to see me.

she smiles a little apology.

156

CLOSE TWO SHOT - Arthur is leaning forward watching Alice as she turns to him.

ALICE

The worst of it is, Father has to have rest and quiet, so I must entertain on the porch -- like I'm doing tonight -- though, of course, now, there's just the two of us.

Her tone indicates that there is, generally, quite a crowd.

ARTHUR

I'm glad there's just the two of us. I wanted to talk to you -- alone, Miss Adams.

(look from Alice)

...Alice.

ALICE

(smiling)

What shall we talk about, Mr. Russell?

(pause)

Arthur.

ARTHUR

About you.

ALICE

(laughing)

Oh, no -- I'd rather talk about you.

(she surveys him smiling)

What kind of a man are you?

ARTHUR

(lightly)

I've often wondered. What kind of a girl are you?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Don't you remember? I told you
the other day. I'm just me.

As though to dismiss the subject she rises and crosses
to the porch railing to stand in a shaft of moonlight.

ARTHUR

But who is that?

57

MED. CLOSE SHOT - Alice faces Arthur, humorously mocking
his words and tone of voice.

ALICE

"I've often wondered." What kind
of a girl does Mildred tell you
I am?

Arthur crosses to her and sits down on the porch railing.

ARTHUR

I don't know; I haven't asked
her.

ALICE

(quickly)
Then don't ask her.

ARTHUR

Why?

58

CLOSE SHOT - Alice at once recovers from the involuntarily
slip she has made and laughs lightly.

ALICE

Because I can tell you what
she'd say. She'd just droop
her eyes and murmur in a low
voice, "Oh, I scarcely think
you'd like her particularly."

59

CLOSE SHOT - Arthur smiles at this take-off on his
cousin.

ARTHUR

That sounds like Mildred, all
right. You certainly seem to
know her.

(he looks at
Alice in mock
alarm)

Do you know everyone as well
as that?

160

MED. SHOT - Alice shakes her head and moves back to the hammock as she answers.

ALICE

Not myself -- no.

Arthur follows and sits down again beside her.

161

MED. CLOSE SHOT.

ALICE

(thoughtfully)

The other day -- after you'd walked home with me, I got to wondering what I wanted you to think of me --

(sends him a

shy smile,

as she nods)

-- in case I should ever happen to see you again.

ARTHUR

(leaning forward)

What did you decide?

ALICE

(wistfully)

I decided I would probably never dare to be myself with you -- not if I cared to have you want to see me again --

(turns to him -

with a self-

mocking little

laugh)

-- and yet, here I am, just being myself, after all.

As if that ended the argument, she leans back against the cushions and smiles at Arthur.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - EVENING

162

MED. SHOT - Mrs. Adams, coming down the stairs, turns to go into the living room but stops as a man's laughter is heard from the porch, joined by Alice. Showing delighted surprise, Mrs. Adams crosses to the front door and cautiously peeks through the lace curtains. The dimness of the hall is relieved only by a reflected light from the living room.

EXT. ADAMS FRONT PORCH - EVENING

163

MED. CLOSE SHOT - Arthur is drawing the other chair close to Alice, facing her.

ARTHUR

(eagerly)
I'd like to - to see you pretty often, if you'll let me. Will you?

ALICE

(pretending
to hesitate)
Well...

ARTHUR

(urging)
Well?

ALICE

Lean toward me a little.

He obeys; she inclines toward him as if to whisper; then, in a half shout, cries:

ALICE (cont'd)

YES!

ARTHUR

(laughing)
Splendid! Now when will it be - our next meeting, I mean?

ALICE

(graciously)
Any time.

ARTHUR

Look here - you're going to Henrietta's dance, aren't you?

ALICE

(startled)
You mean Henrietta Lamb?

As he nods, a little surprised, she tries to cover the slip she has made.

ALICE (cont'd)

Oh - yes - of course. I'd forgotten all about that.

ARTHUR

Will you let me take you?

(CONTINUED)

163 (CONTINUED)

ALICE
(staring at him)
Take me - you mean - to the
dance?

ARTHUR
(humbly)
That is, if you aren't already
dated up.

ALICE
No - no, I'm not.
(rises, moves
away to the
porch rail
where she begins
to twist the
leaves off a
vine, fighting
a sob in her
throat)
In fact, I'm not going.

ARTHUR
(rising and
following her,
disappointment
in his voice)
Oh... Why not?

ALICE
I told you - it's father...
Mildred's dance was almost the
only evening I've gone out -
on account of his illness, you
know.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - EVENING

164 MED. SHOT - Mrs. Adams suddenly straightens, turns from
the door where she has been listening, glances up the
stairs and then marches toward them determinedly.

INT. ADAMS' BEDROOM - EVENING

165 MED. SHOT. Adams, placidly unaware of the impending
storm, has found a new thin place in his hair and is
rubbing hair tonic on it. He is up and dressed except
for his coat, which hangs over a chair, his collar and
tie reposing on the dresser and his shoes which he has
replaced with carpet slippers. He whistles tunelessly
to himself as he rubs. Then the door opens. Mrs. Adams
enters, closes the door behind her and sets her back
against it.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(tensely)
 Virgil Adams - how much longer do
 you expect me to put up with that
 old man and his doings?

MR. ADAMS

(blinking)
 Huh?
 (turns from
 the mirror,
 sparse hair
 rumpled over
 his forehead)
 Whose doings? What old man?

MRS. ADAMS

(advancing
 from the door)
 What other old man would I mean but
 J. A. Lamb? Do you suppose I'm
 going to submit forever to him and
 his family and what they're doing
 to my child?

MR. ADAMS

(puts tonic back
 on dresser, pushes
 hair back and leans
 one elbow wearily
 on the nearest
 support)
 Now what are he and his family doing
 to your child?

MRS. ADAMS

(approaching
 closer and
 glaring at her
 husband)
 Your dear, grand old Mr. Lamb's
 Henrietta has sent out invitations
 for a large party. Everybody who
is anybody in town has been asked,
 you can be sure of that.

Mr. Adams has been listening in some bewilderment not
 yet discovering why his wife's voice is shaken by unshed
 tears. But now she controls it and gives a proud little
 toss to her head.

(CONTINUED)

165 (CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

Now there's a very fine young man - a Mr. Russell who is interested in Alice, and he's asked her to go to the dance with him...

She turns sharply to her husband as she adds on a note of tense accusation:

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

Well, Alice can't go because Henrietta Lamb hasn't invited her.

Mr. Adams understands now -- and realizes, too, the peace of the evening is spoiled.

MR. ADAMS

(wearily)

Oh, my, my...

He crosses to close a window but again his wife follows.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

I should think you would say, 'Oh, my, my!' Your daughter is being snubbed and picked on by every girl in town - and it's all on account of you, Virgil Adams!

MR. ADAMS

(sarcastically)

Oh, yes -- these girls don't like me so they pick on Alice Adams.

He moves to his coat hanging on the back of a chair and gets out a solacing pipe - but then he cannot find the tobacco pouch.

MRS. ADAMS

They wouldn't dare do such things to Mildred Palmer. She has money and family to back her.

Mr. Adams crosses to the dresser still searching for his pouch and Mrs. Adams takes this gesture as a mute denial of her words.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

(fiercely)

You listen to me, Virgil Adams! The way the world is now, money is family. Alice would have just as much family as any of them if you hadn't fallen behind in the race.

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

(angrily)
How did I...

MRS. ADAMS

Yes, you did! Twenty-five years ago, the people we knew weren't any better off than we were. Look at them now...

At this juncture Mr. Adams coughs which reminds his wife that there is some medicine to be taken.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

(impatiently)

Time for your drops.

She moves to the table by the bed - or wherever the bottle and glass are, and Adams, at the same time, finds the pouch and sits down to fill his pipe.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

(talking while
she pours some
medicine into
a glass)

Look at these country clubs! The other girls' families belong, and we don't! Look at the other girls' houses, then look at our house...

MR. ADAMS

You look at what you're doin'. Don't give me too much of that stuff.

MRS. ADAMS

I've counted...

She crosses to him and hands him the glass.

INT. MR. ADAMS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

186

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams drinks the medicine and makes a face over it while his wife goes right on talking - her tone ranging from martyred persecution, to reproach and accusation.

MRS. ADAMS

The men of those families have gone on up the ladder, while you're still a clerk down in that old hole!

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

(putting down
the glass)

Now wait a minute! Suppose I
did leave that 'ole hole' as you
call it - where in thunderation
could I get another job.

MRS. ADAMS

(who has sat
down beside
him and now
fixes him with
an hypnotic stare)

You know I'm not asking anything
of you that you can't do.

The annoyed, weary impatience of Mr. Adams falls from
him like a cloak.

MR. ADAMS

What are you driving at?

MRS. ADAMS

You know what I'm driving at --
that glue formula.

MR. ADAMS

So that's it!
(he bangs a
fist clenched
around his
pipe down
on his knee)

Dang! Dang!

EXT. ADAMS' FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

167 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice, just turning from the railing,
walks back to her chair to face Arthur. She is wearing
the plastered-on smile and trying to act in a lightly
amused fashion.

ALICE

What a pother! What does it
matter whether poor, little
Alice Adams goes to a dance
or not?

ARTHUR

Well, I thought I'd make it
clear that it looks fairly
bleak to me if you don't go.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

(lightly)
Really, Mr. Russell -
(then her voice
drops to a note
of regret)
Well - I can't. I'm too worried
about Father.
(gazes straight
ahead of her,
wistfully
visioning what
a triumph it
would be for her,
as she adds)
Not that I wouldn't like to go
- and dance with you -- if I
could...

INT. MR. ADAMS BEDROOM - NIGHT

168

MED. SHOT. Mr. Adams is still seated, rubbing his
knees, while his wife declaims passionately before him.

MRS. ADAMS

You wouldn't care if your child
dried up into a miserable old
maid! She's still young - she
has a chance for happiness if
she only had a father who had
gumption enough to be a man....

MR. ADAMS

(rising abruptly,
starting to pace
the room)
To be a dirty dog, you mean.

MRS. ADAMS

(crying now,
looking fiercely
disheveled
between rage
and tears)
That glue formula belongs to you
as much as it does to anybody.....

MR. ADAMS

(turning on her,
raising his voice)
It belongs to J. A. Lamb! He
paid us all the time we were
workin' on it. It'd be like
stealing - an' you know it!
(sinks down on
edge of bed as
his wife comes
over to him)

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(passionately)

And what's he stolen from you?
 Twenty years ago he promised to
 do something with that formula -
 to take you into partnership with
 him - and has he done it - has he?

MR. ADAMS

(desperately)

You've broken your word never to
 speak of that to me again.

MRS. ADAMS

What do I care for my word? Do
 you suppose I'll let my 'word'
 keep me from struggling for a
 little happiness for my children?
 I'll struggle for that till I die...
 (breaks into sobs,
 sinks to the
 floor and rocks
 back and forth
 there crying)
 till I die!

MR. ADAMS

(rising, beginning
 to pace again)

Lord! Lord! Do I have to go
 through that again?

MRS. ADAMS

(still rocking,
 sobbing)

Yes, you have - till I die!

