

DRIVING MISS DAISY

a screenplay by

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DRIVING MISS DAISY

FADE IN:

INT. DAISY'S BEDROOM - DAY / AUGUST 1948

A precise, orderly room. Comfortable and well maintained, but not fancy or trendy. Venetian blinds are drawn against the hot August sun. The room seems to be in repose. Suddenly the face of DAISY WERTHAN appears, looking directly at us. She straightens the straw hat on her head. We realize we have been looking at a mirror image of the room.

Daisy is seventy-two years old and apparently in excellent health. She wears a summer street dress, low-heeled white shoes and appropriate summer jewelry -- no makeup.

She does not dwell on her mirror image, once the hat is adjusted. She reaches into a bureau drawer, takes out a pair of white gloves, gets her pocket book from the closet and walks purposefully out of the room.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

- A. Daisy in the upstairs hall.
- B. Daisy walking down the carpeted steps.
- C. Daisy in the downstairs hall, which contains a commode with a 1930's telephone on it and various objets d'art.
- D. Daisy in the dining room, drapes closed against the hot sunlight.
- E. Daisy through the swinging door in the pantry.

She moves briskly through the silent rooms. This is a woman who is never idle. Everything about her suggests energy and purpose. What we see of her house tells us that she is in comfortable circumstances. Bookshelves are evident in many of the rooms. The furniture is overstuffed and/or mahogany.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

A spacious, black-and-white tiled kitchen -- pre-W.W.I in dimension. The only sign of the times is a fairly modern gas range.

IDELLA, black and close to Daisy's age, stands at the sink, under the window, polishing silver with an old toothbrush. She does not look up, or in any way acknowledge Daisy's entrance into the kitchen.

Daisy removes a shopping list from a cabinet drawer.

DAISY

I'm gone to the market, Idella.

IDELLA

Mmmmmmm.

Daisy heads out the door.

EXT. THE BACK YARD - DAY

Bright hot sunlight, the yard shimmering in the morning heat. We can SEE the outside of the house now -- Georgian, built in the teens, comfortable, but not pretentious. Green canvas awnings protect the house from the sun.

DAISY walks to the garage, a separate building, built for two cars, but only holding one -- a shiny new 1948 Packard. She climbs into the car.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

- A. Daisy's gloved hand turns on the ignition.
- B. Her POV. Shifting the automatic gear into reverse.
- C. Her high-heeled foot pushing the accelerator.
- D. On the car, backing out of the garage and into the turnaround.
- E. On Daisy, gloved hands both clutching the wheel, back straight, not touching the seat.
- F. On the gear indicator, still in reverse.
- G. On Daisy's foot, gunning the accelerator.
- I. On the car, shooting backwards over an embankment, seemingly suspended in the air for a moment before it lands on the roof of the garage next door (down the hill) causing the garage to collapse, which, in turn, lands on the free-standing toolshed just adjacent to it, which also falls into pieces, scattering garden tools, etc., in all directions. The NOISE is deafening.
- J. On Idella, looking out of the kitchen window in horror.

IDELLA

Sweet Jesus!

H. On a nursemaid and a toddler, coming out of the house next door.

EXT. THE GARAGE - SAME TIME

Daisy's severely damaged car sits in (on) what's left of the garage. All is still.

ON DAISY

Still in the car, still clutching the wheel with gloved hands. Her hat is crooked and her glasses are askew, but otherwise she is unhurt. She tests the door handle. It works. She pushes the door open, extracts her purse from the car and gets out.

EXT. THE NEIGHBOR'S GARAGE - DAY

What's left of Daisy's car rises in the air, ghost-like. PULL BACK reveals that the car is being hoisted by a tow truck and a gigantic chain and pulley operation. What's left of the garage collapses like pick-up sticks.

BOOLIE WERTHAN, Daisy's son, age 40, stands with a policeman and insurance agent in the yard. He wears a good summer business suit. A sizable part of the neighborhood, black servants, children, yard men, etc., stand silently at a respectful distance watching the proceedings.

ON BOOLIE

He looks up the hill towards his mother's house.

BOOLIE'S POV - DAISY'S HOUSE

Daisy is watching from her bedroom window, but moves quickly out of the way when Boolie catches her eyes.

ON THE NEIGHBOR'S YARD AGAIN

The pulley operation sets the remains of the car at rest. The reverberations of this knock down what's left of the toolshed.

ON THE CROWD, watching silently.

INT. DAISY'S KITCHEN - SAME DAY

Idella is sitting on a stool, eating fried chicken and potato salad at the kitchen counter. Boolie is seated at the kitchen table, finishing off a plate of same. Each has a glass of ice tea and a paper napkin, but Idella's plate is a cracked remnant of an old pattern, her fork is from the dime store, and her tea is in a small mason jar. Boolie is eating off of Daisy's everyday china and silver. Daisy is not in the room, but a THUMPING and CLUMPING O.S. indicate that she is within earshot.

BOOLIE
Mama!

 DAISY (O.S.)
No!

 BOOLIE
Mama!

 DAISY (O.S.)
No!

 BOOLIE
It's a miracle you're not laying
in Emory Hospital -- or decked out
at the funeral parlor.

He rises from the table, and heads for

THE PANTRY

Daisy is in the pantry closet, having changed out of her street clothes into a house dress. She is kneeling on the floor by a large pickle crock, removing the lid, the rock that holds down a plate, which, in turn, holds down the pickles in their brine. She maneuvers the crock out of the closet and toward the pantry sink, waving away Boolie's efforts to help her.

Once at the sink, she begins the operation of spearing pickles that are already lined up by the sink and then ladling brine into the jars and screwing on the jar tops. This operation keeps her busy during the following scene. She spears the first pickle out of the crock and hands it to Boolie, who takes a bite.

 DAISY
The cucumbers are pretty this
summer.

 BOOLIE
Look at you! You didn't even
break your glasses.

 DAISY
It was the car's fault.

 BOOLIE
Mama, you had the car in the
wrong gear.

DAISY

I did not.

(calls to Idella)

Idella! You want a pickle with your lunch?

IDELLA (O.S.)

Not me.

DAISY

Well, I'm putting up a jar for you to take home to William, you hear?

IDELLA (O.S.)

Yassum. Thank you. He love your pickles.

DAISY

That's because he has more sense than you do.

BOOLIE

You had the car in reverse instead of drive. The police report shows that.

DAISY

You should have let me keep my LaSalle. It never would have behaved this way.

BOOLIE

Mama, cars don't behave. They are behaved upon. The fact is you, all by yourself, demolished that Packard.

DAISY

Think what you want. I know the truth.

BOOLIE

The truth is you just cost the insurance company twenty-seven hundred dollars. You are a terrible risk. Nobody is going to issue you a policy after this.

DAISY

You're just saying that to be hateful.

BOOLIE

Okay. Yes. Yes I am. I'm making it all up. Every insurance company in America is lined up out there in the driveway, waving their fountain pens and falling all over themselves to get you to sign on.

DAISY

I love having you here for lunch, son, but if you're going to stand in my pantry and lie like a rug, well, I think it's time for you to go somewhere else.

BOOLIE

Okay. I'd better get back to the office. Florine'll be having a fit if I don't come home on time tonight.

DAISY

That's right. I forgot. Y'all are having dinner with the Ansleys tonight! I'm sure Florine bought another new dress. This is her idea of heaven on earth, isn't it?

BOOLIE

What?

DAISY

Socializing with Episcopalians.

BOOLIE

You're a doodle, Mama. I'll stop by tomorrow evening.

DAISY

How do you know I'll be here? I'm certainly not dependent on you for company.

BOOLIE

Fine. I'll call first. But you know that we have got some real serious talking to do.

DAISY

No.

BOOLIE

Mama!

DAISY
 (singing to end
 discussion)
 After the ball is over
 After the break of morn
 After the dancers leaving
 After the stars are gone
 Many a heart is aching
 If you could read them all --

As soon as she starts singing, Daisy, having finished her pickle business, turns on her heels and walks out of the pantry. We HEAR her SINGING continue and FADE as she climbs the stairs and eventually shuts the door to her room.

Boolie, having lost this round, picks up the largest mason jar of pickles to take home.

ON HIS FACE: How do I handle this?

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Daisy, wearing a light summer dressing gown, raises the blinds. Sunlight floods the room and she looks out of the window.

EXT. GARAGE - SAME TIME - DAISY'S POV

The garage stands empty, except for an old hand lawn mower and a few gardening tools at one side.

INT. THE BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Daisy looks grim.

INT. THE DOWNSTAIRS HALL - LATER THAT DAY

Daisy, now dressed, is on the phone.

DAISY
 (on the phone)
 Well, I need you now! I have to be
 at the beauty shop in half an hour!
 ... No, I most certainly did not
 know you had to call a minimum of
 two hours ahead. I don't know why
 you call yourself a taxicab company
 if you can't provide taxicabs!

ON IDELLA, standing in the dining room doorway with a dusting rag in her hand, listening.

IDELLA

You call yo' son down at the plant,
he sen' somebody to carry you.

DAISY

That won't be necessary. I'll
cancel the appointment and fix
my own hair.

IDELLA

Sometimes I think you ain't got
the sense God gave a lemon!

Daisy glares at her, but Idella, with inalienable right on her side, returns the glare with a calm nod of her head and goes off about her business.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

INT. THE DOWNSTAIRS HALL - SAME TIME

Boolie enters from the kitchen. He is wearing brand new pressed jeans with the cuffs rolled up and a plaid short-sleeved shirt and a bandanna around his neck. It looks wrong on him.

FLORINE, his wife, enters behind him. She is in her middle thirties, dark-haired, slim, very fashionable, carefully made up. Right now she is wearing a full denim skirt down to her ankles (I think they called them circle skirts) and a plaid blouse exactly matching Boolie's shirt. She is also wearing gold jewelry that doesn't quite go with this outfit.

BOOLIE

(calling upstairs)
Mama? You there?

FLORINE

(also calling up)
Hey, Mother Werthan! It's just us!

ON DAISY, appearing at the landing, a book in her hand.

DAISY

Why didn't you call?

FLORINE

We can't stay.

DAISY

(sizing up the outfits)
So I gather.

BOOLIE

The Millers are giving a hayride
for their anniversary.

FLORINE

I had these made. Doesn't your
baby look cute?

DAISY

That's not exactly the word I'd
pick.

Boolie takes the book out of her hand.

BOOLIE

I've been wanting to read this.

He looks through it.

BOOLIE (CONT'D)

It's due back tomorrow. Want me
to take it for you?

DAISY

No thank you. I will go to the
library on the streetcar.

Boolie, getting angry, starts to say something, but Florine
puts a hand on his arm to calm him.

DAISY

Go on now. You don't want to
keep the horses waiting.

ON BOOLIE, exasperated.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Daisy, dressed in hat and gloves, and carrying the library
book, walks down the driveway towards the street.

EXT. BUS STOP - MID-MORNING

Daisy, a young black maid, and a couple of others are waiting
at the bus stop. A City of Atlanta bus pulls up to the stop.
A couple of passengers emerge from the rear door. The waiting
passengers enter the bus, Daisy first, in deference to her
age, sex, and color.

INT. CITY BUS - SAME TIME

Daisy puts in correct fare, squeezes into a seat between a fat
country woman and a high school girl.

The black maid, the last one aboard, goes to the back of the bus, where there are black people standing and no seats. The front of the bus has seats available.

EXT. CITY STREET - SAME TIME

The bus rattles off down the avenue.

EXT. CARNEGIE LIBRARY BRANCH - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT

A one-story brick building on a residential shopping street. Sign in front reads "Atlanta Public Library, Highland Avenue Branch."

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

The checkout desk. The young LIBRARIAN is stamping Daisy's books.

LIBRARIAN

I've got that Revolutionary War book you were asking about, Miz Werthan. I put it aside for you.

DAISY

You're a sweet thing, Miss Jensen.

The Librarian reaches under the counter and pulls out the book. It is enormous, more than a thousand pages.

LIBRARIAN

Everybody's just crazy about it!

Daisy eyes it dubiously as Librarian stamps it for her.

DAISY

Well, thank you very much.

She turns from the desk and heads out the door, carrying the huge book in the cradle of her arm.

INT. THE PIGGLY WIGGLY / PRODUCE SECTION - DAY

The store is busy with shoppers. The PRODUCE MANAGER greets Daisy, who has her library book, her purse, and her gloves in the shopping cart.

PRODUCE MAN

How many peaches for you today, Miz Werthan?

DAISY

Three, thank you.

PRODUCE MAN

You're not gonna be gettin' any better ones the rest of the summer. Lemme give you a few more.

DAISY

Just the three.

PRODUCE MAN

How about a nice watermelon?

Daisy shakes her head "no," puts the paper sack of peaches into her cart, which already contains one bar of soap, one lamb chop, and a can of peas. She walks toward the checkout counter.

EXT. THE BUS STOP - DAY

Across the street from where Daisy started out. The bus rolls INTO VIEW, the doors open and Daisy emerges, carrying her purse, the big library book, and a medium-size grocery store bag. She walks briskly down the street.

EXT. DAISY'S DRIVEWAY - SAME TIME

Daisy walking up the driveway, not quite so briskly, lugging her parcels.

CLOSEUP OF HER FACE. JAW SET.

EXT. THE WERTHAN COMPANY - DAY

A smallish turn-of-the-century brick factory built near the railroad tracks. A company truck is backed up to a loading platform. Several black men are involved in loading large cartons of printed material into the truck. A sleek, late-model sedan is parked in the space marked "Reserved for Mr. Werthan." A couple of less fancy cars are parked in other reserved spots. A mid-week, mid-morning, business-as-usual day.

INT. BOOLIE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Somebody (Florine) has tried to furnish this office well. It contains a good leather couch, a couple of English-hunt-club-type engravings and an expensive mahogany desk. A large Vogue-magazine-style photograph of Florine in a fancy hat is placed prominently. Also there are company picnic photographs, Boolie's Yale diploma, a Bacharach-type photograph of his father, etc. All of the above does not quite hide the fact that this room is part of an old factory. The walls are patchy, the windows are old, and the venetian blinds are grubby and sagging.

Boolie is at the desk and on the phone. During his phone conversation a SHARP BELL is HEARD O.S. It RINGS intermittently. He looks up, annoyed, then concerned, but continues doing his business.

BOOLIE

Well, I.W., you know as well as I do that The Werthan Company isn't the only printing company in Atlanta. If you want to get other bids... oh, you did. Well... that's what Ideal bid, huh?... Okay. You ever do business with Ideal before?

MISS MCCLATCHEY, his secretary, all business and about 30, appears at the door. She seems distressed. He raises his hand, palm up, telling her to wait.

MISS MCCLATCHEY

It's important, Mr. Werthan.