INT. ADAMS' HALL - NIGHT

169 MED. SHOT. Alice is slowly closing the front door.
 She stands for a moment, regarding it somberly, then
 turns away and is moving toward the living room when
 the murmur of voices upstairs suddenly crescendos and
 she hears her mother riotously sobbing. She listens
 an instant, then starts up the stairs, increasing her
 speed as she nears the-top.

INT. MR. ADAMS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

170 MED. SHOT. Mr. Adams is pacing up and down the floor.
 Mrs. Adams, seated on the couch, is bent over, in the
 attitude of Rachel weeping for her children and her
 hair is tousled over her eyes. She is sobbing softly.

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS
(in a rhythmic
repetition)
Dang! Dang! Dang!

MRS. ADAMS
(at the same time)
Till I die! Till I die. Till
I die!!

Her voice crescendos to a wail as the door opens and Alice hurries in, bewildered and questioning. Mr. Adams turns on her, pointing to his wife.

MR. ADAMS
(desperately)
Can you get her out of here?

Alice, alarmed, hurries over to Mrs. Adams and puts her arms around the sobbing, exhausted woman, helping her to her feet.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)
(pointing shakily
toward the door)
Get her out.

But as Alice hastily propels her mother toward the door, he suddenly stops her.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)
Wait!

Alice halts, staring at him across her mother's shaking form.

171 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Adams comes up and looks straight into his daughter's eyes.

MR. ADAMS
She says you have a mean life,
Alice.

ALICE
(quickly)
No, Father...
(but she glances
away as she
speaks)

MRS. ADAMS
(dramatically)
Do you hear her lie?

(CONTINUED)

Look at me!

And when Alice's eyes have steadied on him again:

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

Things like this Henrietta Lamb
dance now - is that so hard to
bear?

ALICE

No....

(it does not
sound convincing
and she tries
again, without
any better result)

No, Father...

MRS. ADAMS

(sobbing)

Do you hear her? Now do you...?

MR. ADAMS

(waving his arms
and shouting)

Get out of here... both of you!
Get-out of here!

172 MED. SHOT. Hastily Alice leads her mother from the room. Adams follows and slams the door behind them, then stands still for a moment while his wrath fades into despair. He stumbles forward, sinks down on the edge of his bed and begins to rub his knees.

MR. ADAMS

Oh, my, my! Oh, my, my!

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. GLUE FACTORY - AFTERNOON

173 MED. CLOSE SHOT. A carpenter on a trestle over the front door is being handed up a big canvas sign by his companion down below. There is a good deal of grunting and heaving, but finally the thing is hung on the rails ready for it, the carpenter climbs down the ladder and the sign is left for all who will to read:

ADAMS GLUE WORKS

(CONTINUED)

173 (CONTINUED)

CAMERA TRUCKS BACK TO MED. SHOT. The two carpenters are gazing at their handiwork when one turns to the other and speaks reflectively.

FIRST CARPENTER

Ever smell a glue fact'ry before?

His companion shakes his head, and the first one continues dispassionately:

FIRST CARPENTER (cont'd)

Brother, you got somethin' comin' to you!

They then move forward to take away the two ladders and the connection plank from before the door.

EXT. SLUM STREET - AFTERNOON

174 MED. LONG SHOT. In f.g. is a long, two-story building undergoing repairs. Carpenters and painters are fairly swarming over it and there is much sawing and hammering. Coming up the same side of the street, from the direction of the street-car are Mr. and Mrs. Adams.

175 MED. CLOSE TRUCKING SHOT. Mrs. Adams looks up with interest at the big building.

MRS. ADAMS

Is this the place, Virgil?

MR. ADAMS

(also glancing
up)

Gosh, no! I couldn't afford this! It used to be an ole butterine fact'ry an' it's been empty for years - until last week.

(sighs enviously
as he adds)

Whoever took it over must have piles of money....

The two meanwhile, have crossed the street to the other side and Mr. Adams halts his wife and points toward his building.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

Here it is, Mother -- here's th' Adams' Glue Works.

176

MED. FULL SHOT. The factory is nothing more than a large shed with a small wing, evidently just added to it. The carpenters are heard hammering and sawing somewhere in back.

MR. ADAMS

(a little
regretful)

T'ain't much, but it's a starter.

MRS. ADAMS

(enthusiastically)

Why, it looks grand, Virgil,
simply grand.

They move forward up a plank walk together and have almost reached the front door, Mrs. Adams still gazing enraptured at the sign -- when a postman's whistle sounds behind them and a mailman comes up, hands Adams a few envelopes and continues on his way.

177

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mrs. Adams pauses and gazes about her with a proprietary air while her husband glances through the mail.

MR. ADAMS

Just bills.

(stares out
into space
and mutters)

It's funny I don't hear somethin'
from him.

MRS. ADAMS

(turning to him)

Who?

MR. ADAMS

(sighing again)

Ole Mr. Lamb. I wrote him a
letter 'bout all this...

(he waves his
hand toward
the factory)

...but he hasn't answered a word.

(sinks down
on the front
steps wearily)

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

Why didn't you go down to see him, Virgil, instead of writing?

MR. ADAMS

(toying nervously
with the letters)

I - well - I just couldn't bring myself to face him.

He looks away as his wife sits down beside him.

MRS. ADAMS

(uneasily)

But, Virgil, you told me he couldn't do a thing to you about that glue formula.

MR. ADAMS

(stuffing the
letters in his
coat pocket and
bringing out
his pipe)

No - it ain't patentable.
There isn't any way it could
be made a question of law.

(pauses, knocking
his pipe on the
steps)

But I wish I knew what he
thought about it.

He rises and walks away. Mrs. Adams looks after him,
then gets to her feet to follow.

178 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams is standing by a pile of
new lumber, kicking it a little, and sucking on a cold
pipe as his wife comes up to him.

MRS. ADAMS

It's just your morbidness, Virgil.
You don't realize what a little
bit of a thing this is to him.
He's probably forgotten all about it.

MR. ADAMS

(turning on her
impatiently)

You're off your base. J. A. Lamb
don't forget things. If he owed
you money he'd cut off his hand
to pay you, but if he thought you
were tryin' to get the best of
him, he'd cut off both hands to
keep you from doin' it.

He finishes breathlessly, kicks the wood pile again and
turns away.

(CONTINUED)

178 (CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

Come on, I'll show you th' rest
of the works now...

He begins to walk around the building, his wife beside
him. CAMERA TRUCKS BEFORE THEM.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

(taking out his
watch and
glancing at it)
It's gettin' late and you'll be
worryin' 'bout th' children's
supper.

MRS. ADAMS

(comfortably)
Not tonight... Walter phoned
he wouldn't be home, and Alice
is out with that nice young
Mr. Russell.

MR. ADAMS

(glancing at
her quickly)
What? Again?

MRS. ADAMS

(nodding and
smiling)
I shouldn't be surprised but
what they'd be engaged before
long.

They have reached the front door again and Adams,
about to go in, turns and stares down at his wife --
then gazes around him with an expression of bewilderment
and protest.

MR. ADAMS

And here we go through all this
muck and mool to help fix things
nice for her -- and she just
goes ahead and gets what she
wants to anyhow!

MRS. ADAMS

(quickly)
Oh, but things haven't gone
that far, Virgil...

But even as she speaks, Adams turns and enters the
factory, and she hastily follows him, closing the door
after her.

DISSOLVE

EXT. ROADSIDE INN - NIGHT

179

MED. CLOSE (TRUCKING) SHOT. A glass door has a light showing behind the curtains. (This and the shadowed terrace indicate a lapse of time from late afternoon to evening.) From somewhere inside comes soft minor violin music. The door opens and a stout Italian waiter appears, a napkin over his arm, a checked apron around his waist. He looks toward the far corner of the terrace, smiles and moves quietly in that direction. CAMERA TRUCKS BEFORE HIM until a table is reached - a low table lit by a candle stuck in a tallow-dripped bottle, shedding a glow on fresh fruit in ice cups, and slender glasses of water and wine. A coffee service of rough pottery stands nearby. Behind the table, on a pillow-piled bench edging the terrace railing, are Alice and Arthur, finishing a leisurely dinner. She is in a tailored summer frock. He is in flannels. A few flower petals drift down upon them from a blossoming tree which spreads its branches like a canopy above. The waiter hovers solicitously about for a moment but, seeing that the young gentleman is gazing intently upon the young lady, he beams paternally upon them and withdraws. Then:

ARTHUR

(to Alice)

What are you thinking of?

ALICE

I don't know. I think I was being sort of -- sadly happy just then.

ARTHUR

Sadly happy?

EXT. ROADSIDE INN - MOONLIGHT

180

CLOSE SHOT. Alice turns her head against the cushions to look at Arthur.

ALICE

Don't you know? Only children can be just happily happy. I think, when we get older our happiest moments are like -- this one...

(gestures slightly
with her hands)

It's like that music...

CLOSE TWO SHOT. Alice pauses to listen and Arthur turns in the direction of the MUSIC which is in a minor key, soft and throbbing.

ALICE (cont'd)
(murmuring)
Oh, so sweet, but oh, so sad.

ARTHUR
(turning to her
and covering her
hand with his)
But what makes it sad for you?

ALICE
I don't know.
(sits up suddenly
and leaning chin
on hand, stares
into distance
as she says)
Perhaps it's a kind of useless
foreboding I seem to have pretty
often...
(looks at him
wistfully)
I'm afraid I'll miss these
summer evenings with you when
they're over.

ARTHUR
(also sitting
forward, and
leaning over)
Do they have to be over?

Alice begins to collect the flower blossoms which continue to drift down occasionally.

ALICE
(shrugging
slightly)
Oh, everything's over some time,
isn't it?

ARTHUR
Don't let's look so far ahead
as that. We don't need to be
already thinking of the cemetery,
do we?

Alice takes the handful of blossoms she has collected and tosses them into the air again.

ALICE
I wasn't. Our summer evenings
will be over before then, Mr.
Russell.

She starts to rise but he catches her hand and pulls her down again.

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

(insistently)

Why?

ALICE

(laughing)

Good heavens! There's laconic
eloquence -- almost a proposal
in a single word...

Arthur is a little startled -- but, after all, why not?

ARTHUR

(earnestly)

Well, I...

ALICE

(who has caught
his hesitation)

Never mind -- I shan't hold you
to it...

And before he can stop her she withdraws, and gets to
her feet.

182

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice moves a step to the railing and
reaches out to break off a flowering branch from the
tree.

ALICE (cont'd)

(as she snaps
the stem)

No -- something will interfere...

(she pauses,
frowning slightly
as she says)

Somebody will, I mean...

(she turns back
to Arthur)

People talk about one another
fearfully in this town...

Arthur smiles indulgently at this, but Alice goes on
earnestly:

ALICE (cont'd)

And they don't stop at the
truth. They make up things --
yes, they really do!

ARTHUR

(laughing and
dismissing it)

Well, what difference does it
all make?

(CONTINUED)

162 (CONTINUED)

ALICE

(at this stops
and turns to him
with a pretty
appealing gesture)
Oh, it's just that I'd rather
they didn't make up things about
me -- to you.

ARTHUR

(coming a little
closer to her)
I'd know they weren't true.