BOOLIE

(on the phone)

Can you have lunch with me tomorrow? Herrens all right? Yes. Unh hunh. Twelve thirty. Love to Peggy and the children.
(to Miss McClatchey)
What's wrong?

MISS MCCLATCHEY

Oscar's stuck in the freight elevator.

BOOLIE

Damn that thing!

He gets up, leaves his office. She follows.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

A. A CORRIDOR. Boolie, followed by McClatchey, hurries down a corridor. Glass-partitioned cubbyhole offices (3 or 4) with men in shirtsleeves at desks, on phones, etc.

B. END OF THE CORRIDOR. Boolie opens a large metal double door and they proceed to

C. THE FACTORY. An enormous room, full of printing presses in full swing. Various workers are operating the machines, stacking material onto hand trucks, etc. The room is lit mostly by the skylighted roof. Boolie and McClatchey hurry through to

D. THE FREIGHT ELEVATOR. It is about four feet above the ground. The old corrugated tin door is open and we SEE a pair of shoes and legs up to the knees.

BOOLIE

Oscar?

OSCAR (O.S.)

Yassuh. Here I am.

BOOLIE

You all right?

OSCAR (O.S.)

Nawsuh. I'm stuck.

BOOLIE

I know. Fiddle with the lever.

OSCAR (O.S.)

It all fiddled out. I done everythin' I know how.

BOOLIE

Oh, Jesus! Call Bell Elevator, Miss McClatchey.

MISS MCCLATCHEY

I already did. They're backed up. But they'll be here around one.

BOOLIE

One! Did you tell them it's an emergency?

MISS MCCLATCHEY

You don't have to holler at me, Mr. Werthan. I didn't break the elevator.

A small crowd of workers has gathered behind Boolie. This is an event.

BOOLIE

You got that stuff for Davison Paxon in there, Oscar?

OSCAR (O.S.)

Wrapped and ready to go.

BOOLIE

I told them they'd have it yesterday. Call Bell back!

McClatchey goes off to the phone.

A VOICE FROM THE CROWD

Oscar! Oscar?

Boolie turns to look and so does the CAMERA. We SEE a SIXTYISH BLACK MAN, neat, but dressed in a shiny suit, a frayed old white-on-white shirt and a sad-looking tie. Clearly somebody down on his luck.

THE OLD MAN

You hear me, Oscar?

OSCAR (O.S.)

I hear you.

THE OLD MAN

Is there a little doo-hickey up yonder where the gate suppose to close? Stickin' down a little?

OSCAR (O.S.)

Wait a minute... Yeah. Unh hunh. It right here.

THE OLD MAN

Well, reach up and mash on it... Mash it up till it catch.

OSCAR (O.S.)

I done it. Now what?

OLD MAN

Well, just work the lever.

A LOUD THUMP, A WHIRR OF MOTOR, and OSCAR, a black man in his forties, dressed in a porter's uniform, appears at ground level in the elevator, stacks of printed material behind him. A light round of APPLAUSE, workers immediately start packing the material onto hand trucks and moving it out.

BOOLIE

(to the Old Man)

Excuse me, do you work here?

OSCAR

Nawsah, this Hoke.

HOKE

Pleased to see you, suh...

BOOLIE

(at a loss)

Oh. Well, thank you. How did you know about the elevator?

HOKE

I used to drive for the Avondale Dairy and they have a old sorry elevator worse than dishyah.

OSCAR

Don' you remember? Hoke the one I tole you about.

BOOLIE

Oh. Of course. Well, come on back with me to my office. Hoke, is it?

HOKE

Hoke Coleburn, suh.

The following takes place as they walk back to Boolie's office.

BOOLIE

You're not with the Avondale Dairy any more?

HOKE

Nosuh. They lay me off back befo' las' November.

BOOLIE

·Long time.

HOKE

Well, Mist' Werthan, you try bein' me and lookin' for work. They hirin' young if they hirin' colored and they ain' even hirin' much young seem like.

They walk in silence for a bit. Boolie is clearly not very interested.

HOKE

Mist' Werthan? Y'all people Jewish, ain't you?

Boolie stops and turns around.

BOOLIE

Yes we are. Why do you ask?

HOKE

Well, suh, I'd druther drive for Jews. People always talkin' 'bout they stingy and they cheap, but don' say none of that 'round me.

BOOLIE

Good to know you feel that way.

HOKE

Yassah. One time I workin' for this woman over near Little Five Points. What was that woman's name? I forget. Anyway, she president of the Ladies Auxiliary over yonder to the Ponce de Leon Baptist Church and seem like she always bringin' up God and Jesus and do unto others. You know what I'm talkin' 'bout?

BOOLIE

I don't think so.

HOKE

Well, one day, Mist' Werthan, one day that woman say to me, she say, "Hoke, come on back in the back wid' me. I got something for you." And we go on back yonder and Lawd have mercy, she have all these old shirts and collars be on the bed, and she say, "Ain't they nice? They b'long to my Daddy befo' he pass, and we fixin' to sell 'em to you for twenty-five cent apiece."

BOOLIE

What was her name?

HOKE

Thass what I'm askin' myself. What was that woman's name?

They have reached BOOLIE'S OFFICE now. Miss McClatchey is typing at her desk. Boolie proceeds to his desk and starts signing papers. Hoke follows, talking a blue streak.

HOKE

Anyway, them's the people callin' Jews cheap. So I say, "Yassum, I think about it" and I get me another job as fas' as I can.

BOOLIE

Where was that?

HOKE

Mist' Harold Stone, another Jewish gentleman jes' like you. Judge, live over yonder on Lullwater Road.

BOOLIE

(looks up, interested)
I knew Judge Stone.

HOKE

You doan' say! He done give me this here suit when he finish with it. An' this necktie, too!

BOOLIE

You drove for Judge Stone?

HOKE

Seven years to the day, nearabout. An' I be there still if he din' up and die, and Miz Stone decide to close up the house and move to her people in Savannah. And she say, "Come on down to Savannah wid me, Hoke." 'Cause my wife dead by then, and I say, "No thank you." I din' want to leave my granbabies and I don' get along with that low-class Geechee trash they got down there.

BOOLIE

Judge Stone was a friend of my father's.

HOKE

You doan' mean! Oscar say you need a driver for yo' family. What I be doin'? Runnin' yo' children to school and yo' wife to the beauty parlor and like dat?

BOOLIE

I don't have any children. But tell me --

HOKE

Tha's a shame. My daughter bes' thing ever happen to me. But you young yet. I wouldn't worry none.

BOOLIE

I won't. Thank you. Hoke, what I'm looking for is somebody to drive my mother around.

HOKE

Excuse me for asking, but how com' she ain' hire for herself?

BOOLIE

Well, it's a difficult situation.

HOKE

Mmmmm Hmmm. She done gone 'roun' the bend a little? That'll happen when they get on.

BOOLIE

Oh no. Nothing like that. It just isn't safe for her to drive any more. I'll be frank with you. I'm a little desperate.

HOKE

I know what you mean 'bout dat. Once I outta work, my wife say to me, "Oooh, Hoke, you ain' gon' get noun 'nother job." And I say, "What you talkin' 'bout, woman?" And the very next week I go to work for that woman in Little Five Points. Cahill! Mrs. Frances Cahill. And then I got to Judge Stone and they the reason I happy to hear you Jews.

BOOLIE

Hoke, I want you to understand, my mother is a little high-strung. She doesn't want anybody driving her. But the fact is you'd be working for me. She can say anything she likes but she can't fire you. You understand?

HOKE

Sho' I do. Don' you worry none about it. I hold on no matter what way she run me. When I nothin' but a little boy down there on the farm above Macon where I come from, I use to wrestle hogs to the ground at killin' time. And ain' no hog got away from me yet.

BOOLIE

How does twenty dollars a week sound?

HOKE

Soun' like you done hire yo' Mama a chauffeur.

Boolie smiles with relief.

ON HOKE, pleased, but not quite sure what he's gotten himself into.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - DAY

A late model sedan drives up the driveway. Boolie driving, Hoke in the seat beside him. Both look apprehensive. They get out of the car and walk toward the back door.

EXT. DAISY'S BEDROOM WINDOW - SAME TIME

Daisy seen in the window watching the arrival. She is not smiling.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

The front hall. Dim light in contrast to the sun outside. Idella is going over the floor with a carpet sweeper. She is singing a hymn ("Are You Washed in the Blood of the Lamb"), mostly to herself.

Boolie comes into the hall, Hoke behind him.

 BOOLIE
How are you, Idella?

 IDELLA
Livin'.

 BOOLIE
Where's that vacuum cleaner I
brought over here?

 IDELLA
In the closet.

 BOOLIE
 (to Hoke)
She won't touch it.

 IDELLA
I would if it din' give me a shock
every time I go near it.

 BOOLIE
It works for me.

 IDELLA
Good. You clean up. I go down and
run yo' office.

Hoke laughs. Idella shoots him a look.

 BOOLIE
Where's Mama?

 IDELLA
Up yonder.

BOOLIE
I guess you know who this is.

IDELLA
Mmmmm Hmmm.

She goes back to her carpet sweeping.

BOOLIE
I'll be right back, Hoke.

He heads up the steps.

IDELLA
(to Hoke)
I wouldn't be in your shoes if the
Sweet Lawd Jesus come down and ask
me hisself!

ON HOKE, sizing up the situation.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS LANDING - SAME TIME

Boolie knocks on Daisy's closed bedroom door.

BOOLIE
Mama?

DAISY (O.S.)
Come in.

INT. DAISY'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Daisy is seated at a small desk, checkbook open, paying bills. She does not rise when Boolie enters. He bends over and tries to kiss her cheek, but she pulls away.

BOOLIE
Good morning, Mama.

No answer. She continues paying bills.

BOOLIE (CONT'D)
All I'm asking is for you to come
and say hello.

DAISY
Now you listen here. Unless they
rewrote the Constitution and didn't
tell me, I still have rights. And
one of my rights is to invite who I
want -- not who you want -- into my
house. You do accept the fact that
this is my house?

BOOLIE

Well, of course I do, Mama, but --

DAISY

What I do not want -- and absolutely will not have is some -- some chauffeur sitting in my kitchen, gobbling up my food, running up my phone bill. Oh, I hate all that in my house. On Forsyth Street we couldn't afford them and we did for ourselves. That's still the best way if you ask me.

BOOLIE

Them? Afford them? You sound like Governor Talmadge.

DAISY

Why, Boolie! What a thing to say! I'm not prejudiced! Aren't you ashamed.

BOOLIE

I got to get back to the plant. You might as well try to make the best of this, Mama.

He leaves, shutting the door.

ON DAISY'S FACE, jaw set.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Hoke, having removed his jacket, and neatly rolled up his shirt sleeves, is looking through the broom closet. Boolie comes into the kitchen.

BOOLIE

She'll be down in a while.

HOKE

I ain' studyin' her, Mist' Werthan. You ain' got to concern yourself. Look like ain' nobody dusted nary a light bulb 'roun' here in fifty years! Where y'all keep the stepladder?

BOOLIE

In the pantry closet, I think. Good luck.

HOKE

You sayin' something now!

Boolie smiles, goes out the back door.

INT. THE DEN / LIBRARY - DAY

Hoke is standing on the stepladder, dusting the lightbulbs in the ceiling fixture.

Daisy comes into the room.

DAISY
Here! What do you think you're doing?

HOKE
Dustin' yo' bulbs, Miz Daisy.

DAISY
That's the silliest thing I ever saw in my life. Who cares if light bulbs are dusty? Get down from there.

HOKE
Yassum.

DAISY
And put that ladder away before somebody trips on it.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Late afternoon sunlight slants into the room. Idella is rolling out biscuit dough. Hoke is sitting on a stool nearby.

HOKE
I knew a Miss Idella once, down there above Macon.

IDELLA
Doan' say.

HOKE
You talkin' 'bout sing! I mean that woman had lungs! She'd a been a whole church choir by herseff if they'd a let her. And fat, too! She about the size of that stove yonder.

Idella laughs. Daisy comes into the kitchen.

HOKE
Don't talk to Idella. She has work to do.

HOKE
Yassum.

INT. STAIRWAY LANDING - DAY

Hoke is standing on the landing studying the framed pictures on the wall.

CLOSEUP framed photo turn-of-the-century fifth grade class, teacher, young Daisy, in Gibson Girl blouse.

Daisy comes into the hall from her bedroom.

DAISY

What are you doing there?

HOKE

I love a house with pictures. Make a home. Dishere you, ain't it?

DAISY

Yes.

HOKE

Look like you bin a teacher or something.

DAISY

I don't want you nosing through my things.

She goes back into her room.

INT. FRONT HALL - EVENING

Idella is wearing her street clothes and carrying a shopping bag. Hoke has on his jacket, and carries his chauffeur's hat in his hand.

IDELLA

(calling up the stairs)

I'm gone, Miz Daisy.

DAISY (O.S.)

All right, Idella. See you tomorrow.

HOKE

(also calling upstairs)

I'm gone too, Miz Daisy.

DAISY (O.S.)

Good!

Idella and Hoke exchange looks and head out the door.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - MORNING

The side of the house. Hoke is kneeling down examining a bed of flowers. He has a trowel in his hand.

Daisy appears in a first floor window.

HOKE

Looks like yo' zeenias use a little tendin' to.

DAISY

You leave my flower bed alone.

HOKE

Yassum but you be sorry somebody doan get after them weeds.

Daisy shuts the windows and disappears.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Daisy and Idella, wearing aprons, stand at the counter. Daisy is making chili sauce. Idella is washing up after her. Peeled tomatoes, onions, etc., wait on the counter. At the moment she is boiling mason jars in a huge kettle. Hoke comes in from the back porch.

HOKE

You know, Miz Daisy, you got a nice place back beyond the garage ain't doin' nothin' but sittin' there. I could put you some butterbeans and some tomatoes and even some Irish potatoes could we get someone with good eyes.

DAISY

If I want a vegetable garden I'll plant it for myself.

HOKE

Well, anything else I kin do fo' you?

DAISY

Go back where you belong...

HOKE

Yassum. I b'long here. Mist' Werthan expec' me to stay 'till five o'clock. Lemme carry you somewhere in de car.

DAISY

No thank you.

She forks a boiling jar out of the cauldron. End of conversation. She gives a small smile of triumph to Idella.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - MORNING

The flowerbed. Daisy, wearing a gardening hat, is on her knees weeding the flowerbed. Hoke walks up the driveway and sees her.

HOKE
Mornin' Miz Daisy.

DAISY
Good morning.

HOKE
Them zeenias lookin' lot better.

No answer.

HOKE (CONT'D)
Right cool in the night, wadn' it?

DAISY
I wouldn't know. I was asleep.

HOKE
Yassum. What yo' plans for today?

DAISY
That's my business.

HOKE
You right about dat. I find somethin' to do.

He goes off toward the garage. She looks after him.

EXT. GARAGE AND DRIVEWAY - DAY

A brand new Oldsmobile sedan is parked in the garage. Hoke goes into the garage and is getting into the car. Daisy comes up behind him.

DAISY
What are you doing?

HOKE
Fixin' to back de car out.

DAISY
Why? I'm not going anywhere.

HOKE

Nome, I know dat, but I brung
thissshyeah from home.

He pulls a small soft cloth from his coat.

HOKE (CONT'D)

Give the car a good wipe off.

DAISY

What for? It isn't dirty. It's
never even been out of the garage.

HOKE

You tellin' me!

DAISY

I don't want you touching my car.
You understand?

He reluctantly gets out of the car.

HOKE

Yassum. I reckon I jes' set in the
kitchen 'till five o'clock.

DAISY

That's your affair.

Hoke goes off towards the back door, a sad stoop to his
shoulders. Daisy watches him with some satisfaction. Then
she goes back to attack her flowerbed.

INT. DAISY'S SCREEN PORCH - THE NEXT MORNING

Very sunny. Daisy sits on one of the porch chairs, reading
the morning paper. Idella enters from the house.

IDELLA

We runnin' outta coffee and Dutch
cleanser.

DAISY

We are?

IDELLA

Yassum and we low on silver polish,
too.

DAISY

I know... I'm fixin' to go to the
Piggly Wiggly on the trolley.

Hoke emerges from the house where he has been listening.

HOKE

Now, Miz Daisy, how come you doan
let me carry you?

DAISY

No, thank you.

She puts the paper down and walks through the
LIVING ROOM to the

FRONT HALL where her straw hat sits on the hall commode. Hoke
has followed her and they talk as she pins her hat on her head
and gathers her purse and gloves. Idella, in b.g., is
straightening the living room.

HOKE

Ain' that what Mist' Werthan done
hire me for?

DAISY

That's his problem.

HOKE

All right den. I find somethin'
to do.

DAISY

You leave my things alone!
(calls to the
living room)
I'm gone to the market, Idella!

IDELLA (O.S.)

Yassum.

Daisy marches out the front door.

EXT. THE FRONT STEPS AND DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Bright, hot sunlight. Daisy walking briskly toward the
driveway, Hoke following.

HOKE

You know, it seem a downright shame.
That fine Oldsmobile settin' out
there in the garage. Ain' move a
inch from when Mist' Werthan rode it
over here from Mitchell Motors. Only
got nineteen miles on it. Seem like
that insurance company done give you
a whole new car for nothin'.

DAISY

That's your opinion.

HOKE

Yassum. And my other opinion is a fine rich Jewish lady like you doan b'long draggin' up the steps of no bus luggin' no grocery sto' bags. I come along and carry them fo' you.

Daisy stops walking and turns to have it out.

DAISY

I don't need you. I don't want you. And I don't like you saying I'm rich.

HOKE

I won' say it no more then.

DAISY

Is that what you and Idella talk about in the kitchen? Oh, I hate all this! I hate being discussed behind my back in my own house! I was born on Forsyth Street and believe you me I know the value of a penny. My brother, Manny, brought home a white cat one day and Papa said we couldn't keep it because we couldn't afford to feed it. My sisters saved up money so I could go to school and be a teacher. We didn't have anything!

HOKE

Yassum, but look like you doin' all right now.

If looks could kill, Hoke would now be dead. Daisy has now reached the street, and walks as briskly as she can up the sidewalk. Hoke retreats toward the house. Daisy sees this and smiles slightly to herself.

EXT. THE STREET - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Heavily green trees dapple the sunlight on this quiet morning. Daisy continues up the sidewalk, unaware that Hoke is behind her in the car. He idles along slowly behind her, until she is aware of his presence. She continues walking and he creeps along beside her during the following.

DAISY

(horrified)

What are you doing?

HOKE

Tryin' to take you to the sto'.

A NEIGHBOR LADY is gardening in her front yard, rather taken with this unusual spectacle.

THE LADY

Where are you off to this morning,
Mrs. Werthan?

DAISY

(polite and mortified)
Oh, just a little shopping.

She continues up the sidewalk, Hoke keeping pace with her.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Go away! I've ridden the trolley
with groceries plenty of times.

HOKE

Yassum, but I feel bad takin' Mist'
Werthan money for doin' nothing.
You understand?

DAISY

How much does he pay you?

HOKE

That between him and me, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

Anything over seven dollars a week
is robbery. Highway robbery.

HOKE

Specially when I don' do nothin'
but set on a stool in the kitchen
all day long.

Another car, with three or four ladies in it, is coming down another driveway toward the street. All the ladies stare openly. Daisy stops walking.

DAISY

All right, the Piggly Wiggly.
And then home. Nowhere else.

HOKE

Yassum.

He stops the car, hops out and goes around to open the door for her, but she is too quick for him and gets in by herself.

Hoke goes back around to his door and starts to get in.

DAISY

Wait. You don't know how to run
this car!

HOKE

Ain' you jes' seen me do it?
Anyway, this here automatic. Any
fool can run it.

DAISY

Any fool but me, apparently.

HOKE

Ain' no need to be so hard on yoseff
now. You cain' drive, but you
probably do alotta things I cain do.
It all work out.

DAISY

The idea!

Hoke presses the accelerator and the car moves on down the
street.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Hoke in a wonderful mood. Daisy in full bristle on the back
seat.

HOKE

I love the smell of a new car.
Doan' you, Miz Daisy?

No answer.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

The car cruising smoothly through the summer suburban street.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

DAISY

I'm nobody's fool, Hoke.

HOKE

Nome.

DAISY

I can see the speedometer as well
as you can.

HOKE

I see dat.

DAISY

My husband taught me to run a car.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

I still remember everything he said. So don't you think for even a second that you can -- wait! You're speeding! I see it!

HOKE

We ain' goin' but nineteen miles an hour.

DAISY

I like to go under the speed limit.

HOKE

Yassum, but the speed limit thirty-five here.

DAISY

The slower you go, the more you save on gas. My husband told me that.

HOKE

We barely moving. Might as well walk to the Piggly Wiggly.

DAISY

Is this your car?

HOKE

Nome.

DAISY

Do you pay for the gas?

HOKE

Nome.

DAISY

All right then. My fine son may think I'm losing my abilities, but I am still in control of what goes on in my car. Where are you going?

HOKE

To the grocery sto'.

DAISY

Then why didn't you turn on Highland Avenue?

HOKE

Piggly Wiggly ain' on Highland Avenue.
it on Euclid, down there near --

DAISY

I know where it is and I want to go
to it the way I always go. On
Highland Avenue.

HOKE

That three blocks out the way, Miz
Daisy.

DAISY

Go back! Go back this minute!

HOKE

We in the wrong lane. I cain jes --

DAISY

Go back I said! If you don't go back
I'll get out of this car and walk!

HOKE

We movin'! You cain' open the do'.

DAISY

This is wrong! Where are you taking
me?

HOKE

The sto'.

DAISY

This is wrong. You have to go back
to Highland Avenue.

HOKE

Mmmmm Hmmm.

DAISY

I have been driving to the Piggly
Wiggly since they put it up and
opened it for business! This isn't
the way! Go back! Go back this
minute!

HOKE

Yonder the Piggly Wiggly, Miss Daisy.

DAISY

Get ready to turn.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

Look out! There's a little boy
behind that shopping cart!

HOKE

I see dat.

DAISY

Pull in next to the blue car.

HOKE

We closer to the do' right here.

DAISY

Next to the blue car! I don't park
in the sun! It fades the upholstery!

HOKE

Yassum.

He parks the car as directed. The Piggly Wiggly has a small concrete parking lot on the side of the store. Daisy springs out of the back seat as soon as the car stops and slams the car door. She heads off for the store, then stops.

DAISY

Wait a minute. Give me the car keys.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

Stay right here by the car. And you
don't have to tell everybody my
business.

HOKE

Nome. Don't forget the Dutch
Cleanser now.

She fixes him with another killer look and goes off into the grocery store.

EXT. STREET - DAY

There is a pay phone booth on the corner. Hoke puts in his nickel and dials.

HOKE

Hello? Miz McClatchey? Hoke Colburn
here. Can I speak to him?... Mornin',
Mist' Werthan. Guess where I'm at?...
I'm at dishere phone booth on Euclid
Avenue right next to the Piggly Wiggly.

(MORE)

HOKE (CONT'D)

I jes' drove yo' Mama to the sto'...
Oh, she flap around a little on the
way. But she all right. She in the
sto'.

INT. THE PIGGLY WIGGLY - HOKE'S POV

Daisy, pushing cart, spots Hoke on the phone, through the
large plate glass window.

EXT. THE PHONE BOOTH - SAME TIME

HOKE

Uh oh. She done see me on the phone.
She liable to throw a fit right there
by the checkout... Yassuh. Only took
me six days. Same time it take the
Lawd to make the worl'.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - SATURDAY MORNING

It is fall now, gray skies and leaves off the trees. A
Werthan Company panel truck is parked in Daisy's driveway.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Oscar and his assistant from the elevator, JUNIOR, are in the
process of removing the slip covers from the upholstered
furniture and rolling down the Oriental rugs and pads. Hoke,
jacket off and sleeves rolled up, is helping them. Idella is
supervising.

OSCAR

How the old lady been treating you,
Hoke?

HOKE

She know how to pitch a fit. I
tell you that.

Oscar and Junior roar with laughter. Daisy comes into the
room wearing a fur piece, a dark hat and gloves. She does not
like hired people laughing in her house.

DAISY

What's so funny?

HOKE

Nothin', Miz Daisy. We just
carryin' on.

DAISY

Oscar and Junior have been doing my fall cleaning for fifteen years and they never carried on before. Leave them alone.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

And put your coat on. We're late.

HOKE

I be right there.

DAISY (O.S.)

Idella! I'm gone to Temple!

HOKE

(as he leaves the
living room)

And I right behind her, Idella.

INT. THE TEMPLE - SAME DAY

We are in the large sanctuary of the Temple, the Atlanta Reform Jewish Congregation. The building was designed in the twenties, and somehow this sanctuary carries a sense of the Bible as interpreted by C.B. DeMille. The room has a very large chandelier, lots of large windows, and is decorated with white walls and gold relief work. The Arc for the Torah itself is all gold relief work. The whole place gives off a scent of well-being and not too much religious warmth.

We are approaching the end of the Saturday morning service. The RABBI, who prefers to call himself DR. WEIL, is conducting the service in a morning coat. There are no yarmulkes or any other Jewish paraphernalia in sight.

The sanctuary is sparsely populated this (and every) Saturday morning. In the front couple of rows sit the Confirmation Class, some thirty or so tenth-graders who have to appear every Saturday in order to get confirmed at the end of the year.

They are standard issue high school sophomores, dressed well and appropriately for a religious service. None of them seem very interested in the service. Some look just plain bored, others are miles away, and still others (girls) are passing notes and/or giggling.

Most of the rest of the room is empty. There are a few worshippers in pairs or alone scattered throughout.

The last few rows are more populated. Here are the older members of the congregation, mostly widows, some older men, and a few grown sons/daughters. Daisy is in the next to the last row, sitting very straight in the pew, her back not touching the seat.

DR. WEIL

Praised and glorified be the name of the Holy One, though He be above all the praises which we can utter. Our guide is He in life and our redeemer through all eternity.

CONGREGATION

Our help cometh from Him, the Creator of heaven and earth.

DR. WEIL

The departed whom we now remember have entered into the peace of life eternal. They still live on earth in the acts of goodness they performed and in the hearts of those who cherish their memory. May the beauty of their life abide among us as a loving benediction.

CONGREGATION

Amen.

DR. WEIL

May the Father of peace send peace to all who mourn and comfort the bereaved among us.

CONGREGATION

Amen.

The CHOIR, O.S., now SINGS.

CHOIR

May the words of my mouth
And the meditations of my heart
Be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord,
My strength and my redeemer.
Amen. Amen. Amen.

The service is over. The congregation, Daisy included, files out the rear door. Daisy is walking with her friends, BEULAH and MIRIAM.

EXT. THE TEMPLE - SAME TIME

The front elevator of the building. It is a clear autumn day. Daisy, Miriam and Beulah come out of the building. Daisy is wearing her little social smile, which suddenly vanishes from her face.

EXT. FRONT OF THE TEMPLE - SAME TIME - DAISY'S POV

Her car, Hoke standing politely by the passenger door in the rear, is directly in front of the building. A couple of other chauffeur-driven sedans are behind it.

Daisy scurries down the steps as fast as she can. She waves goodbye to her friends, gets in the car, sitting up very straight and making sure she slams the door for herself.

DAISY

I can get myself in. Just go.
Hurry up out of here!

HOKE

Yassum.

Hoke, confused, scurries around to the driver's seat and sets the car into gear.

The car moves down the driveway and into Saturday traffic.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

DAISY

I didn't say speed. I said get
me away from here.

HOKE

Somethin' wrong back yonder?

DAISY

No.

HOKE

Somethin' I done?

DAISY

No.

(a beat)

Yes.

HOKE

I ain' done nothin'!

DAISY

You had the car parked right in front of the front door of the Temple! Like I was the Queen of Romania! Everybody saw you! Didn't I tell you to wait for me in the back?

HOKE

I jes' tryin' to be nice. They two other chauffeurs right behind me.

DAISY

You made me look like a fool. A g.d. fool.

HOKE

Lawd knows you ain' no fool, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

Slow down. Miriam and Beulah and them, I could see what they were thinking when we came out of services.

HOKE

What that?

DAISY

That I'm trying to pretend I'm rich.

HOKE

You is rich, Miz Daisy!

DAISY

No I'm not. And nobody can ever say I put on airs. On Forsyth Street we only had meat once a week. We made a meal off of grits and gravy. I taught the fifth grade at the Crew Street School. I did without plenty of times, I can tell you.

HOKE

And now you doin' with. What so terrible in that?

DAISY

You! Why do I talk to you? You don't understand me.

HOKE

None, I don't. I truly don't. 'Cause if I ever was to get ahold of what you got, I be shakin' it around for everybody in the worl' to see.

DAISY

That's vulgar! Don't talk to me!

Hoke mutters something under his breath.

DAISY (CONT'D)

What? What did you say? I heard that!

HOKE

Miz Daisy, you needs a chauffeur and Lawd know, I needs a job. Less jes' leave it at dat.

They eye each other warily in the rearview mirror.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Pitch black dark. Suddenly an electric light snaps on. We are in Daisy's DINING ROOM. It is very early in the morning. Daisy is wearing her winter bathrobe and warm slippers. She is concerned. We SEE her go through the drawers of her buffet. She isn't finding what she's looking for. We FOLLOW DAISY into

THE PANTRY CLOSET

where she pulls an overhead light string. The pantry is a walk-in closet. There are numerous cans and preserved goods on the shelves. Daisy looks at the cans, suddenly pushes one or two aside. Suddenly there is an odd look of triumph on her face.