Alice turns and moves away a step, but Arthur follows
her impulsively. Alice turns back to him.

ALICE

Oh, but you must be careful not
to mix up the girl you might
hear somebody talking about,
with the me I honestly try to
make you see...

(pauses and a
wistful note
creeps into
her voice)

If you do, all this will be
spoiled...

(the gesture of
her hands
includes the
place, the charm
of the evening,
the two of them,
and, quietly
she adds)

...it's so easy to spoil anything
that's pleasant.

ARTHUR

(quietly)
We won't let that happen.

ALICE

(thinks about this,
gazing out across
the landscape)
Wouldn't it be pleasant if two
people could just keep themselves
to themselves?

(turns to look at
him appealingly)

I mean, if they could manage to
be friends without people talking
about them, or talking to them
about it?

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

Well, we've done pretty well about that so far -- and if you want our summer evenings to be over, you'll have to drive me away yourself.

183

CLOSE TWO SHOT - For a moment, Alice searches Arthur's face. Then:

ALICE

Nobody else could?

ARTHUR

No.

ALICE

(suddenly smiling)

Well -- I won't.

Their eyes meet and hold a long moment -- then Arthur bends his head and kisses her. Alice gasps and stares up at him, for once too startled to speak.

DISSOLVE

184 INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SOUND CLOSE SHOT. The clock on the mantel chimes the hour of 9:30.

EXT. ADAMS' PORCH - MOONLIGHT

185 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice, on the steps, waves goodbye to Arthur as the motor of his car is heard starting up.

EXT. ADAMS' HOUSE - MOONLIGHT

186 MED, FULL SHOT. Arthur waves back to Alice and drives away.

EXT. ADAMS' PORCH - MOONLIGHT

187 MED. SHOT. Alice, smiling a little, turns, goes slowly across the porch toward the door, then hesitates and crosses to the hammock.

188 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice pauses and looks about her, remembering the first evening Arthur came to call. She drops her coat, gloves and purse on a chair, sits down in the hammock and pulls his chair closer to her. She gazes at it a moment, then slowly draws the flowering branch across the back where his head rested. Smiling faintly at her own imaginings, she rises and walks to the railing, to look up at the moon.

MED. SHOT. As Alice stands in the moonlight, the front door opens and her mother comes quietly out to join her, a happy sympathetic look on her face. She knows what her daughter is feeling at that moment and she does not speak for fear of breaking the spell.

ALICE

(at last)

Did you ever know a lovelier night than this, Mother?

MRS. ADAMS

(a little wistfully)

Not since I was your age, I expect.

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice turns to look at her Mother with a slight frown.

ALICE

Don't they stay beautiful after my age?

MRS. ADAMS

Well, it may be different for you. I think it will, Alice.

(smiles upon her daughter, adding)

You deserve it...

ALICE

(quickly)

No, I don't. I don't deserve anything, and I know it...

(smiles shyly as she adds)

But I'm pretty happy these days.

MRS. ADAMS

(coming eagerly over to her)

Dearie!

ALICE

(drawing back with a little laugh)

Oh, I don't mean -- we're not engaged, Mother.

As she speaks the gate is heard clicking and steps sound on the walk. Both women turn to look...

EXT. ADAMS' FRONT PORCH - MOONLIGHT

191

MED. SHOT - Walter comes up the steps hurriedly, furtively, pausing as he sees his mother and sister.

MRS. ADAMS

Why, Walter, what kept you so late?

WALTER

(nervously)

Where's Pop?

MRS. ADAMS

He's up in his room...

She is about to question her son farther, but he turns and hurries into the house. She looks after him a moment, then decides everything is all right and comes back to seat herself in a chair near the hammock where Alice is slightly swinging, too engrossed in her own thoughts to notice her brother.

192

MED. CLOSE SHOT

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

Do you know, Alice, I think its time your father and I showed some interest in Mr. Russell. I actually don't believe he's ever been inside the house.

ALICE

(quietly)

No, he hasn't -- we've always sat out here on the porch -- it's so much nicer.

MRS. ADAMS

(rocking a little
and fanning
herself with her
handkerchief)

I was thinking we could hardly put off asking him to dinner -- or something -- much longer.

Alice sits up straight and stares at her mother, a protest forming. She does not want anything to change -- to be different.

ALICE

Oh, Mother -- must we?

MRS. ADAMS

But don't you see? It looks so queer not to do something. It looks so kind of -- poverty-stricken.

CLOSE SHOT. Alice gazes down at the flowering branch. It is beginning to wilt. She takes her finger and tries to hold up a flower to its original position, but it is no use. It symbolizes her own situation. She realizes what her Mother says is true -- and she must face the inevitable.

ALICE

(tonelessly)

Very well -- I'll ask him, if you think I've got to.

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice rises and starts to collect her things. The beauty and romance has gone out of the night and she wants to go indoors, but her Mother sits still, rocking and already beginning to plan.

MRS. ADAMS

We can get that mulatto woman, Malina Burns -- she goes out by the day, and she can bring a waitress too.

(pauses then

adds with a

little, nervous

laugh)

I'll have to ask your father for some money -- but he won't mind, I'm sure.

INT. ADAMS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

MED. SHOT. Walter is standing to one side of the door twisting his hat in his hands and watching with a blank tense face while his father, in pajamas and bathrobe angrily paces the opposite side of the room. Suddenly he turns on his son and speaks, as though reiterating a question.

MR. ADAMS

But what do you want it for?

WALTER

(tonelessly)

I got to have it.

MR. ADAMS

But what for? Can't you tell me what for?

WALTER

I got to have it.

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

(mimicking him
sarcastically)

'You got to have it.' You seem
to think just saying that'll
bring you in the money... A
hundred and fifty dollars!

He turns back to his pacing. Walter watches him a
moment, his quiet attitude blanketing his tense
anxiety.

WALTER

Haven't you got that much?

INT. MR. ADAMS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

196

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams turns in a stride and
glares across at his son.

MR. ADAMS

No I haven't! You know I've
sunk every cent I've ever saved
in that glue factory -- and even
what I could raise on the house.

He continues pacing, CAMERA FOLLOWING HIM. Then a
thought strikes him and he swings around again.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

What's the idea, coming to me
for money, anyway? You've got
a job, haven't you?

(and, before

Walter can answer,
his shoulders
droop and he
mutters)

Not that you'll have it long;
Mr. Lamb'll fire you as soon as
he finds out you're still there --
after what I've done.

197

MED. SHOT. Walter has not changed his position, nor
altered his expression, save to add a slightly scornful
look.

WALTER

He knows I'm there, all right.
He talked to me yesterday.

(CONTINUED)

197 (CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

(coming over
to the boy
eagerly)
What did he say?

WALTER

Just asked me how my work was
comin' along...

That finishes the subject for him. He ignores his father's almost avid desire for more details, waits an instant and then blurts out:

WALTER (cont'd)

Look here, are you goin' to do
anything -- about that hundred
and fifty?

MR. ADAMS

(disappointment
adding fuel to
his irritation)

No, I'm not. I haven't got a
hundred and fifty cents, let
alone dollars. What do you
think I am -- a mint?

He turns back to his pacing.

198 MED. CLOSE SHOT. In a moment of tense silence, Walter looks at his father, impersonal, withdrawn, an invisible barrier between them.

WALTER

(quietly)
All right. I don't see as you
ever did anything much for me,
anyhow.

And, with that, he turns on his heel, walks out and closes the door with a softness which takes nothing from the finality of the gesture.

199 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams stops in his stride and stares in surprise at the closed door. He had not expected Walter to **accept** so quickly -- nor in that strange manner.

EXT. ADAMS' FRONT PORCH - MOONLIGHT

200

MED. SHOT. Alice is standing by the rail, hat in hand, cloak over her arm, staring out into the night. Behind her, Mrs. Adams is aimlessly arranging the porch chairs, or moving a couple of flower pots, as she continues her planning.

MRS. ADAMS

You can get flowers for the table and put some in the living room -- and we'll have a nice dinner -- something real stylish.

201

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice turns to her mother, an impulsive gesture born of fear.

ALICE

Mother, can't we -- can't we just wait -- for a while?

MRS. ADAMS

(surprised)

But, Alice, why should we?

(and then, with a smile which belies her belief in her own words)

Unless you don't want Mr. Russell to meet your father and mother....

ALICE

(hastily)

Oh, no -- it isn't that -- only --

(she struggles for words to explain and gives it up with a shrug)

-- Oh, what's the use?

202

CLOSE SHOT. Alice tilts her head and looks wistfully up at the moon, speaking her thoughts out loud.

ALICE

He's so honestly what he is -- just simple and good and intelligent. I feel a tricky mess beside him.

(she half turns away as she adds)

I don't see why he likes me; and sometimes, I'm afraid he wouldn't -- if he knew me.

203

CLOSE TWO SHOT. Mrs. Adams steps forward and puts her arm fondly about Alice's waist.

MRS. ADAMS

Darling, he'd just worship you!

At this evidence of blind loyalty and love, Alice turns and gives her mother a swift, grateful smile.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. PALMER DRAWING ROOM - AFTERNOON

204

MED. SHOT. The room looks cool and inviting, its austerity softened by great vases of flowers. Luncheon is just over, and Mr. and Mrs. Palmer are seating themselves on opposite couches while the butler brings in a tray with pot of coffee, cups, glasses containing ice cubes, etc. Mildred, in a charming summer frock, has paused by a small desk and is looking over some papers there, while Arthur, in summer flannels, is gazing out the windows which open on the balcony.

ARTHUR

(turning as
he speaks)

What beautiful flowers! I
didn't realize you had such a
fine garden.

He comes back to his host and hostess.

MRS. PALMER

(gently reproving)

That's because you haven't been
cousinly enough to get used to
it, Arthur. You've almost taught
us to forget what you look like.

ARTHUR

(momentarily
confused)

I'm sorry -- but I've been so
busy....

MILDRED

(politely)

Oh, we understand, perfectly.

MRS. PALMER

(as she prepares
to pour coffee)

Hot coffee, Arthur, or iced?

ARTHUR

Iced, please.

(CONTINUED)

MR. PALMER

Iced for me, too, Louise...
It's really getting warm, isn't
it?

At this moment, Mildred crosses from the desk carrying several sheets of paper. Mrs. Palmer has just finished pouring two glasses of iced coffee.

MILDRED

(to her mother)
Here's the list of guests
for the garden party, Mother.

Mrs. Palmer hands Arthur his glass of coffee, then raises her lorgnette and glances over the list Mildred has handed her.

MILDRED (cont'd)

I -- I didn't know whether or
not to invite Alice Adams.

Arthur's head comes up with a jerk.

MILDRED (cont'd)

You remember her, Arthur -- you
danced with her -- here.

ARTHUR

(confused)
Oh -- oh, yes.

MRS. PALMER

(casually)
A rather too conspicuous young
woman -- the Adams girl.

Arthur's embarrassment goes unnoticed as Mrs. Palmer hands her husband his glass of coffee.

MR. PALMER

Adams? Adams? Isn't her father
Virgil Adams, who used to work
for Mr. Lamb?

MILDRED

I think so.

ARTHUR

(quickly)
Why?

MR. PALMER

(with a
little smile)
Oh, nothing much -- just that
I heard that this Virgil Adams
had stolen some kind of glue
formula from Mr. Lamb...

205

CLOSE SHOT. Arthur stares at Mr. Palmer, startled.

ARTHUR

Stolen it?

206

MED. CLOSE SHOT of group. Mrs. Palmer is pouring some coffee for Mildred and herself. Mr. Palmer is sipping his casually as he continues to talk.

MR. PALMER

Yes, and it's quite upset the old gentleman... Adams had been his clerk for over twenty-five years.

207

CLOSE SHOT. Arthur is stirring his coffee automatically watching his host with an interest that mingles, at the same time, a touch of dread. He does not want to hear any more -- yet feels that he must know all the story.

MR. PALMER'S VOICE

And Lamb had been carrying him along even though he'd been dead weight to the firm.

Arthur looks down at his coffee and carefully lays the spoon on the saucer.

208

MED. CLOSE SHOT of group. Mr. Palmer pauses to sip his coffee.

MR. PALMER

Then, to show his gratitude, this Adams up and walked off with the glue formula.

MRS. PALMER

(mildly indignant)

Imagine!

MR. PALMER

Is this Alice Adams a friend of yours, Mildred?

Arthur glances quickly at the young girl, but before she can speak her mother answers for her.

MRS. PALMER

My dear! Every girl who meets Mildred and tries to push the acquaintance isn't a friend of hers.

Arthur raises his glass to his lips, but puts it down again untasted. He looks thoroughly miserable.

209

CLOSE SHOT. Mildred leans forward with a graceful gesture to return her cup to the tray on the table.

MILDRED

(quietly)
Oh, I shouldn't put it quite like that. I saw something of her -- for a time. She's not unattractive -- in a way.

Her lowered eyes and soft voice, in fact her entire mannerism suggests the scene Alice gave on the porch when she imitated her.

210

MED. CLOSE SHOT of group.

MRS. PALMER

A pushing sort of girl -- a very pushing little person...
(she breaks off, glancing with a smile at Arthur, and says)
But I'm afraid all this is rather boring to poor Arthur.

ARTHUR

(hearing his name)
What? Yes -- I beg your pardon.

He is more confused than ever.

MRS. PALMER

There! You see?
(she turns to her daughter)
Mildred, why don't you take Arthur out and show him the garden. He may find it a relief to put his thoughts on something prettier than thievish clerks.

Mildred rises obediently and Arthur, greatly relieved, follows her as she leads him from the room. Mrs. Palmer looks after them, then glances toward her husband with a self-satisfied smile. They exchange little, knowing nods, and then Mrs. Palmer leans forward to pour herself a second cup of coffee.

CAMERA PANS DOWN to CLOSE SHOT of the exquisite silver service and Mrs. Palmer's fine, white, jeweled hands.

DISSOLVE

INT. ADAMS' KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

211

CLOSE SHOT. Mrs. Adams' hand pours some boiling water from a battered tea kettle into a coffee pot. CAMERA TRUCKS BACK to show Mrs. Adams, dressed for the dinner, her gown protected by a large apron, hovering over a steaming stove, the top of which holds several cooking kettles in which the meal is preparing. Behind her looms the figure of a big negress. Mrs. Adams puts the kettle on the back part of the stove and moves forward CAMERA TRUCKING BEFORE HER to ironing board, where Mr. Adams' evening clothes are in the process of being pressed.

MRS. ADAMS

(talking all
the while)

Now, Malena, as soon as the
doorbell rings you put the
caviar sandwiches on a tray...

(she pauses just
long enough to wet
her finger and test
the iron - then
continues in a lowered
voice)

...but be sure Miss Alice doesn't
see you. I want to surprise her.

MALENA

Yes'm.

She resumes her task of biscuit-making, pausing now and again to wipe the sweat from her forehead with the back of her hand, and all the while her jaws move over a piece of gum with the unbroken rhythm of a cow chewing its cud. Then the door opens and Alice rushes in, an empty vase in her hand, her kimona fairly flying out behind her as she hurries over to the sink to get some water. Mrs. Adams turns to look at her anxiously.

MRS. ADAMS

Alice, you ought to slip upstairs
and take a little teeny nap so
as to look fresh for tonight.

ALICE

(nervously)

Oh, I'll look all right. Besides,
I haven't time. It's six o'clock.

(starts out, but
pauses by the
ironing board
to add)

You're the one who ought to rest-
the way you've worked today.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS
(trying to
smile brightly)
Oh, I'm fine...

Alice sends her a helpless, troubled look, then hurries out of the room.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)
(half to herself
as she bends over
to pull out the
electric iron cord)
I just wish it hadn't turned so
hot.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

212 MED. SHOT. Alice hurries in with the vase, puts it on the center table and begins thrusting half a dozen roses in it. Her eyes wander about the room as she works and she interrupts herself to dash across and exchange two chairs, pulling the best one out and thrusting a worn one into a corner. She is dragging the couch to a better angle when her mother stops by the door, carrying the tuxedo and glances in.

MRS. ADAMS
Alice! You did all that this
morning -- and a dozen times
since! You'll wear yourself
out.

ALICE
But, Mother -- these chairs!

MRS. ADAMS
They're all right -- and no
one will notice the worn places
when we're sitting in them.

She comes forward to shake a lace curtain into better lines with her free hand as Alice hurriedly returns to her flower arranging.

ALICE
The roses help some, don't they?
And I've saved a dozen for the
table.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(hardly glancing
at them as she
gives a chair a
twitch and plumps
up a pillow)

They look beautiful. I never
knew anybody with so much taste
as you, Alice.

MR. ADAMS' VOICE

(from upstairs)

Where are those danged things?

MRS. ADAMS

(glancing down
at the tuxedo)

Coming, Virgil!

She turns to Alice and gives her the clothes.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

Here, dear, take these up to
your father. And you'd better
get dressed yourself; or you
won't be ready. I only have
to slip off my apron...

Alice, who has taken the tuxedo and already started for
the stairs, turns back anxiously.

ALICE

Mother -- what about Walter?
About wearing his evening
clothes, I mean?

MRS. ADAMS

(doubtfully)

I'm afraid he'll make a lot
of objections -- just like
your father...

(brightens as
she adds)

But I'll talk to him as soon
as he comes in.

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

213

MED. SHOT. Alice, relieved, hurries toward the stairs
and Mrs. Adams turns toward the dining-room, but is
stopped by her daughter's sudden, fierce stage-whisper.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

(leaning over
the balustrade)

And Mother -- for goodness
sakes! Get Malena to throw
away that gum of hers before
she waits on the table.

MRS. ADAMS

(nodding)

Don't worry - you just leave
everything to me...

And she continues her progress toward the dining room
as Alice hurries on up the stairs.

INT. ADAMS' KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

214

MED. SHOT. The room is still wreathed in steam
through which Malena moves from sink to stove, as
Mrs. Adams enters.

MRS. ADAMS

Malena, now remember to have the
soup already on the table before
you announce dinner.

(crosses to the
stove and begins
lifting pan lids
to peer under them)

MALENA

Yes'm -- but ain't it pretty
hot fo' soup, Mis Adams?

MRS. ADAMS

(sharply)

Never mind that! Then serve the
sweetbread and mushrooms, then
the fillet and vegetables...

MALENA

(breaking in)

Mis Adams - I'm afraid de ice
cream ain' gwine hold up much
longer. It's 'bout floatin'
a'ready.

Mrs. Adams turns to stare at her in dismay.

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING

215

MED. SHOT. Alice is fastening herself into the
organdie frock she wore at Mildred's dance, her
nervous fingers fairly picking at the hooks, when a
knock SOUNDS on her door.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Come in...

The door opens and Mr. Adams enters sheepishly, clad in tuxedo trousers, suspenders hanging down, and undershirt, his stiff-bosomed shirt in his hand.

MR. ADAMS

Alice -- could you sew up a buttonhole for me? The danged thing's too large and keeps poppin' open...

Alice her gown on and, not stopping to fasten it, runs over to her sewing basket to get needle, thread and thimble.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

Wish I could go to the table like this...

Alice takes the shirt from him, sits down on the bed and begins sewing feverishly.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

I don't believe I remember any hotter night in the last ten years.

(has left the hall door open and now sniffs the air with a little grimace)

My, but that smell's pretty strong. Is it fashionable to have cabbage for comp'ny dinner?

ALICE

That isn't cabbage. It's brussels sprouts.

MR. ADAMS

(sniffing again)

Oh, is it?

And just then the door bell rings -- and Alice sticks her finger.

ALICE

(staring toward the door)

He's come!

(CONTINUED)

ALICE (cont'd)
(breaks off the
thread, rises and
thrusts the shirt
into Mr. Adams' hands)
Hurry, Father...
(then remembering
her own unfinished
condition)
Here -- hook me up...

She turns to him and he starts to hook -- and just
then a crash SOUNDS below stairs. They glance up,
startled, questioning.

EXT. ADAMS' PORCH - EARLY EVENING

216 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Arthur, in dark coat and white
flannel trousers, is waiting at the door, and has
also heard the crash. He, likewise, looks startled.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - EARLY EVENING

217 MED. SHOT - Alice and her father are hurrying down
the stairs but stop half way as Mrs. Adams runs from
the dining room, minus her apron.

ALICE
What's happened?

MRS. ADAMS
(making gestures
for silence)
Malena fell down the cellar
stairs.

MR. ADAMS
Did she break anything?

MRS. ADAMS
Sh! No -- just bumped herself.
She'll be all right.
(waves them back
still speaking in
a stage whisper)
I'll let him in.

As she moves toward the door, Alice and Mr. Adams
hurry back upstairs.

218 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Mrs. Adams glances back over her
shoulder to see if the coast is clear, sets a smile
on her lips and opens the door. Arthur, who has been
waiting patiently, is now a little startled.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(extending
her hand)

Do come right in, Mr. Russell --
I'm Mrs. Adams. I'm so glad to
receive you informally this way
in our own little home...

As she speaks, she fairly draws him inside, closes the
door and takes his straw hat, while he smiles and
bows an acknowledgment of the introduction.

219

MED. (TRUCKING) SHOT - Mrs. Adams hangs Arthur's hat
on the hatrack and moves toward the living room.
CAMERA TRUCKS AFTER them until living room is reached.

MRS. ADAMS

(talking all
the while)

I'm afraid you'll think it's
almost too informal, my coming
to the door, but unfortunately
our maid has just had a little
accident.

Arthur pauses in the center of the living room and
starts to murmur regrets but Mrs. Adams waves him
toward the best chair placed under a light.

ARTHUR

Thank you.

He sits down and Mrs. Adams places herself in the
worst chair, spreading out her skirt a little to
cover it.

MRS. ADAMS

(cheerily)

It's been quite warm today,
hasn't it?

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

220

MED. CLOSE SHOT - Arthur opens his mouth to agree
with her and then closes it again for she ripples
right on.

MRS. ADAMS

(laughing a little)

The only person I know who doesn't
mind the heat the way other people
do is Alice. But then she's so
amiable, she never minds anything
-- it's just her character.

(CONTINUED)

Arthur is trying to smile agreement, but the light gets in his eyes and he keeps moving his head and turning it a little way to avoid the full glare.