EXT. BOLLIE'S HOUSE - A WINTER MORNING - 1949

ESTABLISHING SHOT of a handsome Colonial set well back from the road.

INT. BOOLIE'S HOUSE / THE DOWNSTAIRS HALL - EARLY MORNING

The hall is decorated in English Country house fashion. Lots of old pieces and Williamsburg-y wallpaper. There is a Queen Anne telephone table with appropriate chair. The PHONE is RINGING (loudly). Florine comes into the hall to answer it. She is wearing a winter dressing gown with long flowing sleeves.

FLORINE

Hello?... Wait a minute, Mother
Werthan. I'll get him for you...
No trouble. He's right here.

We FOLLOW FLORINE a few steps to

THE BREAKFAST ROOM

where Bollie, shirt and tie, but no jacket, sits at a built-in
breakfast booth eating his bacon and eggs. A uniformed black
maid is pouring him a second cup of coffee.

FLORINE

Guess who?

BOOLIE

(looking at his watch)

My Lord!

Florine sits back down at the table and picks up the women's
page of the paper. We FOLLOW BOOLIE back to

THE HALL

Boolie stands by the table and picks up the receiver.

BOOLIE

Good morning, Mama. What's the
matter?... No, I don't always think
something's the matter when you call.
It's just when you call so early in
the morning... What? Mama, you're
talking so fast I... What? All right.
All right. I'll come by on my way to
work. I'll be there as soon as I can.

He hangs up the phone. Goes back to

THE BREAKFAST ROOM

BOOLIE

I better go on over there.

FLORINE

Bye.

BOOLIE

Come on, honey.

FLORINE

It's not healthy for you to rush like
this in the morning.

BOOLIE
 (getting into
 his jacket)
 I eat too much anyway. And it sounds
 like she needs me.

FLORINE
 When doesn't it?

She smiles at him, lifts her face to be kissed.

FLORINE (CONT'D)
 Give Mother Werthan my love.

He hurries out and she picks up the women's page of the paper,
 lights a cigarette and calls into the kitchen.

FLORINE (CONT'D)
 Coffee, Gaynell!

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Daisy, still in her bathrobe, paces back and forth, looking
 out of the window. In a minute or so, Boolie comes through
 the door.

BOOLIE
 I didn't expect to find you in one
 piece.

DAISY
 I wanted you to be here when he comes.
 I wanted you to hear it for yourself.

BOOLIE
 Hear what? What is going on?

DAISY
 He's stealing from me.

BOOLIE
 Hoke? Are you sure?

DAISY
 I don't make empty accusations. I
 have proof!

BOOLIE
 What proof?

DAISY
 This!

She triumphantly pulls an empty can of salmon out of her robe
 pocket.

DAISY (CONT'D)

I caught him red-handed! I found this hidden in the garbage pail under some coffee grounds.

BOOLIE

You mean he stole a can of salmon?

DAISY

Here it is! Oh, I knew. I knew something was funny. They all take things, you know. So I counted.

BOOLIE

You counted?

DAISY

The silverware first and then the linen dinner napkins and then I went into the pantry. I turned on the light and the first thing that caught my eye was a hole behind the corned beef. And I knew right away. There were only eight cans of salmon. I had nine. Three for a dollar on sale.

BOOLIE

Very clever, Mama. You made me miss my breakfast and be late for a meeting at the bank for a thirty-three cent can of salmon.

He jams his hand into his pocket and pulls out some bills.

BOOLIE (CONT'D)

Here. You want thirty-three cents? Here's a dollar! Here's ten dollars! Buy a pantry full of salmon.

DAISY

Why, Boolie! The idea! Waving money at me like I don't know what! I don't want the money. I want my things.

BOOLIE

One can of salmon?

DAISY

Well, it was mine! I bought it and I put it there and he went into my pantry and just took it and he never said a word. I leave him plenty of food every day and I always tell him exactly what it is. They are like having children in the house.

(MORE)

DAISY (CONT'D)

They want something so they just take it. Not a smidgin of manners. No conscience. He'll never admit this. "Nome," he'll say. "I doan know nothin' 'bout that." And I don't like it! I don't like living this way! I have no privacy!

BOOLIE

Mama!

DAISY

Go ahead. Defend him. You always do.

BOOLIE

All right. I give up. You want to drive yourself again, you just go ahead and arrange it with the insurance company. Take your blessed trolley. Buy yourself a taxicab. Anything you want. Just leave me out of it.

DAISY

Boolie...

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

Idella and Hoke walking up the driveway to work. Both are wearing coats. They see Boolie's car in the driveway.

HOKE

What you 'spect he's doin' here this hour of the morning?

IDELLA

Can't be good. I promise you dat.

They exchange looks.

INT. DAISY'S LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Hoke comes in from the back hall.

HOKE

Mornin', Miz Daisy. I b'leve it fixin' to clear up. 'Scuse me, Mr. Werthan. Y'all busy?

BOOLIE

Hoke, I think we have to have a talk.

HOKE

All right. Jes' lemme put my coat away. I be right back.

He pulls a small paper bag from his pocket.

HOKE (CONT'D)

Oh, Miz Daisy. Yestiddy when you out with yo' sister I ate a can of yo' salmon. I know you say eat de leff over pork chops, but they stiff. Here, I done buy you another can. You want me to put it in the pantry fo' you?

DAISY

Yes, thank you, Hoke.

HOKE

I be right with you, Mist' Werthan.

Hoke goes off to the kitchen. Daisy looks at the empty can in her hand.

DAISY

(trying for dignity)

Well, I got to get dressed now.
'Bye, son,

She pecks Boolie on the cheek and heads up the stairs. He looks after her with a little smile breaking across his face.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE DEN - DAY - APRIL

It is Saturday afternoon. Daisy sits in a comfortable chair. She is listening to a period console RADIO which sits on a nearby table. It's the Saturday broadcast of the Met. The sextet from "Lucia di Lammermoor" is BLASTING forth and Daisy hums along happily as she does a bit of crewel work. Hoke, passing in the hall, stands a minute in the open door frame, smiling at what he sees.

EXT. CREST CEMETERY - DAY - MAY, 1951

A full, fuzzy-green, warm morning. Although this is a cemetery, it is not depressing -- not today, anyway, in the bright sunlight. The red-clay Georgia soil looks particularly soft.

Daisy's car is parked off to the side of one of the narrow roadways. The car is not quite so new now, but still well-kept. Hoke is carefully buffing the front grillwork with his trusty old chamois cloth. We can SEE the Georgia license plate which reads 1951, so a couple of years have passed since the last scene.

Twenty feet or so from him, Daisy is kneeling by a well-tended grave. The headstone reads "WERTHAN." The small stone at the foot on one side reads "Sigmund Werthan" with his dates. The other side is unused. Daisy is digging with her trowel, planting verbena. Hoke ambles over.

HOKE

I jess thinkin', Miz Daisy. We bin out heah to the cemetery three times dis mont' already, and ain' even the twentieth yet.

DAISY

It's good to come in nice weather.

HOKE

Yassum. Mist' Sig's grave mighty well tended. I b'leve you the best widow in the state of Georgia.

DAISY

Boolie's always pestering me to let the staff out here tend to this plot. Perpetual care they call it.

HOKE

Well, doan you do it. It right to have somebody from the family looking after you.

DAISY

I'll certainly never have that. Boolie will have me in perpetual care before I'm cold.

HOKE

Go on 'way from here!

DAISY

Hoke, run on back to the car and get that pot of azaleas for me and set it on Leo Bauer's grave.

HOKE

Miz Rose Bauer's husband?

DAISY

That's right. She asked me to bring it out here for her. She's not very good about coming. And I believe today would have been Leo's birthday.

HOKE

Yassum. Where the grave at?

DAISY

I'm not exactly sure. But I know it's over that way on the other side of the weeping cherry. You'll see the headstone. Bauer.

HOKE'S POV - a veritable sea of look-alike headstones.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

What's the matter?

HOKE

Nothin' the matter.

He goes back to the car and gets the azaleas. Daisy goes on with her digging.

HOKE

Miz Daisy...

DAISY

I told you, it's over on the other side of the weeping cherry. It says Bauer on the headstone.

HOKE

Now, how do that look?

DAISY

What are you talking about?

HOKE

I'm talkin' 'bout I cain' read.

DAISY

What?

HOKE

I cain' read.

DAISY

That's ridiculous. Anybody can read.

HOKE

Nome. Not me.

DAISY

Then how come I see you looking at the paper all the time?

HOKE

Thass it. Jes' lookin'. I dope out
what's happenin' from the pictures
bes' I can.

DAISY

You know your letters, don't you?

HOKE

My ABC's? Yassum, pretty good. I
jes' cain' read.

DAISY

Stop saying that. It's making me mad.
If you know your letters then you can
read. You just don't know you can
read. I taught some of the stupidest
children God ever put on the face of
this earth and all of them could read
enough to find a name on a tombstone.
The name is Bauer. Buh buh buh buh
buh Bauer. What does that buh letter
sound like?

HOKE

Soun' like a B.

DAISY

Of course. Buh Bauer. Er er er er
er. BauER. That's the last part.
What letter sounds like er?

HOKE

An R?

DAISY

So the first letter is a --

HOKE

B.

DAISY

And the last letter is an --

HOKE

R.

DAISY

B-R. B-R. B-R. Buh-err. Buh-err.
It even sounds like Bauer, doesn't it?

HOKE

Sho' do, Miz Daisy. Thass it?

DAISY

That's it. Now go on over there like I told you in the first place and look for a headstone with a B at the beginning and an R at the end and that will be Bauer.

HOKE

We ain' gon' worry 'bout what come in the middle?

DAISY

Not right now. This will be enough for you to find it. Go on now.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

And don't come back here telling me you can't do it. Because you can.

EXT. THE CEMETERY - SAME TIME

We FOLLOW HOKE on his walk past the weeping cherry tree, carrying the potted azalea in front of him. He is cautious, but excited. The headstones loom in front of him, somehow suddenly menacing. But he proceeds. And, sure enough, there it is -- BAUER.

He silently mouths the Buh and the Er and places the azaleas gently in front of the headstone. A big moment for him. Then, walking quickly, he heads back to where Daisy is finishing up her digging and collecting her things.

HOKE

Miz Daisy...

DAISY

Yes?

HOKE

I sure 'preciate this, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

Don't be ridiculous! I didn't do anything. Now, let's get all this back to the car. I'm burning up out here.

He gathers her digging tools and her blanket and they walk together towards the car, Hoke holding her elbow to keep her from tripping.

EXT. BOOLIE'S HOUSE - CHRISTMAS MORNING, 1953

ESTABLISHING SHOT - house all done up for Christmas.

INT. BOOLIE'S HOUSE / THE DEN - SAME TIME

We HEAR Eartha Kitt SINGING "Santa Baby" and we SEE we are in a small room off the living room, furnished like a Georgia decorator's idea of an English club. The mantelpiece and mirror above it are currently supporting a large display of Christmas cards. One of them reads in bold letters, "So Long 1953!"

Boolie, wearing a long-sleeved cashmere pullover and an open shirt, is going through a pile of long-playing Christmas records. His cabinet hi-fidelity record player is the very latest thing, circa 1953. The record jackets we see are albums by Bing Crosby, Rosemary Clooney, Hugo Winterhalter, etc., none of them particularly religious in content. Through the open double doors we can just glimpse a portion of a huge floor-to-ceiling Christmas tree and a mound of wrapped presents at the base.

O.S. we HEAR Florine's inimitable VOICE.

FLORINE (O.S.)

Of course I told you! Of course
I told you!

And we HEAR a second, MUFFLED VOICE rising in protest.

FLORINE (O.S.)

Now, how can I be expected to buy it
if you don't write it down!

More muffle, escalated.

FLORINE (O.S.)

Honey! Boolie! I need you!

BOOLIE

Be right there!

And we FOLLOW HIM through the back hall to the

KITCHEN

An early fifties dream of a kitchen, newly appointed. Every surface contains the makings of a Christmas party-to-be. A large baked ham, unsliced, various bottles of liquor, makings for canapes, etc., etc. The current bone of contention is a large cut glass bowl full of sliced oranges and bananas. Florine, in slacks and a silk blouse, peers into the bowl. KATIE BELL, the current cook, black and young, is cowering by the sink.

FLORINE

I told you. I told you a million times, Katie Bell. Write it down.

KATIE BELL

Yassum.

FLORINE

More I cannot do.
(to Boolie)
We're out of coconut.

BOOLIE

(the peacemaker)
I'm sure we can manage, Katie Bell.

KATIE BELL

I tole her.

FLORINE

But you didn't write it down! I don't need to stand around and listen to excuses on Christmas Day. Maybe you can figure out how to serve ambrosia to fifty people without coconut. I give up.

Head high, she marches out of the kitchen.

BOOLIE

(to Katie Bell)
I'll call Mama. She has the whole Piggly Wiggly in her pantry.

Katie Bell smiles weakly, a little cheered. Boolie goes to the

CENTER HALL

He stands by the telephone table and dials.

BOOLIE

Mama? Merry Christmas. Listen, do Florine a favor, all right? She's having a fit and the grocery store is closed today. You got a package of coconut in your pantry? ... Would you bring it when you come? Many thanks. See you anon, Mama. Ho ho ho!

He hangs up the phone and bounds up the

CURVED STAIRWAY, baby-blue carpeting, calling as he goes:

BOOLIE
Honey! Hey, Honey!

He enters the

MASTER BEDROOM

a fancy, French Provincial affair with a bay window, a chaise longue, etc.

 BOOLIE
Florine! Florine!

 FLORINE (O.S.)
In here.

He goes back out into the hall and enters

A SECOND BEDROOM

At least it was intended to be a bedroom because it is good-sized. This room is Florine's clothes closet. Racks of clothes are everywhere like a fancy dress store; shoes, hats, accessories, etc., abound. Florine is standing in front of a three-way mirror holding a hostess skirt in front of her.

 BOOLIE
Your ambrosia's saved. Mama's got
the coconut!

 FLORINE
I knew she was good for something.

 BOOLIE
 (his face clouding)
Damn it, Florine! I told you I don't
like all this sniping at Mama. She's
an old lady, for God's sake!

Florine's eyes flash and she starts to speak, but changes her mind and smiles coquettishly.

 FLORINE
Silly! I was teasin' you! Let's
don't fight on Christmas, .okay?

 BOOLIE
Of course okay.

He smiles and kisses her, a kiss reflected in her many mirrors.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET SCENE - CHRISTMAS NIGHT

MUSIC OVER. Rosemary Clooney "Counting My Blessings" or some such thing. We are SEEING well-to-do suburban streets from the POV OF AN AUTOMOBILE. Lots of outdoor Christmas decorations, lights, etc.