MRS. ADAMS (cont'd)

(conversationally)

I think character is the most important thing in the world after all -- don't you, Mr. Russell?

221 CLOSE PANNING SHOT. Arthur shades his eyes with his hand.

ARTHUR

(solemnly)

Yes.

Under cover of the shaded hand he begins to take in the room, his eyes roving from object to object.

INT. DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

222 MED. SHOT - the murmur of Mrs. Adams' voice and her intermittent laughter is heard as Alice moves around the table trying to make a dozen roses look like fifty in a trailing vine effect down the center of the table, and shaking with nervousness. The kitchen door opens and Mr. Adams tiptoes in, dressed in tuxedo but with tie hanging.

MRS. ADAMS

Alice -- can you fix this?
(comes over
to her)

INT. ADAMS' DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

223 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Alice begins tying the tie favorably.

224 CLOSE SHOT - Mr. Adams' shirt front gives away at a lower button and starts bulging.

MR. ADAMS' VOICE

Oh, dang it!

His fingers try to re-button it.

225 MED. CLOSE SHOT - Alice has the tie fixed by this time.

MR. ADAMS

Well, anyway, it lets some air into me when it bulges.

Alice pats the tie into place while he still fumbles with the shirt stud.

MED. SHOT - Alice hurries back to the table
and the arranging of the flowers.

ALICE

(anxiously)

Look -- do you think it's all
right?

MR. ADAMS

Fine -- perfect!

(glances toward
the dining
room door)

Now, you'd better go and rescue
that young man from your mother.

ALICE

(absently)

Just a minute...

She exchanges a couple of the roses to get the best
ones in front of Arthur.

MR. ADAMS

(impatiently)

You better come on.

ALICE

Oh, I wish we'd rented some silver.

(as she speaks
she quickly moves
a couple of pieces
from one place
to another and
exclaims)

There!

She steps back to survey the results with a look of
deepening dissatisfaction.

MR. ADAMS

What's the matter now?

ALICE

(still whispering
but on the
point of wailing)

The roses -- they're beginning to
wilt! Maybe I shouldn't have
tried that vine effect.

(takes a step
forward, stops
and shrugs)

Oh, well - the vase was terribly
ugly.

(CONTINUED)

Her father, meanwhile, is moving toward the dining room door.

MR. ADAMS

Come on --

ALICE

(stopping him)

Father! We mustn't go in by this door.

And catching his hand, she rushes him toward the kitchen.

INT. ADAMS' KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

227 MED. SHOT - the dinner is simmering on the stove but Malena is nowhere to be seen, as Alice and her father hurry through and toward the back stairs.

MR. ADAMS

What difference does it make...

But Alice is running up the steps and he has to trot to keep up with her.

INT. UPPER HALL - EARLY EVENING

228 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice reaches the top of the back stairs, her father at her heels, and turns to descend the front steps, but stops suddenly. Mrs. Adams' voice and laughter are heard below, but the words are indistinct.

ALICE

(halting her
father and
speaking in
a whisper)

Wait!

He opens his mouth to protest, and decides against it as he stares at Alice.

229 CLOSE SHOT - Alice draws a deep breath, lifts her drooping shoulders, throws back her head and forces a sparkle into her eyes and a gay smile to her lips. In an instant she is another girl, poised, vivacious, charming. Now she is ready and as she starts down the stairs,

CUT TO

INT. ADAMS HALL - EARLY EVENING

230

MED. FULL SHOT - Alice begins to descend the stairs, clapping her pretty hands in time to a lilting tune which she begins to hum.

MRS. ADAMS' VOICE

(from living room)

You mustn't tell Alice we had this little chat about her. She'd just be furious with me, but she is such a dear child --

Alice, followed by her bewildered father, reaches the bottom of the stairs. Here she extends her right arm to its full length and keeps it extended as she flows into the living room.

ALICE

Why, Mr. Russell --

INT. ADAMS LIVING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

231

MED. SHOT - Arthur gets to his feet with a look of relief and steps forward to grasp Alice's hand.

ALICE

How terrible of me - to be so late coming down!

(turns to Mr. Adams, hovering in background)

This is my father - Mr. Russell.

The two men shake hands.

ADAMS

How do, Mr. Russell?

ARTHUR

Mr. Adams!

Meanwhile, Mrs. Adams has risen and moved forward to join the group.

232

MED. CLOSE SHOT - after the introductions, there is a slight pause. Alice turns swiftly to Arthur with a gay smile, but before she can speak Mr. Adams addresses the group.

MR. ADAMS

(genially)

I guess dinner's more'n ready. We'd better go sit down.

MRS. ADAMS

(with a little strained laugh)

No, not yet, Virgil.

(CONTINUED)

232 (CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

Well, why...

And just then they hear a suppressed moan coming from the doorway. All turn involuntarily in that direction.

233

MED. CLOSE SHOT - (toward door). Malena, now in cap and apron, with the cap decidedly awry, is just limping in, one hand on her wounded hip, a look of patient suffering in her eyes. But she is still chewing gum, and clutched firmly in her right hand is the tray of sandwiches.

234

MED. SHOT - the group watches Malena, fascinated, as she limps toward them and simply thrusts forward the tray and stands patiently waiting. Mrs. Adams is smiling happily, Alice is trying to scramble out of the moment's surprise into which she has fallen, but her father looks plainly bewildered.

235

CLOSE TWO SHOT - Mr. Adams stares down at the tray on which are spread caviar sandwiches made with Uneeda biscuits.

MR. ADAMS

What in the world --

(he is stopped
by a violent
nudge in the
ribs from his
wife's elbow)

Well, I'll try one.

Mrs. Adams has already chosen a sandwich and now he takes one.

MRS. ADAMS

(brightly, to Arthur)

A little caviar sandwich,
Mr. Russell?

236

CLOSE TWO SHOT - Alice and Arthur turn their attention to the tray as it is thrust forward.

ALICE

(echoing her mother)

Oh, caviar...

(takes one, bites
into it and only
saves the biscuits
from going to pieces
in her hand by a
dexterous movement)

These are delicious, Mother.

Arthur has also taken one.

MED. CLOSE SHOT of group. Mr. Adams, after suspiciously inspecting the sandwich, bites into his, one half goes into his mouth and the other folds up so that part falls on the floor and some on his tuxedo front. He juggles valiantly and retains the larger portion, brushing the crumbs off his person, but as he starts to chew a look of pain and protest comes over his face. At the same moment he is aware that his daughter is talking about him.

ALICE

(to Arthur)

Too bad we can't offer you what ought to go with this - but we never have any liquor in the house. Father's a teetotaler...

Mr. Adams gulps at this and almost chokes, and just then, from the doorway,

MALENA'S VOICE

(wearily)

Supper's ready.

Mrs. Adams is fussed by the form of this announcement, and Arthur covers his surprise with a quick smile. Mr. Adams alone sees nothing incongruous in it.

MR. ADAMS

(heartily)

Well, that's good: Let's go see if we can eat it.

Alice and her mother laugh merrily as though at a good joke and move away toward the door with Arthur, but Mr. Adams remains behind to surreptitiously throw the remains of the sandwich into the fireplace (or any other handy container).

ALICE'S VOICE

(to Arthur)

I hope you won't hate us for making you dine with us in such fearful weather.

Mr. Adams hurries a little to catch up with the others.

INT. ADAMS DINING ROOM - EARLY EVENING

MED. SHOT. - Mrs. Adams, Alice, Arthur and Mr. Adams enter, move toward table where soup is already served.

(CONTINUED)

238 (CONTINUED)

ALICE

I'm nearly dying of the heat myself,
so you have a fellow-sufferer- if
that pleases you.

Meanwhile, Arthur has gone around to aid Mrs. Adams
to seat herself and, after a fumbled hesitation,
Adams pushes in Alice's chair.

ALICE (cont'd)

(pointing to the chair
with its back to the
dining room door)

Will you sit there, Mr. Russell?

ARTHUR

Thanks.

He takes his place as Mr. Adams sits at the head
of the table.

239

MED. CLOSE SHOT. There is an extra plate on Alice's
side and she pushes it out of the way.

MR. ADAMS

(noting the
empty chair)

Where's Walter?

Mrs. Adams starts to answer, but her daughter is too
quick for her.

ALICE

Poor Walter - he's probably been
delayed at the office. Really,
father, you shouldn't permit him
to work so hard - particularly in
weather like this....

240

CLOSE SHOT - Alice's father blinks at her in
bewilderment over the soup he is attempting to eat.

ALICE'S VOICE

But the boy's so ambitious -
I suppose you simply can't
stop him.

Mr. Adam's puzzled expression deepens. Can she
possibly be talking about Walter?

241

CLOSE SHOT - Alice, ignoring her soup, smiling across at Arthur and trying to look cool and fresh.

ALICE (cont'd)

My, what a funnt thing weather is!.
Yesterday it was cool -- the angels
had charge of it, and today they
had an engagement somewhere else --

(she makes an
eloquent gesture
with her hands,
then laughs and
adds)

-- so the devil saw his chance
and started to move the equator
to the North Pole; but by the
time he got half way he thought
of something else he wanted to
do and went off and left the
equator here - right on top of us!

242

MED. CLOSE SHOT toward table. Arthur is listening with interest and amusement and not eating.

ALICE

(sighing
humorously)

I wish he'd come back and get it.

MRS. ADAMS

(fondly)

Alice! What an imagination!

ALICE

(pushing soup
cup away)

And what a lack of imagination
to prepare anything so hot on
a night like this....

Mrs. Adams looks a little flustered and confused,
but Alice has already turned to Malena, who is
limping forward with crackers.

ALICE (cont'd)

Do take this dreadful soup
away.

Malena surprised and slightly injured, puts down
the crackers, picks up Alice's portion and moves
around to Mr. Adams' place

(CONTINUED)

243

CLOSE SHOT - Mr. Adams is still eating his soup as Malena's large hand closes upon the plate and takes it away, leaving the spoon in Mr. Adams' possession. He tries to get it back to the dish but it is too late.

ALICE'S VOICE

How unfortunate we didn't have something iced and jellied instead.

Her words end on a rippling little laugh of apology, as Mr. Adams vaguely waves the spoon in the air -- and finally brings it to rest on the butter plate. CAMERA PANS DOWN with the spoon to CLOSE SHOT.

244

CLOSE SHOT - The creamed sweetbreads and mushroom course is being dabbed at by Adams' fork. Alice's tinkling laughter is heard.

245

CLOSE SHOT - The meat course, with a pile of watery-looking mashed potatoes, is now on the table. Alice's voice still laughing merrily.

CAMERA PANS up to CLOSE SHOT of Mr. Adams, with Malena on the wrong side again, offering him a dish of brussels sprouts. He is the last one to be served.

MR. ADAMS

So these are brussels sprouts...

(helps himself,
adding with
a chuckle)

Well, they certainly smell up the house.

246

MED. SHOT - Malena moves languorously toward the kitchen.

ALICE

(shaking her head,
even as she smiles)

What could have been in cook's mind not to have made an aspic instead of a heavy entree for weather like this?

Malena casts a reproachful glance over her shoulder as she bangs open the kitchen door and exits from the room.

ALICE

I'm afraid we let the servants
do too much as they like about
our meals, Mother. Perhaps we
should get new ones.

Mrs. Adams glances up, a little surprised, but
smiles loyally. Meanwhile, Mr. Adams has been
gazing disconsolately into an empty water glass --
and now raises his head.

248

MED. SHOT - Malena is just entering with a bowl of
chicken salad topped by a huge mound of mayonnaise.

MR. ADAMS

(waving the
empty glass
at her)

Hey! Here -- you --

MRS. ADAMS

What is it, Virgil?

MR. ADAMS

What's her name?

But by this time Malena has disappeared into the
kitchen again, unaware of the fact that she was
being paged.

ALICE

(innocently)

What's whose name, Father?

MR. ADAMS

Why - that young colored woman.

249

CLOSE SHOT - Arthur's lips twitch against a smile
and he bends his head over his plate.

MR. ADAMS' VOICE

I want some water.

250

MED. CLOSE SHOT - toward table.

ALICE

(laughing to
cover her
embarrassment)

Don't give up hope, Father.
She hasn't gone forever.

251 CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams sets down the glass and shakes his head.

MR. ADAMS
I don't know about that.

He picks up a brussels sprout on his fork, burns his mouth, and puts the fork down again hastily. CAMERA PANS DOWN WITH fork TO his plate.

DISSOLVE

251A SAME SHOT. Showing the chicken salad with a mound of mayonnaise on top.

ALICE'S VOICE
(laughing)

DISSOLVE

252 CLOSE SHOT. Before Alice is placed a dish of ice cream -- and it is floating just as Malena predicted.

ALICE'S VOICE
Father simply must have a heavy meal in the evening...

CAMERA PANS UP TO her face.

ALICE (cont'd)
(desperately bright
and cheerful)
He works so hard in his terrible old factory -- terrible new factory, I should say, that he needs lots of food to keep his strength up.

She looks fondly toward her father.

253 CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams is paying no attention. He has just noticed that his shirt has popped open again and is trying to fasten it surreptitiously under the edge of the table cloth.

ALICE'S VOICE
I don't see why business men can't leave most of the detail to their assistants -- but then I suppose some of them are like that...

254 MED. CLOSE SHOT - toward table. Malena is just trailing out with an empty tray, having served the last large coffee cup.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

...They just allow the help to sit around idle while they do all the work...

(smiles brightly
and rushes right on)

Then, of course, there's the other type of business man who drives his employees every minute of the time -- and invents things for them to do if there's nothing else -- because he hates to see people idle.

(leans forward to
smile teasingly
at Arthur)

Which category do you fall into, Mr. Russell?

ARTHUR

Oh, I don't know...

ALICE

(hastening on -
and on)

I'm sure not the last one. You're probably the idol of your office boys and secretaries.

255 CLOSE SHOT. Mr. Adams has conquered the rebellious shirt stud and sits erect feeling triumphant.

MR. ADAMS

Secretaries, Alice? You know, I may be needin' one soon. Never thought I'd one day be having one of my own...

(smiles half
apologetically
as he speaks)

256 MED. CLOSE SHOT - toward table. Again Arthur bends over his plate to eat hurriedly.

MRS. ADAMS

Sort of gives a man a feeling of importance, don't it?

ALICE

(laughs merrily
at this, and then
leans forward)

Won't you have more coffee, Mr. Russell?

257

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Walter, tense, white, frightened appears in the doorway and stops at sight of the guest.

ARTHUR'S VOICE

No -- really -- no, thank you...

Walter turns, hisses quietly between his teeth and beckons his father.

258

MED. SHOT. All look up, except Arthur who is too polite to turn around.

ALICE

Why, Walter! You remember Mr. Russell...

Arthur starts to rise and face the young man, but before he has completed the gesture, Walter has ducked his head and disappeared.

MR. ADAMS

Pardon me -- I guess my boy wants to see me.
(gets up)

Arthur, who has started to sit down, rises again, and then resumes his chair as Adams hurriedly leaves the room.

259

MED. CLOSE SHOT toward table. Mrs. Adams watches her husband go, nervous and apprehensive. Arthur mops his forehead and smiles vaguely across at the young girl.

ALICE

Walter's such a funny boy -- so abrupt and unexpected. But, of course, you know that about him...
(laughs lightly and hurries on)

I suppose all talented people are a bit peculiar. It's part of their charm, really...

260

CLOSE SHOT. Alice leans forward and looks gayly across the table at Arthur.

ALICE

What are your talents, Mr. Russell? Do you play any instrument, or sing, or paint. Or perhaps you have some secret hobby that derives its chief charm from just being secret...

261

MED. CLOSE SHOT toward table. Arthur's smile is becoming a bit set as Alice continues to tease him.

ALICE

...just something you have all to yourself and don't like to talk about.

ARTHUR

Well, really.....

He is interrupted by the SOUND of loud, angry, though indistinct voices coming from upstairs. The three at the table look startled.

MRS. ADAMS

(hastily)

Perhaps I'd better see if Walter's had his dinner. You'll excuse me...

She tacks a smile on her face. Arthur rises and she gets to her feet and hurries out. The gay, humorous expression has been wiped from Alice's lips and, for just an instant, her shoulders droop wearily. Then, as Arthur sits down again, she snaps back into the part she has set herself to play.

262

CLOSE TWO SHOT toward table.

ALICE

(to Arthur)

Penny for your thoughts -- no, I'll bid more...

(her hands

hover over the
vine effect on
the table)

...a rose -- a poor, little dead
rose for your thoughts, Mr. Arthur
Russell...

(tosses him

the rose,

smiling lightly,

then swiftly sobers

as she adds)

Will you ever forgive me?

ARTHUR

(striving to

appear surprised)

What for?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

For making you eat such a heavy dinner... I mean look at such a heavy dinner -- because you certainly didn't do more than look at it -- on such a night.

Arthur smiles a vague protest and dabs at his forehead with his handkerchief. Before he can speak, however, Alice hurries on, trying to regain her attitude of light cheerfulness.

ALICE (cont'd)

But cheer up -- your fearful duty is almost done and you can run home as soon as you want to...

263 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice rises, hesitates and glances sideways at Arthur.

ALICE

That's what you're dying to do.

ARTHUR

(also rising)

Not at all.

Alice comes around the table but pauses there to study Arthur's face.

ALICE

You're upset about something.

ARTHUR

Not at all.

264 CLOSE TWO SHOT. Alice smiles, gently, maternally, but with a touch of gaiety as she moves closer.

ALICE

What's the matter, little boy?
Tell Auntie...

Involuntarily, Arthur steps back and Alice, changing instantly, throws up her hands.

ALICE (cont'd)

Oh, my dear! I won't eat you!

265 MED. SHOT. Alice turns swiftly and goes out of the room and Arthur follows her.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - EVENING

266 MED. SHOT. Alice, coming from the dining room, walks quickly to the front door.

ALICE
(over her shoulder)
Let's go out on the porch --
where we belong!

He opens the door for her and they go outside.

EXT. ADAMS' FRONT PORCH - EVENING

267 MED. SHOT. Alice crosses to the swing and he sits down on the chair beside her. She leans forward, quietly confidential.

ALICE
Now -- tell me what's the matter.

268 CLOSE SHOT. Arthur, confused and unhappy, but trying to remain polite, shakes his head.

ARTHUR
Nothing. Nothing's the matter.
(shrugs and
takes out his
handkerchief
again)
Of course, one is rather affected
by such weather as this. It may
make one a -- a little quieter
than usual, of course.

He smiles, thinking that he has made a very good excuse.

269 CLOSE TWO SHOT. Alice is not listening. She is gazing ahead of her, trying to solve the problem herself.

ALICE
Maybe it's this ugly little
house -- maybe it's the
furniture, or Mother's vases
that upset you...
(turns to look
at him)
Or was it Mother, herself -- or
father?

(CONTINUED)

269 (CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

(slightly desperate)

Nothing upset me.

ALICE

(gently)

You say that because you're too kind, or too conscientious, or too embarrassed -- anyhow, too something to tell me...

270 MED. SHOT. Alice rises and walks to the railing, leaving Arthur helpless and speechless, though he, too, gets to his feet.

271 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice, gazing out into the night, speaks her thoughts aloud -- to herself.

ALICE

I wonder -- I wonder if they haven't done it after all.

ARTHUR

(coming up
beside her)

I don't understand.

ALICE

(half turning,
but not looking
at him)

I wonder who has been talking about me to you, after all. Isn't that it?

ARTHUR

(uncomfortably)

Not at all!

ALICE

(flaring up)

Please don't say 'not at all' again. Oh, you're not good at deceiving...

She moves away impatiently and again Arthur follows.

272 MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice pauses by the swing but does not sit down.

ARTHUR

I'm not deceiving. I...

ALICE

Never mind...

(CONTINUED)

She moves around as though to sit down, but halts, standing straight, hands clasped in front of her as a thought arrests her.

ALICE (cont'd)

Do you remember saying that nothing anybody else could do would ever keep you from coming here -- that if you -- left me, it would be because I drove you away myself?

ARTHUR

(quietly)

Yes, it was true.

ALICE

(bewildered)

But I haven't driven you away -- and yet you've gone.

She sinks down in the swing, overwhelmed by this discovery. Arthur again takes the chair beside her.

ARTHUR

(trying to smile)

Do I seem as stupid as all that?

273 CLOSE TWO SHOT. Alice hardly hears him. She is trying to make reasonable this premonition within her.

ALICE

I wonder if I have driven you away?

ARTHUR

(feeling a little like a parrot)

You've done nothing at all...

ALICE

I wonder...

She hesitates,

ALICE

Do you know, I have the strangest feeling. I feel as if I were going to be with you only about five minutes more -- in all the rest of my life...

275

CLOSE SHOT. Arthur is acutely embarrassed. He can hardly let that remark pass, and yet he doesn't want to commit himself.

ARTHUR

Why, no. Of course I'm coming to see you --- often. I --

ALICE'S VOICE

No.

276

CLOSE TWO SHOT. Alice's eyes are large and bright with a strange light of foreknowing.

ALICE

I've never had a feeling like this before. It's...

(She struggles for words to express it)
...it's just so, that's all.
You're never coming here again!

(her voice is clear, the note one of amazement at the discovery -- nothing else)

Why, it's finished, isn't it?
Why, it's all over -- isn't it? Why -- yes...

277

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice rises and stares about her -- as one would awakening from a dream.

ARTHUR

(getting to his feet)

I'm afraid -- you're awfully tired and nervous...I really ought to be going.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE
(gazing at him
as though seeing
him for the first
time)
Yes, of course, you ought.
(and when Arthur
looks confused
she adds quietly)
There's nothing else for you
to do. When anything's spoiled --
people can't do anything else
but run away from it...
(she turns to
him, holding
out her hand)
So --- goodbye.

ARTHUR
(taking her
hand and making
a last effort
to speak lightly)
At least we'll only....
(again he
hesitates not
wanting to make
promises)
...only say goodnight.

But Alice is gazing up at the top of his head.

ALICE
Oh, your hat...

She turns away quickly.