INT. DAISY'S CAR - SAME TIME

Hoke is driving. Daisy sits in her customary position in the back. She is not in a festive mood.

HOKE

Ooooooh at them lit up decorations!

DAISY

Everybody's giving the Georgia Power Company a merry Christmas.

HOKE

Miz Florine's got 'em all beat with the lights.

DAISY

She makes an ass out of herself every year.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

She always has to go and put a wreath in every window she's got.

HOKE

Mmm Hmmm.

DAISY

And that silly Santa Claus winking on the front door!

HOKE

I bet she have the biggest tree in Atlanta. Where she get 'em so large?

DAISY

Absurd. If I had a nose like Florine I wouldn't go around saying Merry Christmas to anybody.

HOKE

I enjoy Christmas at they house.

DAISY

I don't wonder. You're the only
Christian in the place!

HOKE

'Cept they got that new cook.

DAISY

Florine never could keep help. Of
course, it's none of my affair.

HOKE

Nome.

DAISY

Too much running around, if you ask
me. The Garden Club this and the
Junior League that! As if any one of
them would ever give her the time of
day! But she'd die before she'd fix
a glass of ice tea for the Temple
Sisterhood!

HOKE

Yassum. You right.

DAISY

I just hope she doesn't take it in
her head to sing this year.

(she imitates)

Glo-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-ria! She
sounds like she has a bone stuck in
her throat.

HOKE

You done say a mouthful, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

You didn't have to come. Boolie
would have run me out.

HOKE

I know dat.

DAISY

Then why did you?

HOKE

That my business.

EXT. BOOLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hoke turns the car into the driveway. Several cars are already in the turnaround, indicating a party in progress. Perched in a dogwood tree, near the road, is a Rudolph-the-Red-Nosed-Reindeer facsimile, nose a-blink.

HOKE

Well, looka there. Look what Miz Florine done put in the dogwood tree.

DAISY

Oh my Lord! If her grandfather, old man Freitag, could see this! What is it you say? I bet he'd jump up out of his grave and snatch her baldheaded.

Hoke has gotten out of the car and is going around to the passenger door.

HOKE

Go on 'way from here, Miz Daisy! Jump up and snatch her baldheaded!

DAISY

Wait a minute.

She takes a small package wrapped in brown paper from her purse.

DAISY (CONT'D)

This isn't a Christmas present.

HOKE

Nome.

DAISY

You know I don't give Christmas presents.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

I just happened to run across it this morning. Go on. Open it up.

He unwraps the package.

HOKE

Ain' nobody never give me no book.

He reads, not without difficulty:

HOKE (CONT'D)

"Hand Writing Copy Book - Grade Five."

DAISY

I always taught out of these. I saved a few.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

It's faded but it works. It you practice, you'll write nicely.

HOKE

Yassum.

DAISY

But you have to practice. I taught Mayor Hartsfield out of this same book.

HOKE

(very touched)

Thank you, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

It's not a Christmas present.

HOKE

Nome.

DAISY

Jews haven't got any business giving Christmas presents. And you don't need to go yapping about this to Boolie and Florine.

HOKE

This strictly between you and me.

FLORINE (O.S.)

Merry Christmas, Mother Werthan!

We FOLLOW HOKE and DAISY'S POV to

BOOLIE'S FRONT DOORWAY

Boolie and Florine are standing in the doorway, arms around one another. Florine is dressed in a satin gown-pants-suit affair, reminiscent of Rosalind Russell as Auntie Mame. They are both waving.

BACK TO THE DRIVEWAY

HOKE

They done seen us.

DAISY

I hope I don't spit up.

He takes her arm and helps her up the steps toward the house.

EXT. STREET SCENE - DAY - SPRING, 1955

Daisy's car in lightish Saturday traffic on a main street. Hoke is driving, Boolie sitting beside him in the front seat.

INT. DAISY'S CAR - SAME TIME

HOKE

You know, yo' Mama done watch over dis machine like a chicken hawk. One day we park in front of de dry cleaner up yonder at de Plaza and dis white man -- look like some kind of lawyer, banker, dress up real fine -- he done lay his satchel up on our hood while he open up his trunk, you know, and Lawd what he want to do that for? 'Fore I could stop her, yo' Mama jump out de back do' and run that man every which way. She wicked 'bout her paint job.

EXT. STREET - SAME TIME

The car is approaching Mitchell Motors, a Buick-Cadillac dealer.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

BOOLIE

Did Mama tell you this new car has air conditioning?

HOKE

She say she doan like no air cool. Say it give her the neck ache.

EXT. MITCHELL MOTORS - SAME TIME

The car heads into the dealer's lot. A large sign in the window proclaims the arrival of the new 1955 models. Boolie and Hoke get out of their respective doors and walk towards the shiny new 1955 Cadillac, painted Cadillac blue and gleaming in the sun like a jewel.

BOOLIE

You know how Mama fought me, but it's time for a trade. I bet both of you will miss the old one, though.

HOKE

Not me, unh unh.

BOOLIE

Oh, come on. You're the only one that's driven it all this time. Aren't you a little sorry to see it go?

HOKE

It ain't goin' nowhere. I done bought it.

BOOLIE

You didn't!

HOKE

Already made the deal with Mist' Red Mitchell inside yonder.

BOOLIE

For how much?

HOKE

Dat for him and me to know.

They are inspecting the new car now. RED MITCHELL himself, all smiles, having made two sales, comes out to join them.

RED MITCHELL

Well, hey, Boolie! You got a gem here. You got that payment for me, Hoke?

HOKE

Sho' do...

BOOLIE

We'll be right in, Red.

Mitchell heads back towards the building. Boolie walks Hoke a little ways away.

BOOLIE (CONT'D)

For God's sake! Why didn't you just buy it right from Mama? You'd have saved money.

HOKE

Yo' Mama in my bizness enough as it is. I ain' studyin' makin' no monthly car payments to her. Dis here mine the regular way.

The two cars are side-by-side in the sun, the one gleaming, the other also glowing, but with age. Boolie pats the old one fondly.

BOOLIE

It's a good car, all right. I guess nobody knows that better than you.

HOKE

Bes' ever come off the line. And dis new one, Miz Daisy doan take to it, I let her ride in disheah now an' again.

BOOLIE

Mighty nice of you.

HOKE

Well, we all doin' what we can.

EXT. FRONT DOOR OF THE DEALERSHIP - TEN MINUTES LATER

Boolie, holding the keys to the new car and his copy of the papers, shakes hands with Red Mitchell at the door. Hoke follows him out the door, holding his own set of papers. Mitchell waves and goes back inside. Boolie lights a cigarette.

BOOLIE

You want to drive the new one home?

HOKE

No suh.

BOOLIE

Why the hell not?

HOKE

'Cause I doan want you gettin' them nasty ashes all over my 'polstry.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON - JUNE, 1957

ON IDELLA'S HANDS lifting fried chicken out of a sputtering skillet and onto waiting paper towels. PULL BACK to reveal Idella herself, probably in her eighties now, and looking a bit worn. The kitchen counter holds hardboiled egg whites waiting to be stuffed, carrot sticks, and other indications of picnic-making in progress.

Golden afternoon sun streams into the room, which now contains a fifties refrigerator, a new dinette and chairs, and a cheery wall calendar, which reads "June, 1957."

Daisy comes into the kitchen.

DAISY

That's not enough chicken.

IDELLA

How much you and Hoke plannin' to eat?

DAISY

I like to give them leftovers when I get there.

IDELLA

You will, less you make a pig of yo'seff.

DAISY

Did you put mustard in those eggs?

IDELLA

I always put mustard in my stuffed eggs.

DAISY

Spicy things make me sick.

IDELLA

You go on upstairs and see 'bout your packing. I leave everything ready to put in the car in the morning.

Daisy starts out of the kitchen, but remembers something.

DAISY

Don't put the peaches in the icebox. I hate cold peaches.

IDELLA

Yassum.

Daisy leaves, and Idella goes on with the preparations, muttering to herself.

IDELLA (CONT'D)

Act like I ain' never made a picnic in my life.

She spears a piece of chicken vehemently.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE - NEXT MORNING

Daisy's bedroom has undergone the usual changes in the nine or so years since we've seen it. A late model (middle fifties) bedside radio has replaced the large pre-war one. The wallpaper is different, though it looks very much like its predecessor. The room is still well kept. Daisy is dressed in traveling clothes. She is about eighty now, but still in good health. She moves a bit more carefully.

It is early morning. The sun is recently up. A large, old-fashioned suitcase sits open on one of the twin beds. It is just about full. Everything is wrapped carefully in layers of tissue paper. Daisy has been packing it for days, and the job is just about complete.

She looks out of her front window towards the street and frowns. She checks her wristwatch. The street again. And she makes a decision. Chin set resolutely, she slams the suitcase shut and snaps the various locks closed. Another check to the street. She lifts the suitcase off the bed. It is almost too heavy for her.

A SERIES OF SHOTS OF DAISY WITH THE SUITCASE

- A. Struggling out of her bedroom door.
- B. Bumping down the hall steps.
- C. Going through the dining room.
- D. Battling with the swinging door into the pantry.
- E. Emerging into the back yard and half-dragging it across the driveway.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE DRIVEWAY AND GARAGE - SAME TIME

A beautiful, soft, early summer morning. Birds singing, Daisy's garden is in gentle bloom. All in contrast to Daisy's rising irritation. She looks toward the street, pushes a stray wisp of hair back under its net and goes resolutely back into the house.

INT. DAISY'S KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Daisy enters the kitchen. A shoebox sits open on the table. It contains various components of the picnic lunch, all carefully wrapped in waxed paper. Daisy opens the refrigerator, gets a couple more wrapped packages and puts them in the shoebox. She closes the box and wraps it with a rubber band, irritation still mounting. She gathers it, and a good-sized, fancily-wrapped gift box, and heads out the back door again.

EXT. THE BACK YARD - SAME TIME

Daisy has placed the gift box and the lunch box on top of the suitcase at the rear of the garage by the trunk of the car. We HEAR the SOUND of a CAR pulling up. We FOLLOW HER to the head of the driveway and we SEE Hoke's car pulling up.

Hoke gets out of the car, goes around to the trunk and removes his own small suitcase. His car is the same Oldsmobile, a bit worse for wear now, but still kept well. The Cadillac, also, is now a couple of years old and has lost its new car shine.

DAISY

It's three after seven!

HOKE

Yassum. You say we leavin' at fifteen to eight.

DAISY

At the latest, I said.

HOKE

Now what bizness you got, draggin' disheah out de house by yoseff?

DAISY

Who was here to help me?

HOKE

Miz Daisy, it doan take mo'n five minutes to load up de trunk of dis car. You fixin' to break both yo' arms and yo' legs too fo' we even get outta Atlanta. You takin' on too much.

DAISY

I hate doing things at the last minute.

HOKE

What you talkin' 'bout? You ready to go fo' the las' week and a half!

He picks up the present.

DAISY

Don't touch that.

HOKE

Ain' it wrap pretty! Dat Mist' Walter's present?

DAISY

Yes. It's fragile. I'll hold it
on the seat with me.

Hoke is loading the trunk under Daisy's careful supervision.

Boolie's car pulls up the driveway. Boolie, dressed in a
business suit and carrying a small wrapped gift, gets out of
his car and kisses his mother's cheek.

DAISY

Well, you nearly missed us!

BOOLIE

I thought you were leaving at quarter
of.

HOKE

She takin' on.

DAISY

Be still.

BOOLIE

Florine sent this for Uncle Walter.

He holds out the gift. Daisy recoils from it.

BOOLIE (CONT'D)

Well, it's not a snake, Mama. I
think it's note paper.

DAISY

How appropriate. Uncle Walter can't
see!

BOOLIE

Maybe it's soap.

DAISY

How nice that you show such an
interest in your uncle's ninetieth
birthday.

BOOLIE

Don't start up, Mama. I cannot go to
Mobile with you. I have to go to New
York tonight for the convention.

DAISY

The convention starts Monday. And I
know what else I know.

BOOLIE

Just leave Florine out of it. She wrote away for those tickets eight months ago.

DAISY

I'm sure "My Fair Lady" is more important than your own flesh and blood.

BOOLIE

Mama!

DAISY

Those Christians will be mighty impressed.

BOOLIE

I can't talk to you when you're like this.

Daisy has gotten herself into the car. The two gifts and the lunch and her purse and her map are on the seat beside. She sits straight in the seat, ready to travel.

DAISY

They expect us for a late supper in Mobile.

BOOLIE

You'll be there. I've got to talk to Hoke a minute.

He takes Hoke out of Daisy's hearing.

DAISY

I know they'll fix crab. All that trouble.

BOOLIE

(to Hoke)

I don't know how you're going to stand all day in the car.

HOKE

She doan mean nothin'. She jes' worked up.

BOOLIE

Here's fifty dollars in case you run into trouble. Don't show it to Mama. You've got your map.

HOKE

She got it in wid her. Study ever'
inch of the way.

BOOLIE

I'll be at the Ambassador Hotel in
New York. On Park Avenue.

DAISY

It's seven-sixteen.

BOOLIE

You ought to have a job on the radio
announcing the time.

DAISY

I want to miss rush hour.

BOOLIE

Congratulate Uncle Walter for me.
And kiss everybody in Mobile.

Hoke gets in the car and starts up the engine.

DAISY

Did you have the air condition
checked? I told you to have the air
condition checked.

HOKE

Yassum I had the air condition
checked but I don't know what for.
You doan never 'low me to turn it on.

DAISY

Hush up.

The car moves out of the garage, turns around and heads down
the driveway.

Boolie stands at the head of the driveway, waving.

BOOLIE

Goodbye! Good luck!
(to himself)
Good God!

SERIES OF TRAVELING SHOTS

1. DAISY'S CAR heading down the quiet suburban street.
2. DAISY'S CAR in traffic on a main thoroughfare.
3. DAISY'S CAR on a highway.

4. INT. DAISY'S CAR. Daisy reading the map and telling Hoke which numbered road to follow.

5. DAISY'S CAR on a highway, city skyline in the b.g.

6. DAISY'S CAR on a two-lane country road, mid-morning now.

7. INT. DAISY'S CAR. Daisy, relaxed somewhat in her seat, window open, enjoying the countryside. Hoke, jacket removed, doing same in front seat.

EXT. COUNTRY ROADSIDE - NOON

Daisy's car is pulled off to the side of a two-lane blacktop road, somewhere near the Georgia/Alabama border. It is a beautiful summer day, not especially hot. Daisy and Hoke are in the process of eating the lunch packed in the shoebox, cold fried chicken, stuffed eggs, etc. Daisy is sitting in her seat with the car door open. Hoke stands by the car, using the hood as an outdoor table. The mood is very relaxed.

HOKE

Idella stuff eggs good.

DAISY

You stuff yourself good.

They eat in peaceful silence.

DAISY (CONT'D)

I was thinking about the first time I ever went to Mobile. It was Walter's wedding. 1888.

HOKE

1888! You weren't nothing but a little child!

DAISY

I was twelve. We went on the train. And I was so excited. I'd never been in a wedding party and I'd never seen the ocean. Papa said it was the Gulf of Mexico and not the ocean, but it was all the same to me. I remember we were at a picnic somewhere -- somebody must have taken us bathing -- and I asked Papa if it was all right to dip my hand in the water. He laughed because I was so timid. And then I tasted the salt water on my fingers. Isn't it silly to remember that?

HOKE

No sillier than most of what folks
remember.

A STATE PATROL CAR pulls up alongside the parked car. TWO
TROOPERS in uniform are in the front seat.

TROOPER

(to Hoke)

Hey, boy!

Hoke looks at him evenly.

TROOPER (CONT'D)

What do you think you're doing with
this car?

DAISY

(also calm but angry)

This is my car, officer.

The Trooper gets out of the patrol car and walks over.

TROOPER

Yes, ma'am. Can I see the
registration, please.

(to Hoke)

And your license, boy. .

Hoke produces both the registration from the glove compartment
and the license from his wallet. The Trooper studies both.

TROOPER

(to Daisy)

What's this name? Wetheran?

DAISY

Werthan.

TROOPER

Werthan. Never heard that one before.
What kind of a name is that?

DAISY

It's of German derivation.

TROOPER

German, hunh? Coulda fooled me. I
thought it was a Jew name.

The other Trooper smirks in the patrol car. The First Trooper
tips his hat to Daisy and they drive away.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

Daisy's car, traveling, passes an old pickup, headed the other way. The pickup, a white farmer family, parents, grandparents and children, dressed in overalls and simple country clothes.

CLOSEUP OF HUSBAND AND WIFE exchanging silent glance at the sight of Daisy's chauffeur-driven car.

EXT. STATE DIVIDE - DAY

Marker says "Entering Alabama." Daisy's car travels by.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Deep country, cotton fields, an occasional shack, a less occasional car.

INT. DAISY'S CAR - DAY

HOKE

You talkin' 'bout first time before.
I tell you 'bout the first time I
ever leave the state of Georgia?

DAISY

When was that?

HOKE

A few minutes back.

DAISY

Go on!

HOKE

Thass right. First time. My daughter,
she married to a Pullman porter on the
N.C. & St. L., you know, and she all
the time goin' -- Detroit, New York,
St. Louis -- talkin' 'bout snow up
aroun' her waist and ridin' in de
subway car and I say, "Well, that very
nice, Tommie Lee, but I jes' doan feel
the need." So dis it, Miz Daisy, and
I got to tell you, Alabama ain' lookin'
like much so far.

DAISY

It's nicer the other side of
Montgomery.

HOKE

If you say so. Pass me up one of
them peaches, please ma'am.

She reaches into the shoebox. A road sign catches her eye.

DAISY

Oh my God!

HOKE

What happen?

DAISY

That sign said Phenix City -- thirty miles. We're not supposed to go to Phenix City. We're going the wrong way! Oh my God!

HOKE

Maybe you done read it wrong.

DAISY

I didn't. Stop the car! Stop the car!

EXT. ROADSIDE - SAME TIME

Hoke swerves off the road, next to a field. The mood is tense, in contrast to the peaceful lunch stop.

INT. DAISY'S CAR - SAME TIME

Daisy, very agitated, wrestles with the map on her lap.

DAISY

Here! Here! You took the wrong turn at Opelika.

He takes the map and reads it.

HOKE

You took it wid me. And you readin' the map!

DAISY

I was getting the lunch. Go on back. Oh my God!

HOKE

It ain' been thirty minutes since we turn.

DAISY

I'm such a fool! I didn't have any business coming in the car by myself with just you. Boolie made me! I should have come on the train. I'd be safe there. I just should have come on the train.

HOKE

Yassum. You sho' shouldda'.

SERIES OF SHOTS

1. DAISY'S CAR pulling out into the road.
2. DAISY'S CAR traveling through an Alabama country town, a square, a courthouse, white people, black people clustered separately on benches, etc., watching the fine car pass through, an event.
3. INT. CAR. No conversation. It's getting hot and sticky. Late afternoon now.
4. EXT. COUNTRY GAS STATION - NEAR DUSK. Daisy's car pulled up to the pump. A man in overalls fills the tank. Daisy emerges from the ladies' room, a distasteful look on her face, regarding the condition inside.
5. EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DARK. Daisy's car still heading towards Mobile.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Hoke driving, Daisy in her seat, both somewhat slumped. They are tired. It's a humid, dark night. Large moths and small insects fly at the windshield.

DAISY

They fixed crab for me! Minnie
always fixes crab! They go to so
much trouble! It's all ruined by now!
Oh Lord!

HOKE

We got to pull over, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

Is something wrong with the car?

HOKE

Nome. I got to be'xcused.

DAISY

What?

HOKE

I got to make water.

DAISY

You should have thought of that back
at the Standard Oil station.

HOKE

Colored cain' use the toilet at no
Standard Oil. You know dat.

DAISY

Well, there's no time to stop.
We'll be in Mobile soon. You can
wait.

HOKE

Yassum.
(a beat)
Nome.

EXT. ROAD - SAME TIME

Daisy's car pulls abruptly to the side of the road.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

DAISY

I told you to wait!

HOKE

Yassum. I hear you. How you think I
feel havin' to ax you when can I make
my water like I some damn dog?

DAISY

Why, Hoke! I'd be ashamed!

HOKE

I ain' no dog and I ain' no chile and
I ain' just a back of the neck you
look at while you going wherever you
want to go. I a man, nearly seventy-
two years old, and I know when my
bladder full and I gettin' out dis car
and goin' off down the road like I got
to do. And I'm takin' the car key dis
time. And that's the end of it!

He gets out of the car, shutting the door sharply behind him.

ON DAISY, sitting straight in her seat, lips pursed. Dark
country night silence. A DOG BARKS in the distance. She
rolls down the window.

DAISY

Hoke!

She waits a second, then calls again, less angrily.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Hoke!

No answer. Silence. Darkness. COUNTRY SOUNDS. She is becoming frightened.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Hoke!

She starts to get out of the car, when suddenly a man appears in the shadowy dark. She is frightened for a moment, but realizes it is Hoke come back.

HOKE

You all right in there, Miz Daisy?

Her face floods with relief, but not for long. Soon she is her old snappish self.

DAISY

Of course I am!

EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE - DUSK

INT. AMBASSADOR HOTEL / BOOLIE & FLORINE'S ROOM - DUSK

A standard twin-bedded double room. Nicely furnished, but not very large. A room air conditioner hums away. White gauzy curtains billow in front of it. Open suitcases on the luggage rack and bureau.

Boolie, wearing boxer shorts, undershirt, long socks and garters, is stretched out on one of the beds, talking on the telephone, which sits on a table between the beds.

During his conversation, Florine emerges from the bathroom. She is dressed in her best evening outfit -- a killer of a summer city dress (a sack dress? one with a balloon skirt? -- whatever Kay Kendall would have worn in 1957).

BOOLIE

Yes. I'm calling Mobile, Alabama.
Adams 4-7893. That's Adams. I don't
know what digits. Wait a minute.
23. 234-7893. Person to person.
Mr. Walter Woolf. No, wait, Operator.
Make that station to station.

(to Florine)

It'll take forever to get Uncle Walter
to the phone.

Florine, intent on her mirror image, shrugs.

BOOLIE (CONT'D)

(on the phone)

Yeah. Hey! Is this Slick? Hey,
Slick! It's Boolie! Unh hunh.
Congratulations on your Dad's big day.

INT. UNCLE WALTER'S HOUSE / THE LIVING ROOM - TWILIGHT

An unpretentious, comfortable Mobile living room -- not nearly as well-to-do as Daisy's house in Atlanta. SLICK, Uncle Walter's son, is a sixtyish small man, dressed in short-sleeve white shirt, no tie, etc. He is talking on the phone with Boolie. In the b.g. are UNCLE WALTER, blind and ninety, but the possessor of great vitality. He happens to strongly resemble his sister, Daisy. He is ensconced in his favorite living room chair, a pile of wrapped presents, Daisy's included, on a table nearby. He is surrounded by various children, grandchildren and relatives, including Daisy and her slightly older sister, NONIE.

Slick is having trouble hearing Boolie over the b.g. NOISE.

SLICK

Well, thank you. Thank you,
Boolie.

(he beckons to Daisy)

Aunt Daisy, it's Boolie calling.

ON DAISY

A prim smile. She's glad her son is doing the right thing. She leaves the relatives and takes the phone from Slick.

DAISY

Hello. Hey, son. Uncle Walter appreciates your call. I don't think he can come to the phone.

INT. BOOLIE'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

BOOLIE

(on phone)

Fine. How is Hoke?

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

DAISY

What do you mean? How should he be?

Uncle Walter's daughter emerges from the kitchen bearing a large iced angel food cake, aglow with candles. An excited hush falls over the family and the singing of "Happy Birthday" starts.

DAISY (CONT'D)

I have to hang up, Boolie. I'll tell him. Yes, we will. All right. You, too. Bye.

The cake procession and the singing continue.

ON UNCLE WALTER, his blind, pink face lit by the glow of ninety candles.

ON DAISY, also lit by the candles, her face soft with love and pride for the occasion. She looks across the room.

DAISY'S POV

Hoke standing by the kitchen door with MINNIE and a couple of other family servants. Hoke nods gravely at Daisy, acknowledging the importance of the moment.

ON DAISY. She nods imperceptibly, but gratefully, back at Hoke, still lit by the candles.

ON UNCLE WALTER, guided by Slick, leans over to blow the candles out.

EXT. THE WERTHAN COMPANY - DAY

The same exterior, but with a few changes. A very large billboard in front of the factory entrance reads: "CONSTRUCTION BY A. R. EDWARDS, INC. - COMPLETION FALL 1962." The rest of the old Werthan plant and the projected modern addition at the rear.

The Cadillac that was driven to Mobile pulls into an empty space. It is older now and a little worse for wear, but it is kept well. It now belongs to Hoke. He emerges from the car, a bit greyer, but spry. He is up in his seventies. He waves to some men on the loading dock, who wave back. He heads into the building.

INT. THE WERTHAN COMPANY / THE RECEPTION AREA - DAY

The receptionist waves Hoke in and he proceeds down the corridor to

MISS MCCLATCHEY'S DESK

where she is seated, typing letters. Boolie's voice is HEARD on the DICTAPHONE machine by her side. She types as fast as he talks. When she sees Hoke she smiles, turns off her machine.

MCCLATCHEY

Well, good morning to you.

HOKE

Can I see him?

MCCLATCHEY

He's out there with the construction.
Best toy he ever had.

HOKE

I know that's the truth.

He walks back down the hall and through the

FACTORY, which looks pretty much as it did fourteen years before, past the same old

FREIGHT ELEVATOR with the same old corrugated tin door. Oscar, older now, is unloading full hand carts.

OSCAR

Hey, my man!

HOKE

They ain' give you a new elevator yet?

OSCAR

You don't see one, do you?

HOKE

Well all right.

He proceeds through the factory and out a rear door.

EXT. REAR OF WERTHAN COMPANY - DAY

The early stages of construction. Concrete poured on first floor and I-beams being put in place. Boolie, wearing hard hat and expensive suit, talking to CONSTRUCTION WORKERS. Boolie is a bit paunchier and balder.

BOOLIE

Eddie, are you telling me you're going over already?

EDDIE

No suh, Mist' Werthan. I'm just sayin' be prepared, if you git my meanin'.

BOOLIE

I'm prepared to spend exactly what's in the contract and not one dime more.

EDDIE

I hear you.

Boolie sees Hoke. He moves away from the construction group.

EDDIE

(to a worker as
Boolie moves away)

They don't call 'em Jews for nothing.

The other man snickers.

BOOLIE

(to Hoke)

Isn't it your day off? To what do I owe this honor?

HOKE

Seein' 'bout things in the neighborhood.

BOOLIE

Well, let me show you around.

They move around to a

SIDE ELEVATION OF THE CONTRUCTION

BOOLIE

(pointing up at empty air)

Right there's gonna be my office. One hell of a view.

HOKE

Isn't that something?

BOOLIE

You don't seem real interested.

HOKE

We got to talk, Mr. Werthan.

BOOLIE

What is it?

HOKE

It Mist' Sinclair Harris.

BOOLIE

My cousin Sinclair?

HOKE

His wife.

BOOLIE

Jeanette?

HOKE

The one talk funny.

BOOLIE

She's from Canton, Ohio.

HOKE

Yassuh. She tryin' to hire me.

BOOLIE

What?

HOKE

She phone when she know Miz Daisy be out and she say, "How are they treating you, Hoke?" You know how she soun', like her nose stuff up. And I say, "Fine, Miz Harris," and she say, "Well, if you lookin' for a change, you know where to call."

BOOLIE

I'll be damned!

HOKE

I thought you want to know 'bout it.

BOOLIE

I'll be God damned!

HOKE

Ain' she a mess?
(a pause)
She say name yo sal'ry.

BOOLIE

I see. And did you?

HOKE

Did I what?

BOOLIE

Name your salary.

HOKE

Now, what you think I am? I ain' studyin' workin' for no trashy somethin' like her.

BOOLIE

But she got you to thinkin', didn't she?

HOKE

You might could say dat.

BOOLIE

Come on back in my office.

They head back inside the factory.

INT. BOOLIE'S OFFICE - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

The same space as before, but serious redecoration has occurred. It is now furnished with the latest blonde mahogany desk, coffee table, side piece, etc. The wall-to-wall carpeting and drapes are new, too. And there is a new fashion photo of Florine placed prominently. She has Mamie Eisenhower bangs in it. Boolie sits at his desk, puts his feet up and motions Hoke to sit.

BOOLIE

Name your salary.

HOKE

Dat what she say.

BOOLIE

Well, how does \$65 a week sound?

HOKE

Sound pretty good. 'Course seventy-five sounds better.

BOOLIE

So it does. Beginning this week.

HOKE

Das mighty nice of you, Mist' Werthan. I 'preciate it. Mist' Werthan, you ever had people fightin' over you?

BOOLIE

No.

HOKE

Well, I tell you. It feel good.

He smiles and walks happily out of the office.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE DEN - DAY - MAY, 1963

Only addition to the scene is a bulky console b/w TELEVISION set, which is ON at the moment, a soap opera in progress.

Idella and Hoke are watching avidly. Idella is shelling peas, a paper bag for the pods and a bowl for the peas. She looks very old and frail.

Daisy stops in the doorway.

DAISY

I don't know how y'all can look at that.

HOKE

You see it a few times, you get in it.