278 MED. SHOT. Alice hurries toward the door, speaking
over his shoulder.

ALICE
I'd like to keep it for a
souvenir, but I'm afraid you
need it.

She darts into the house and Arthur takes this
moment to release a long breath and again mop
his forehead.

ALICE (cont'd)
(returning
with the hat)
You poor thing -- you can't
go without your hat.
(she laughs on a
slightly hysterical
note)
What a thing to say! What a
romantic parting -- talking
about hats!

Arthur smiles, trying to give the impression that all this is just a joke -- when, suddenly, from the house, comes Mrs. Adams' wail of broken-hearted anguish. Arthur is startled, but Alice hardly turns her head.

ALICE (cont'd)

Oh, don't bother... We have lots of that in this funny old house...

She crosses swiftly to the door, opens it, pauses and looks back.

ALICE (cont'd)

(gently)

Goodbye, Mr. Russell...

And then she goes in and closes the door behind her. Arthur stands for a moment staring, finally and slowly puts on his hat and, turning, walks down the steps and out into the night.

INT. MR. ADAMS' ROOM - NIGHT

279

MED. SHOT. Mr. Adams, his coat off, is nervously removing his tie and collar as he rails about the room. Mrs. Adams is seated on the bed crying, and Walter stands nearby with downcast eyes.

MR. ADAMS

He was waitin' for this, Lamb was. But I'll pay him back -- every cent, -- every last, dang, dirty penny.

MRS. ADAMS

(dabbing at her eyes with her handkerchief)

Oh, Walter, Walter! How could you do it!

WALTER

(still gazing at the floor)

I asked him for the money --

(he jerks his head toward his father)

-- and he wouldn't give it to me.

MR. ADAMS

Where was I gonna get it?

(CONTINUED)

At this moment the door opens and Alice enters. She closes the door behind her and sets her back against it, looking at the three anxiously.

ALICE

What's the matter?

For a moment no one answers. Slowly Mr. Adams sinks into a chair as he speaks.

MR. ADAMS

Walter's short in his accounts --
down at Lamb's.

Alice stares at her brother in shocked surprise.

MRS. ADAMS

(sorrow in
her voice)

He -- he took a hundred and
fifty dollars.

ALICE

(gasping)

A hundred and fifty dollars!
Why? What for?

WALTER

(moving restlessly)

A guy -- friend of mine -- got
in a jam. He said he'd pay me
back before the end of the
month, -- but he didn't, and --
and the auditor's already
started on the books, -- down
at the office.

Mrs. Adams rises and flings her arms protectingly
around her son.

MRS. ADAMS

Oh, Walter -- you can't go to
jail! You can't!

ALICE

(crossing to
her mother)

Wait, Mother -- don't be so
upset.

(she draws her
back, patting her
shoulder)

Perhaps Mr. Lamb won't
prosecute if --

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

(his head
coming up
with a jerk)

Him? Him not prosecute? Why
that's what he's been waiting
for all along. Thinks we both
cheated him. Why he was just
lettin' Walter walk into a
trap!

ALICE

(turning from
her mother)

But if you raised the money
and paid it back --

MR. ADAMS

(getting out
of his chair)

Oh, I'll pay it back all right --
every cent. Every last penny.
I can raise it. I'll put a loan
on my factory. I'll get it for
him!

As he speaks he reaches for his jacket, slips it on
and starts for the door.

ALICE

(stepping forward)

Where are you going?

MR. ADAMS

(turning in
his stride)

To see Jonathan - my Bank
President. I'll get that
money tonight.

WALTER

(stepping
hesitantly
forward)

I'm sorry, Dad.

MR. ADAMS

(angrily)

Don't you talk to me, you danged
little idiot ... Thinks we're all
yellow, does he? I'll show him.

(he flings out
of the room
and as he storms
down the hall he
is still heard
saying)

Every last, danged, dirty penny ---

(CONTINUED)

MRS. ADAMS

(rising and
coming forward
nervously)

Poor father!

(glances at her
son)

Poor Walter!

(then turning
to Alice)

And to have this come on
the night of your sister's
dinner, --

(crosses to the
girl and puts an
arm about her
shoulders)

Oh, poor, poor Alice!

ALICE

(moving away
and answering
a little sharply)

Don't say poor "Alice"! I'm
all right, Mother.

Then as Mrs. Adams begins weeping again, Alice bends
over her soothingly, murmuring.

ALICE (cont'd)

Hush, hush, Mother.

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

280 MED. SHOT. Mr. Adams, his hat on, is nervously
searching in the desk for the necessary papers to
take with him to the bank. Just as he finds them
and stuffs them in his pocket, the door bell rings.
He looks up, startled and apprehensive, then decides
to answer it and crosses the room.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - NIGHT

281 MED. CLOSE SHOT. (TRUCKING CAMERA). Adams opens the
door to reveal Lamb standing on the threshold.
Startled, Adams stares at him.

MR. LAMB

Hello, Adams.

Adams is so flustered that he doesn't move out of the
doorway.

LAMB (cont'd)

Well, can I come in?

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS

(stepping
aside)

Yes, yes, sure -- come in.

MR. LAMB

(entering and
closing the
door behind him)

I want to talk to you.

MR. ADAMS

(nervously)

Yes, yes --

He starts for the living room, Lamb following, and
CAMERA TRUCKS AFTER THEM.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

-- me too - Have a chair.

CAMERA STOPS as Lamb pauses by the table.

INT. UPPER HALL LANDING - NIGHT

282

MED. SHOT. The ringing of the door bell has brought
Mrs. Adams, Alice and Walter out into the hall where
they are grouped, listening.

WALTER

(in a scared
whisper)

It's old J.A. I'm clearing
out.

He turns to run back down the hall but his sister
grabs him.

ALICE

(also whispering)

Walter, you can't!

WALTER

(trying to
pull free)

Oh, can't I?

ALICE

(hanging on
grimly)

You can't be a coward too.

She pushes him into her room and enters, followed
by her mother.

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

283 MED. SHOT. Mr. Lamb has not accepted a chair but is standing in the center of the room finishing a very definite speech by shaking his finger at Mr. Adams.

MR. LAMB

And I wouldn't even have set foot in this house except that I wanted to tell you to your face how I felt.

(he gazes at Adams scornfully)

A fine family you turned out to be, after all these years.

MR. ADAMS

(nervous and anxious)

I'll pay you back every cent Walter took, Mr. Lamb, -- just as soon as I can get the money.

(fumbles in his pocket and brings out the papers to prove his words, as he adds)

I was just goin' down now to try and raise a loan on -- on my glue works.

His voice trails lightly over this last phrase as he suddenly realizes how it sounds to Mr. Lamb.

MR. LAMB

Your glue works? I always thought you had to show people some business prospects to raise a loan.

MR. ADAMS

Naturally.

Mr. Lamb turns to the table, pushes aside his hat lying there, steps back, thrusts his hands in his pockets and stands wide and expansive before Mr. Adams as he says triumphantly:

MR. LAMB

Well, -- you may find that a little difficult, -- 'specially now that I'm starting a glue works of my own.

MR. ADAMS

What's that?

MR. LAMB

Yes, -- and very convenient to your place too, -- fact is, right across the street.

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS
(staring at him,
then slowly
recovering enough
to stammer)

What?!.... You mean that big,
enormous, old butterine factory...?

He gestures as though the building stood right outside
the living room door. Lamb turns away, sits down in a
chair, leans back and crosses his legs.

MR. LAMB
That's it! My sign's going up
tomorrow....

Mr. Adams has turned away, desperation rising within him
twisting his hands nervously. Now he sinks down in a
chair.

MR. LAMB (cont'd)
(quietly)
What did you expect me to do,
Virgil Adams? Let you walk off
with that formula, like swallowin'
a pat o' butter?

(shakes his
finger at
Adams again)
I knew what you thought. You
said to yourself -- 'Here's this
old fool, J. A. Lamb -- he's in
his second childhood, an' I can
put this over on him' --

MR. ADAMS
(looking up
and answering
hotly)
I did not! I worked years on
that formula -- it was just as
much mine as yours.

(his voice drops
from a note of
defense to one
of self-pity as
he adds)
-- and, anyway, a lot you know
about my feelin's and what I
said to myself.

(his voice rises
and he sits
forward in his
chair to emphasize
his words)
But there's one thing I want to
say to you right now...I don't
feel mean any more about what
I've done -- 'cause there's a
meaner man in this world than I
am, Mr. Lamb.

He nods his head several times emphatically.

(CONTINUED)

MR. LAMB

Oh, so you feel better about yourself?

MR. ADAMS

You bet I do.....

INT. ADAMS' HALL - NIGHT

284

MED. CLOSE SHOT. Alice and Mrs. Adams are creeping cautiously down from the top of the stairs to listen, but stop as they hear.

MR. ADAMS' VOICE

You've spiked my business, all right. Now I can't even raise the money to keep my boy out of the penitentiary. That's where you worked till you got me!

As he speaks, Alice and Mrs. Adams exchange stricken glances.

INT. ADAMS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

285

MED. SHOT.

MR. LAMB

(indignantly)

Are you accusing me --?

MR. ADAMS

(getting to
his feet and
facing Lamb)

Look at me! I worked all my life for you, and what I did when I quit, couldn't make two cents worth of difference in your life -- and it looked like it'd mean all the difference in the world to my family.

(takes a step
forward and
rushes on)

You think I did you a bad turn, and now you got me ruined for it -- and my fam'ly ruined...

(his voice
is rising
hysterically)

-- and if anybody'd 'a' told me last year I'd say such a thing, I'd called him a dang liar -- but I do say it, Mr. Lamb. (cont'd)

(CONTINUED)

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)
(pounds the table as
he finishes
breathlessly)
You're a -- a doggone -- mean
-- man...

He leans against the table shaking with emotion. Lamb
has risen to his feet but before he can answer...

ALICE'S VOICE
(from hall)
Father! Stop --- please!

She runs into the room and grabs his arm as Mrs. Adams
follows.

MRS. ADAMS
You're not well enough for such
excitement -- Virgil!

MR. ADAMS
(trying to
pull away
from both
women who
are attempting
to draw him
toward the door)
No, I won't -- I gotta tell him
what I think. I --

ALICE
Father, please. Come upstairs,
you'll be ill ---

And between the two of them they get him to the door.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - NIGHT

286 MED. SHOT. Mrs. Adams and Alice bring Mr. Adams from
the living room. Alice accompanies them as far as the
stairs. Mrs. Adams, her arm linked in that of her
husband's, forces him up the rest of the way.

ADAMS
(as he goes)
Lemme go, lemme go, I'm all
right. He's got me ruined
all right -- and all of us
ruined. Set a trap for him, --
that's what he did, -- a trap
for all of us.

(CONTINUED)

Alice shakes her head and turns around to discover Mr. Lamb making for the door, hat in hand. She hurries forward.

ALICE

(anxiously)

Mr. Lamb! Please, just a moment... I don't want you to leave thinking too badly of father. He couldn't have meant what he said just now, I guess he's so overwrought that he just lost his head.

MR. LAMB

'Overwrought! I shouldn't wonder, -- the danged old fool! (as he speaks he moves away from the door indicating a willingness to listen)

ALICE

Yes, I guess he is, -- an old fool.