DAISY

Your brains are gonna dry up. I'll be up in my room reading. Don't make a mess with those peas, Idella.

IDELLA

Do I ever?

Daisy goes upstairs. The two watch.

HOKE

Ain't the blonde one got a lotta hair? How do she make it so shiny?

IDELLA

(shelling away)
Washes it in my-naise.

He looks dubious.

IDELLA (CONT'D)

Yes she do. Had about it in Life Magazine.

HOKE

Don' seem human, do it?

ON THE SOAP OPERA

Two young women drinking coffee in a kitchen.

DARK-HAIRED YOUNG WOMAN

Virginia, I saw Richard last night.

Ominous organ MUSIC.

DARK-HAIRED YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)

It looked to me like he was on his way to Hope's house!

More ominous MUSIC.

ON HOKE

HOKE

Look out! Linda up to somethin' now. What you think, Idella?

No answer.

HOKE (CONT'D)

Idella?

O.S. SOUND of BOWL hitting the floor.

We SEE the bowl overturned and peas rolling out on the Oriental rug.

ON HOKE

HOKE

Idella! Idella!

INT. AUBURN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH / THE SANCTUARY - DAY

This is a fairly small church, humble in contrast to Daisy's Temple we have seen earlier. The sanctuary is about half-filled at the moment. A funeral is in progress.

A BLACK CHOIR MEMBER - A TEEN-AGED GIRL, with a particularly strong voice, is singing "What a Friend we Have in Jesus." She wears a choir robe. She is standing with the rest of the choir, but this is the solo part of the service.

A MINISTER, also black and also robed, stands nearby, just behind a simple coffin.

A SHOT OF THE SANCTUARY reveals that the entire population is black, except for three white people in the rear -- Daisy, Boolie and Florine. Hoke is sitting in the pew with them, on the aisle, next to Boolie. Everyone in the congregation holds a printed program of events.

ON THE THREE WHITE FACES, a part of the service, but not a part. Florine wears a stylish suit, Daisy has on a black hat with a veil. She looks straight ahead at the singer, her face showing no emotion. Only Hoke's face expresses his feelings, as the four watch the solemn proceedings.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE KITCHEN - DAY - JULY, SAME YEAR

For the first time, the kitchen looks a bit out of date, a bit shabby. The linoleum is clean, but a little chipped and scruffy. An electric fry pan sits on one of the counters, clearly a concession to Boolie because it is shiny new and obviously never used.

Daisy is frying chicken in a large black cast iron skillet. The cut-up chicken is on the counter as is the paper bag full of flour. She shakes the chicken in the bag, then places it in the hot oil skillet.

Hoke appears behind her, watching critically. Eventually he cannot contain himself and speaks.

HOKE
You fixin' to ruin it.

DAISY
What are you talking about?

HOKE
You got de skillet turn up too high
and de chicken too close together.

DAISY
Mind your business.

HOKE
It's yo' chicken.

He shrugs, walks out of the kitchen. Daisy considers a moment, turns the flame down.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE YARD - DAY

Some time later. Daisy, wearing gardening gloves, is standing on a small kitchen stepladder, wielding a large pair of shears, trimming a shrub. Hoke stands at the foot of the ladder, picking up the clippings and putting them in a nearby wheelbarrow.

EXT. CITY SCENE - DAY - WINTER, 1964

ESTABLISHING SHOT of ice storm in progress, branches weighted down, icicles hanging everywhere, etc.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - DAY

Effects of storm visible.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE FRONT HALL - IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING

No furniture or decoration has changed here since we first saw it, but everything is older. Daisy is on her knees rummaging through the lowest commode drawer. Outside the storm is visible. The hall is dark. Daisy finds what she is looking for, a stumpy old white candle. She shuts the drawer, gets up, and we FOLLOW HER through

THE DARK PANTRY into

THE KITCHEN

somewhat lighter because of the windows. She lights the candle with kitchen matches, drips wax onto a saucer, and firms the candle in place. She heads back towards the living room.

She walks through the dark HALL. We FOLLOW HER into
THE LIVING ROOM

Only a little brighter, evidence of ice storm outside. The room seems more cluttered, less organized than it was in 1948. And the darkness of the morning only accentuates the somewhat shabby aura.

Daisy goes to sit in her armchair. The current National Geographic is on the table. She picks it up and tries to read, but is unsuccessful in the poor light.

Suddenly she HEARS the BACK DOOR open and close. FOOTSTEPS. She half-rises out of the chair in alarm.

DAISY

Who is it?

HOKE (O.S.)

Mornin', Miz Daisy.

DAISY

Oh, Hoke.

She sinks back into her chair with relief. Hoke comes into the doorway. She is carrying a paper bag, and wears an overcoat and galoshes.

DAISY

What in the world?

HOKE

I learn to drive on ice when I deliver milk for the Avondale Dairy. Ain' much to it. I slip aroun' a little comin' down Briarcliff, but nothin' happen. Other folks bangin' into each other like they in the funny papers, tho'. Oh, I stop at the 7-11. I figure yo' stove out and Lawd knows you got to have yo' coffee in the morning.

She is touched.

DAISY

How sweet of you, Hoke!

He hands her a cardboard cup and sips his own.

HOKE

We ain' had no good coffee 'roun heah since Idella pass.

DAISY

Mmm Hmm. I can fix her biscuits and we both know how to make her fried chicken. But nobody can make Idella's coffee. I wonder how she did it.

HOKE

I doan' nome.

They sip silently for a moment, deep in thoughts. Then:

DAISY

Idella was lucky.

HOKE

Yassum. I 'spec she was.

He starts out of the room.

DAISY

Where are you going?

HOKE

Put desheah things up. Take off my overshoes.

DAISY

I didn't think you'd come today.

HOKE

What you mean? It ain' my day off, is it?

DAISY

Boolie called and said he couldn't even get down his driveway. Well, I don't know what you can do around here except keep me company.

HOKE

I see can I light us a fire.

He leaves the room. The next few exchanges are Daisy calling to him in the kitchen.

DAISY

Eat anything you want out of the ice box. It'll all spoil anyway.

HOKE (O.S.)

Yassum.

DAISY

And wipe up what you tracked onto my kitchen floor.

HOKE (O.S.)

Now, Miz Daisy, what you think I am?
A mess?

This is an old routine between them and not without affection. Daisy smiles. The PHONE RINGS, loudly. An intrusion on the intimacy.

Daisy gets up to answer. She speaks as she goes to the hall.

DAISY

Yes. That's exactly what I think
you are.

HOKE

All right den. All right.

THE HALL TELEPHONE

[NOTE: The scene of following phone conversation shifts between Daisy's hall and BOOLIE'S DEN, where he sits wearing a cashmere sweater and a muffler. Florine can also be seen, wearing a full-length mink coat and expensive leather gloves.]

DAISY

Hello?

BOOLIE

It'll all be melted by this
afternoon. They said so on the radio.
I'll be out after you as soon as I
can get down the driveway.

DAISY

Stay where you are, Boolie. Hoke is
here with me.

BOOLIE

How in the hell did he manage that?

DAISY

He's very handy. I'm fine. I don't
need a thing in the world.

BOOLIE

Hello?

(to Florine)

I must have the wrong number. I
never heard Mama say loving things
about Hoke before.

DAISY

I didn't say I love him. I said he
was handy.

BOOLIE

(winking at Florine)

Uh huh.

DAISY

Honestly, Boolie. Are you trying to irritate me in the middle of an ice storm?

She hangs up sharply.

ON BOOLIE as he hangs up the phone, smiling at his wife.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A traffic jam is in progress. Cars standing still, HORNS BLARING, irritability in the air. It is early fall, but hot and humid.

One of the cars in the stalled lane is Daisy's. It's a car we haven't seen before -- a Cadillac sedan (circa 1960). All of Daisy's cars, subsequent to the first Cadillac, are virtually the same -- all "Cadillac blue" -- but, of course, Boolie trades them in every two or three years -- a matter of equity.

At the moment Daisy is alone in her car, fanning herself with her handkerchief, and out of sorts. She is wearing a hat and gloves.

Hoke, walking against the traffic, reaches Daisy's car. He is carrying his jacket. He leans into the car.

INT. DAISY'S CAR - DAY

DAISY

Well, what is it? You took so long!

HOKE

Couldn't help it. Big mess up yonder.

DAISY

What's the matter? I might as well not go to Temple at all now!

He gets into the car.

HOKE

You cain' go to Temple today, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

Why not? What in the world is the matter with you?

HOKE
Somebody done bomb the Temple.

DAISY
What? Bomb the Temple!

HOKE
Yassum. Dat why we stuck here so long.

DAISY
I don't believe it!

HOKE
Dat what the policeman tell me up yonder. Say it happen about a half hour ago.

DAISY
Oh, no! Oh, my God! Well, was anybody there? Were people hurt?

HOKE
Din' say.

DAISY
Who would do such a thing?

HOKE
You know good as me. Always be the same ones.

DAISY
Well, it's a mistake. I'm sure they meant to bomb one of the Conservative synagoges or the Orthodox one. The Temple is Reform. Everybody knows that.

HOKE
It doan matter to them people. A Jew is a Jew to them folks. Jes' like light or dark, we all the same nigger.

DAISY
I can't believe it!

HOKE
Tell you what. I see can I get us out of here.

He starts up the car, maneuvers it down the shoulder of the road, moving past all the congestion.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Daisy's car moving in lighter traffic.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Hoke drives. Daisy dabs at her eyes with a Kleenex.

HOKE

I know jes' how you feel, Miz Daisy. Back down there above Macon on the farm -- I 'bout ten or 'leven years old -- and one day my frien' Porter, his Daddy hangin' from a tree. And the day befo', he laughin' and pitchin' horseshoes wid us. Talkin' 'bout Porter and me gon' have good strong right arms like him. And den he hangin' up yonder wid his hands tie behind his back an' the flies all over him. And I seed dat with my own eyes and I threw up right where I was standin'. You go on an' cry.

DAISY

I'm not crying.

(after a moment of
collecting herself)

Why did you tell me that story?

HOKE

I doan' know. Seem like disheah mess put me in mind of it.

DAISY

Ridiculous! The Temple has nothing to do with that!

HOKE

So you say.

DAISY

We don't even know what happened. How do you know that policeman was telling you the truth?

HOKE

Now, why would a policeman go and lie 'bout a thing like dat?

DAISY

Well, you never get things right anyway.

HOKE

Miz Daisy, somebody done bomb dat place and you know it, too.

DAISY

Go on. Just go on now. I don't want to hear any more about it.

HOKE

You de boss.

DAISY

Stop talking to me!

ON HOKE'S sad, compassionate face.

INT. THE COMMERCE BUILDING / THE COMMERCE CLUB - DAY - SUMMER, 1966

The entire top floor of a mid-sixties Atlanta skyscraper with a panoramic view. This is a businessman's club/restaurant, furnished appropriately with leather chairs, paneled walls, portraits of past presidents, etc.

There is an honorary luncheon in progress. Boolie, the honoree, sits at the center of a raised table on a dais. Next to him is Florine, dressed in a fashionable mini-dress and Courreges white boots. Next to her is Daisy in her best dress.

WELLBORN ARKWRIGHT, the president of the Commerce Club, is standing in his place, on the other side of Florine, holding a large engraved silver bowl, and beckoning to Boolie. General applause. Boolie rises, takes the trophy, and approaches the microphone. A cameraman gets off a few shots.

BOOLIE

Thank you, Wellborn. And thank you all. I am deeply grateful to be chosen Man of the Year by the Atlanta Business Council -- an honor I've seen bestowed on some mighty fine fellas and which I certainly never expected to come to me. I'm afraid the loss here --

(he touches his hair)

-- and the gain here --

(he pats his belly)

-- have given me an air of competence I don't possess. But I'll tell you, I sure wish my father and grandfather could see this. Seventy-two years ago they opened a little hole-in-the-wall shop on Whitehall Street with one printing press.

(MORE)

BOOLIE (CONT'D)

They managed to grow with Atlanta and to this day, the Werthan Company believes we want what Atlanta wants. This award proves we must be right. Thank you.

He holds up his trophy. Applause. He starts back to his seat but thinks better of it.

BOOLIE (CONT'D)

One more thing. If the Jackets whup the Dogs up in Athens Saturday afternoon, I'll be a completely happy man.

Laughs, lighter applause. Boolie shakes Wellborn's hand, and goes back to his place. He kisses a delighted Florine. Another flash bulb or two.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE FRONT HALL - DAY - FALL, 1966

Daisy is seated at the telephone table, dialing. Still the same old black telephone. She dials with some difficulty. Things have become harder for her to do.

DAISY

Hidey, Miss McClatchey. You always recognize my voice. What a shame a wonderful girl like you never married. Miss McClatchey, is my son in? Oh, no no no. Please don't call him out of a sales meeting. Just give him a message. Tell him I bought the tickets for the UJA banquet. Yes, UJA banquet honoring Martin Luther King on the seventeenth. Well, you're a sweet thing to say so. And don't you worry. My cousin Tillie in Chattanooga married for the first time at fifty-seven. 'Bye.

She places the phone in its cradle.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE KITCHEN - DUSK - SAME DAY

Boolie comes through the back door on his way home from work. The end of the same day. The house is quiet.

BOOLIE

Mama? Where are you?

DAISY (O.S.)

Up here.

He follows her voice up the stairs into

HER BEDROOM

Daisy sits at her desk, paying bills. Her large, old-fashioned checkbook open on her desk and a small stack of bills neatly stacked and stamped nearby. She works efficiently, but slowly, because it's harder to write now. She continues her work after Boolie comes in.

BOOLIE

How are you feeling, Mama?

DAISY

Not a good question to ask somebody nearly ninety.

BOOLIE

Well, you look fine.

DAISY

It's my ageless appeal.

BOOLIE

Miss McClatchey gave me your message.

DAISY

Florine is invited, too.

BOOLIE

Thank you very much.

DAISY

I guess Hoke should drive us. There'll be a crowd.

BOOLIE

Mama, we have to talk about this.

DAISY

Talk about what?

BOOLIE

The feasibility of all this.

DAISY

Fine, you drive. I thought I was being helpful.

BOOLIE

You know, I believe Martin Luther King has done some mighty fine things.

DAISY

Boolie, if you don't want to go, why don't you just come right out and say so?

BOOLIE

I want to go. You know how I feel about him.

DAISY

Of course, but Florine --

BOOLIE

Florine has nothing to do with it. I still have to conduct business in this town.

DAISY

I see. The Werthan Company will go out of business if you attend the King dinner.