MR. LAMB

(turning, surprised)

Huh?

ALICE

(quietly)

For listening to us -- Mother and me... Oh, -- it's all my fault -- this whole terrible mess, -- all my fault.

MR. LAMB

(looking at her keenly)

Look here, young woman, I guess maybe you're a bit overwrought yourself.

ALICE

(facing him)

No, I'm all right. I'm just talking the truth, -- for once.

She moves toward the living room door and pauses in the archway. The old gentleman anxiously follows her.

MR. LAMB

What are you talking about?

ALICE

You see, Mother was always after Father, and after him, -- to make more money -- for me -- so that I could have lovely things like other girls -- well, like your grand-daughter, Henrietta, Mr. Lamb.

This hits home and Mr. Lamb looks away, but Alice does not notice this. She is staring beyond him into space, thinking.

ALICE (cont'd)

I guess parents will make any sacrifice to see their children happy, -- and, when Father saw how unhappy I was -- he -- he did what he did.

(turns to Lamb)

Oh, he always wanted to go back to work for you, -- I guess he almost worshipped you, Mr. Lamb, -- and if he had, he could have kept an eye on Walter...And that's another thing, Mr. Lamb. Walter didn't steal that money, -- he just borrowed it.

MR. LAMB

(trying to
regain his
high-handed
attitude)

Oh, he did?

ALICE

Yes, -- to help a friend who was in trouble...

Lamb snorts and turns away toward the hall door. Alice follows him.

ALICE (cont'd)

(anxiously)

Mr. Lamb, if you'll just give us a little time, -- I'll get a job, -- and pay you back what Walter owes you -- really I will... I know I haven't much experience, but I can do things -- I was good at Arithmetic and English in school, -- I won a prize in English once, -- and I'd make a good secretary for someone. I think I'm more sensible about things now, -- and if you'll only give us a little time --

Her voice, by this time, has an hysterical note in it. During her speech the old man has been watching her keenly and now gently interrupts.

MR. LAMB

Alice, -- wait.

(he pauses,
glancing toward
the stairs)

I -- I'd like to see your father
for a moment. Do you suppose --?

ALICE

(surprised)

Why, -- of course, Mr. Lamb.

She moves toward the steps, too startled by this turn of events to question him.

INT. MR. ADAMS' ROOM - NIGHT

288

MED. SHOT. Mr. Adams, in dressing gown, is seated wearily in his big chair, but his head still nervously moves from side to side and his fingers drum on the chair arms. Mrs. Adams is bringing in a sedative from the bathroom.

MRS. ADAMS

(handing him
the glass and
finding nothing
better to say)

I forgot to get you that new
tube of shaving cream, Virgil.
I'll get it tomorrow.

Adams just gives her a look, then raises his glass to drink as a knock on the door is heard.

MR. ADAMS

(bracing himself
for more trouble)

Come in.

The door opens, and Alice ushers Mr. Lamb in.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

(surprised and
instantly ready
to renew the fray)

Well, -- what ---?

(CONTINUED)

MR. LAMB

(coming forward
and holding up
a restraining hand)

Now, wait just a minute... You
got me awful mad a little while
ago, Virgil Adams, and -- well,
you weren't exactly purring like
a kitten yourself.

MR. ADAMS

You certainly gave me cause.

He starts to get to his feet, the better to fight, but
Lamb stops him with another gesture.

MR. LAMB

Just hold your horses a minute,
please.

Adams sinks back, and Lamb sits down in the chair Alice
has brought forward for him. Then she joins her mother,
who is waiting anxiously in the background.

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

(to Adams)

You were saying about this glue
controversy not meaning anything
to me, and it meaning a whole heap
to you and your family. Well, it
did mean a good deal to me to have
you go back on me after so many
years.

Adams looks down at the floor and says nothing, while
Lamb glances toward the young girl and faintly smiles.

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

But I've been talking to Alice
here, and now I can see where maybe
you were pushed into this thing by
circumstances, -- and I've lived
long enough to know that
circumstances can beat the best
of us, -- yes, the best of us.
And, well, maybe I've been a bit
of a danged old fool myself --

Adams' head comes up sharply.

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

-- yes, that's what I called you.

MR. ADAMS

(flaring up)
You did, huh?

(CONTINUED)

MR. LAMB

Yes, I did.

MR. ADAMS

(slowly capitulating)

Well, maybe you were right.

Mr. Lamb standing up and putting aside his chair.

MR. LAMB

Now, Virgil, this is the point.
If you and I been transgressing
against each other, why, I think
it's time we quit such foolishness...

Adams also rises. For a moment, the two old men gaze at
each other with growing understanding. Abruptly Lamb
looks away, fiddling with his hat.

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

I guess maybe I once talked about
doing something for you in connection
with that glue business. I've been
selfish and forgetful, but it's
never too late to mend, and well, --
we won't talk about it now --

He moves toward the door, adding:

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

-- you come down to the office
soon's you feel fit and we'll work
something out --

He pauses, thinks over possibilities, and vigorously
nods his head as he says:

MR. LAMB (cont'd)

-- yes, I think together, maybe,
we ought to be able to show the
world something about glue...
And we'll talk about Walter then,
too... Well, good night.

He nods pleasantly toward everyone, as Mrs. Adams,
relieved to the point of tears, hurries after him to
escort him out. Alice crosses to the door, closes it and
turns back to face her father who has sunk down on the
edge of the bed, overcome by this turn of events.

ALICE

(quietly)

Isn't he a wonderful old man, Daddy?

MR. ADAMS

(gratefully)

He is, -- but if it hadn't been for
you --

(CONTINUED)

He reaches out and takes her hand as she comes over to him.

ALICE

Nonsense, Daddy, -- why should you think that?

MR. ADAMS

(adoringly)

What I think -- I think you're the smartest girl in the world; I wouldn't trade you for the whole kit-and-boodle of 'em.

He beams upon her, and she hugs him, sinking down on the bed beside him. For a moment both gaze into space, each busy with his own thoughts.

MR. ADAMS (cont'd)

Isn't it funny how things work out? I've seen it happen in other people's lives and now it's happened in ours.

ALICE

What, father?

MR. ADAMS

Why, you think you're going to be pushed right spang up against the wall. You can't see any way out, -- or any hope at all -- and then something you never counted on turns up -- and you kind of squeeze out of it -- and keep on going.

ALICE

(softly)

I understand, Daddy.

MR. ADAMS

(turning to look at her)

I'm afraid you do. And you oughtn't to at your age.

(shakes his head regretfully)

Young people should leave the troubles to the old ones, and concentrate on good times...

(pats her arm)

He's a fine young man, Alice, -- the nicest and quietest you ever had. And I know he likes you just for your own sake and not on account of any dang glue factory or anything else.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

(not looking
at him)

Yes, Daddy.

(she rises and
speaks more
briskly)

Now you'd better go to bed and
rest. You've had enough excitement
for one night. Good night, dear.
(stooping, she
kisses him)

MR. ADAMS

Good night.

Alice crosses to the door, turns off the overhead lights,
smiles back at her father and goes out, gently closing
the door behind her.

INT. UPPER HALL - NIGHT

289

MED. SHOT. Mrs. Adams is coming down the hall
accompanied by Walter. Alice advances to meet them and
they pause for an instant.

WALTER

(contrite and
very grateful)

Mom told me, Alice.

He squeezes her arm to express the emotion he cannot
voice, -- then walks into his father's room to try and
make it up with Mr. Adams. Mrs. Adams follows Alice to
the stairway.

MRS. ADAMS

(stopping her
anxiously)

Alice!... How about--- ?

ALICE

(quickly)

Oh, he left before anything
happened. Everything's all
right.

She tries to smile but the attempt is a signal failure.

MRS. ADAMS

(taking Alice's
hand)

No -- no it isn't. Oh, my poor
baby, -- he's gone, isn't he?

ALICE

(looking away and
slightly shrugging)

It doesn't matter ---

MRS. ADAMS
(softly wailing)
That dinner, --- oh, Alice, can
you ever forgive your poor mother?

ALICE
There's nothing to forgive, mother,
-- it's just the way things are...

She pats her arm and smiles. Then she ceases to look
at her mother and stares beyond her as though reviewing
the full sequence of events. Half to herself, she
continues quietly:

ALICE (cont'd)
It's all so clear to me now:
You do thus and so, and you tell
yourself, 'now, seeing me do thus
and so, people will naturally
think this and that', -- but in
the end they don't. They think
something else, -- usually just
what you don't want them to...
I suppose about the only good in
pretending is the fun we get out
of fooling ourselves that we fool
somebody else.

Mrs. Adams is gazing at her, startled, a little
apprehensive. This is not like Alice. The young girl,
suddenly realizing this, smiles and, reaching out, gives
her mother a big hug.

ALICE (cont'd)
(as one would
speak to a
tired child)
Run on to bed now, dear -- I'll
turn out the lights.

As she says this she starts down the stairs. Mrs. Adams
looks after, slowly shakes her head, then turns away and
moves toward her own door.

INT. LIVING ROOM-- NIGHT

290 MED. SHOT. Alice, coming in, switches off the overheads.
The lamps are still lit, and she moves from one to the
other turning them off until she reaches the last one,
by the phonograph. Here she pauses, thinking - about
the evening - about Arthur. After a moment's hesitation
she gets out a record, places the disc and starts it
whirling. MUSIC answers softly -- the same piece that
had been played five times at the inn - her piece --
hers and Arthur's. She listens -- then, as one moving
in a dream, quietly, a little wearily, she crosses the
room and into the hall.

INT. ADAMS' HALL - NIGHT

291 MED. SHOT. As the MUSIC follows Alice, she opens the door of the darkened hall and goes out on the porch, leaving the door ajar behind her.

EXT. ADAMS' PORCH - NIGHT

292 Alice comes out on the porch. She stands for a moment, gazing out into the night -- quiet, a little weary. Then, out of the darkness --

ARTHUR'S VOICE

A penny for your thoughts.

Alice whirls, startled, gazing at him as at an apparition, as he comes forward.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

No -- a little, dead rose --

He hands her the same one she had given him at the table. She takes it without looking, her gaze riveted upon him. At last she finds her voice.

ALICE

You -- you came back!

ARTHUR

(smiling)
I didn't go.

ALICE

Why?

ARTHUR

I was waiting -- for you.

ALICE

But I thought --

Suddenly she realizes that if he had waited, he must have heard -- she looks up at the house and gasps.

ALICE (cont'd)

Oh!

ARTHUR

(interpreting
the look and
nodding)
Yes, I heard everything, and
what's more --

ALICE

(stammering)
You heard --?

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

(gently but
firmly)

Stop it! And let me finish.

Then, as Alice shuts up, he continues on a more conversational note.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

I heard a great deal this afternoon -- at Mildred's, too.

ALICE

So they did talk about me.

ARTHUR

Yes, and it's all opened my eyes to one thing --

He pauses, takes a step toward her, gazing at her intently, as he says:

ARTHUR (cont'd)

I love you, Alice.

She stands still, petrified, staring at him.

ARTHUR (cont'd)

Did you hear me? I love you --

ALICE

Gee Whiz --

And when she still stands and looks, he suddenly, strongly, sweeps her into his arms.

FADE OUT

THE END