BOOLIE

Not exactly. But a lot of men I do business with wouldn't like it. They might snicker a little and call me Martin Luther Werthan behind my back -- something like that. And I'd begin to notice that my banking business wasn't being handled by the top dogs. Maybe I wouldn't hear about certain lunch meetings at the Commerce Club. And Jack Raphael, over at Ideal Press, he's a New York Jew instead of a Georgia Jew and the really smart Jews come from New York, don't they? So some of the boys might start throwing business to Jack instead of old Martin Luther Werthan. I don't know. Maybe it wouldn't happen, but that's the way it works. If we don't use those seats, somebody else will and the good Dr. King will never know the difference, will he?

DAISY

If we don't use those seats? I'm not supposed to go either?

BOOLIE

Mama, you can do whatever you want.

DAISY

Thanks for your permission.

BOOLIE

Can I ask you something? When did you get so fired up about Martin Luther King? Time was, I'd have heard a different story.

DAISY

Why, Boolie! I've never been prejudiced and you know it!

BOOLIE

Okay. Why don't you ask Hoke to go to the dinner with you?

DAISY

Hoke? Don't be ridiculous! He wouldn't go!

BOOLIE

Ask him and see.

ON DAISY'S FACE, looking up from her desk, clearly challenged.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / DAISY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

The wallpaper is the same as we last saw (before the trip to Mobile) but a little blotched and spotted in places. A couple of the framed photographs on the wall are a little crooked. A new color TV set sits on a metal stand, looking out of place.

Daisy is reflected in the mirror above her bureau. The same mirror as at the beginning of the picture, but, of course, she is twenty years older. Her mind is as sharp as ever, but her body is becoming difficult to operate. She is in the process of putting on the final touches of her evening outfit. She takes a final check in the mirror, not especially happy with the results, and heads out of the room.

INT. THE KITCHEN - SAME TIME

A new sink/dishwasher combination is installed. Otherwise the room is the same. Hoke sits at the kitchen table. He wears thickish glasses now and is squinting at the evening paper. Daisy enters the kitchen, having added a light jacket to her outfit.

DAISY

All right.

Hoke rises, following her out the back door, remembering to turn out the kitchen light as he leaves.

A SERIES OF SHOTS

1. Hoke helping Daisy into the car (a car we have not seen).
2. The car headed down the driveway.
3. The car going down a suburban street.
4. The car, close to the side of the road, almost hitting a mailbox.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Daisy flinches.

DAISY

I don't know why you still drive.
You can't see.

HOKE

Yassum I can.

DAISY

You didn't see that mailbox.

HOKE

How you know what I din' see?

DAISY

It nearly poked through my window.
This car is all scratched up.

HOKE

Ain' no sucha' thing.

DAISY

How would you know? You can't see.
What a shame. It's a brand new car,
too.

HOKE

You done had this car two years come
March.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Daisy's car on a main thoroughfare.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

DAISY

You forgot to turn.

HOKE

Ain' this dinner at the Biltmo'?

DAISY

You know it is.

HOKE

Biltmo' straight thissaway.

DAISY

You know so much!

HOKE

Yassum. I do.

DAISY

I've lived in Atlanta all my life.

HOKE

An' ain' run a car in onto twenty years.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Daisy's car in downtown traffic.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

DAISY

Boolie said the silliest thing the other day.

HOKE

That right?

DAISY

He's too old to be so foolish.

HOKE

Yassum.

(a long beat)

Well, what did he say?

DAISY

Well, he was talking about Martin Luther King.

(a beat)

I guess you know him, don't you?

HOKE

Martin Luther King? Nome.

DAISY

I was sure you did. But you've heard him preach?

HOKE

Same way as you, over the TV.

DAISY
I think he's wonderful.

HOKE
Yassum.

DAISY
You know, you could go see him in
person any time you wanted.
(no response)
All you'd have to do is go over
there to the -- what is it?

HOKE
Ebenezer.

DAISY
Ebenezer Baptist Church some Sunday
and there he'll be.

HOKE
What you gettin' at, Miz Daisy?

DAISY
Well, it's so silly! Boolie said
you wanted to go to this dinner with
me. Did you tell him that?

HOKE
Nome.

DAISY
I didn't think so. What would be the
point? You can hear him anytime --
whenever you want.

HOKE
You want the front do' or the side
do' to the Biltmore?

DAISY
I think the side. Isn't it wonderful
the way things are changing?

EXT. BILTMORE HOTEL - NIGHT

Lots of cars, policemen, lights, a big event. Daisy's car
turns the corner and Hoke stops in front of the lesser-used
side door.

INT. CAR - SAME TIME

Hoke turns off the engine and turns in his seat to face Daisy.

HOKE

What you think I am, Miz Daisy?

DAISY

What do you mean?

HOKE

You think I some old somethin'
sittin' up here doan know nothin'
'bout how to do?

DAISY

I don't know what you're talking
about.

HOKE

Invitation to disheah dinner come in
the mail a mont' ago. Did be you
want me to go wid you, how come you
wait till we in the car and on the
way to ask me?

DAISY

What? All I said was that Boolie
said you wanted to go.

HOKE

Mmmmm hmmm.

DAISY

Well, my stars! Aren't you a great
big baby!

HOKE

Ne'er mind baby. Next time you ask
me some place, ask me regular.

DAISY

You don't have to carry on so much!

HOKE

Dass all. Less drop it.

DAISY

Honestly!

HOKE

You talkin' 'bout things change.
They ain' change all dat much.
(he opens his door)
I hep you to the do'.

DAISY

Thank you, Hoke. I can help myself.

EXT. BILTMORE SIDE DOOR - SAME TIME

Daisy emerges from her car, slowly but head held high. Hoke stands where he is, on his side of the car, not helping, his head also held high. This is an enormous breach of etiquette. Daisy proceeds into the hotel. Hoke climbs back in the car and looks straight ahead.

ON HOKE'S immobile face.

INT. BILTMORE HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

The room is crowded with round tables, each seating eight. A speaker's table is on a raised dais at one end of the room, UJA banner and NAACP banner behind it. DR. KING, MRS. KING, other black leaders seen at a distance seated amongst white clergymen, etc., at the head table. Dr. Weil, the Temple rabbi, is at the microphone winding up a prayer.

DR. WEIL

And we ask, Oh Lord, that You shine favor on all Your children. None of us here would presume to know what You look like or even what color You are. But we do know without doubt that whatever color we happen to be doesn't matter to You.

During this speech the CAMERA MOVES IN ON

ONE TABLE

PAN THE FACES at the table, all listening politely. Then we get to Daisy. She seems distracted, worried, not really listening.

INT. DAISY'S CAR - SAME TIME

ON HOKE who still sits at the steering wheel, alone, listening to the SPEECH on the car RADIO.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING - MARCH, 1970

The car that was at the UJA banquet drives up the driveway. It now belongs to Hoke. A newer Cadillac, same color blue (a 1969-70 model) sits in the garage. Hoke pulls his car into the garage next to the new one and emerges into the strong clear sunlight. We SEE the EXTERIOR of Daisy's house, no longer as freshly painted and well maintained as it was twenty years ago. Shutters are peeling paint here and there, a gutter has come away from the house, etc.

Hoke opens the kitchen door and we FOLLOW HIM into

INT. THE KITCHEN - MORNING

The room is still and empty in the sunlight.

HOKE
(calling)
Mornin', Miz Daisy.

No answer.

He cocks his head, listening, something seems off to him.

HOKE (CONT'D)
Miz Daisy?

No answer. He proceeds through the kitchen and pantry into
THE DINING ROOM

where he finds all the drawers open, having been pawed
through. He hurries into

THE FRONT HALL

where the drawers in the commode are also open.

HOKE
(alarmed)
Miz Daisy?

We HEAR a THUMPING upstairs and he heads for the steps.

DAISY (O.S.)
Hoke! Hoke! Is that Hoke?

HOKE
Yassum. It's me. You all right?

DAISY (O.S.)
(coming closer)
Hoke?

Hoke looks up the staircase as Daisy makes her way slowly
down. Her hair is in disarray and her housecoat has fallen
open, the slip showing underneath.

DAISY
Hoke? Hoke?

HOKE
Yassum.

DAISY
Where did you put my papers?

HOKE

What papers, Miz Daisy?

She has reached the bottom of the stairs now.

DAISY

My papers! I had them all corrected last night and I put them in the front so I wouldn't forget them on my way to school. What did you do with them?

She lurches off unsteadily towards

THE DEN

Hoke follows, close on her heels.

HOKE

School? What are you talking 'bout?

Daisy is opening drawers and rifling through things.

DAISY

The children will be so disappointed if I don't give them their homework back. I always give it back the next day. That's why they like me.

HOKE

You talking out yo' head!

DAISY

Why aren't you helping me?

HOKE

Oh Lawd! What you want me to do, Miz Daisy?

DAISY

Find those papers! I told you. It's all right if you moved them. I won't be mad with you. But I've got to get to school now. I'll be late and who will take care of my class? They'll be all alone. Oh God! Oh Goddy! I do everything wrong.

She has tottered off toward

THE LIVING ROOM

Hoke hurries behind her and tries to get her to sit in her easy chair, but she is intent on opening drawers and looking for her papers.

HOKE

Set down. You 'bout to fall and hurt yoseff.

DAISY

It doesn't matter. I'm sorry. It's all my fault. I didn't do right! It's so awful! Oh God!

Now you lissen heah. Ain' nothin' awful 'cep' the way you carryin' on.

DAISY

I'm so sorry. It's all my fault. I can't find the papers and the children are waiting.

HOKE

No they ain'. You ain' no teacher no mo'.

DAISY

It doesn't make any difference!

HOKE

Miz Daisy, ain' nothin' the matter wid you.

DAISY

You don't know! You don't know! What's the difference?

HOKE

Your mind done took a turn this mornin'. Thass all.

He has been shutting drawers behind her. She has now worked her way into

THE FRONT HALL

and is rummaging in the commode. Hoke dials a phone number quickly.

HOKE

(into the phone)

Lemme have 'im, Miz McClatchey.

DAISY

Go on. Just go on now.

INT. THE WERTHAN COMPANY / BOOLIE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

The new wing is finished and Boolie's office is very grand. Florine has really gone wild furnishing it. Lots of chrome and glass and large expanses of window. A framed, signed photo of Richard Nixon sits on Boolie's desk with the other mementoes. Boolie has longer sideburns, less hair and more belly. He is in his early sixties -- pink, healthy, beautifully dressed.

BOOLIE

Hey, Hoke! What can I do for you this morning?

INT. DAISY'S HALL - SAME TIME

HOKE

It's yo' Mama. She think she teachin' school.

Daisy has pulled a drawer out of the commode and it lands on the floor at their feet.

DAISY

Oh, God! Oh Goddy!

HOKE

Oh, Lawd. I'm real worried, Mist' Werthan.

INT. BOOLIE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

BOOLIE

I'll be right there.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE STAIRCASE - SAME TIME

Daisy is tottering up the staircase. Hoke is right behind her.

HOKE

You snap right back if you jes' let yoseff.

DAISY

I can't! I can't!

HOKE

You a lucky ole woman! You know dat?

DAISY

No! No! It's all a mess now. And I can't do anything about it!

She heads into a

SPARE BEDROOM

He follows and succeeds in settling her into a rocking chair.

HOKE

You rich, you well fo' yo' time,
and you got people care about what
happen to you.

DAISY

I'm being trouble. Oh, God! I don't
want to be trouble to anybody.

The chair rocks furiously.

HOKE

You want something to cry about, I
take you to the state home, show
you what layin' out dere in de halls.

DAISY

Oh, my God!

She is less physically agitated now, but still very confused.
She is in her chair, muttering weakly.

HOKE

An' I bet none of them take on bad
as yo' doin'.

DAISY

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Those poor
children in my class.

HOKE

You keep dis up, I promise, Mist'
Werthan call the doctor on you and
just as sho' as you born, dat doctor
gon' have you in the insane asylum
'fore you know what hit you. Dat de
way you want it to be?

Daisy turns and looks at him. She speaks in her normal voice.

DAISY

Hoke, do you still have that
Oldsmobile?

HOKE

From when I firs' come here? Go on, Miz Daisy. Dat thing been in the junkyard fifteen years or mo'. I drivin' yo' next to las' car now. '63 Cadillac, runnin' fine as wine.

DAISY

You ought not to be driving anything, the way you see.

HOKE

How you know the way I see, less you lookin' outta my eyes?

DAISY

Hoke?

HOKE

Yassum?

DAISY

You're my best friend.

HOKE

Come on, Miz Daisy. You jes...

DAISY

No. Really. You are. You are.

She takes his hand.

HOKE

Yassum.

He stands by her chair holding her hand.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / DAISY'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

The blinds are up. Sun streams into the room. The bureau drawers are open. Clothes from the closet are piled on the bed. There is a large cardboard carton half full of things.

Florine comes out of Daisy's closet. She wears what she considers work clothes. Vanderbilt-type jeans and a crisp cotton shirt. She is probably in her early 60's and she shouldn't be wearing clothes like this, but she definitely still has her figure. Her age mostly shows in the amount of makeup she must resort to and her hair which seems to grow brighter and more false as she goes along. At the moment she is carrying Daisy's old fur neck piece on a hanger. She puts it on and looks in the mirror. It is old and scruffy and out of fashion. She laughs at her image and tosses it into the cardboard box.

INT. CAR - DAY - NOVEMBER, 1973

Hoke, 85 years old, is seated in the passenger seat of a car. We do not see the driver. Hoke's glasses have gotten thicker, close to Coke bottle depth now. He is wearing an overcoat over his suit. He does not look happy. We see that the car is traveling down a suburban street.

The car slows down as it approaches Daisy's house.

EXT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE FRONT YARD - DAY - HOKE'S POV

A gray, fall day. A large wooden "FOR SALE" sign is stuck in the lawn close to the street. Over it has been plastered a "SOLD" sign.

ON HOKE in the passenger seat. He winces, almost invisibly.

ON THE CAR, a modest, early seventies two-door, turns up Daisy's driveway. It is driven by a well-dressed BLACK WOMAN in her 30's.

The car comes to a stop. A late model Mercedes Benz is parked in the garage.

The woman pats Hoke's hand. He gets out of the car. The woman looks concerned, but Hoke shoos her away and goes in the back door.

INT. DAISY'S HOUSE / THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

The room is almost empty. Most of the furniture is gone. A couple of moving cartons are in the center of the room, containing objects wrapped in newspaper. The pictures have been taken down, but we can see where they were because the wallpaper has aged around them.

Boolie, 65 now, is checking one of the cartons. He looks up as Hoke comes through the hall. Hoke walks with a shuffling gait.

HOKE

Mornin' Mist' Werthan.

BOOLIE

Well, hey Hoke! Good to see you!
You didn't drive yourself out here?

HOKE

Nawsuh. I doan drive no mo'. My
granddaughter run me out.

BOOLIE

My Lord! Is she old enough to drive?

HOKE
Michele thirty-seven. Teach biology
at Spellman College.

BOOLIE
I never knew that.

HOKE
Yassuh.

BOOLIE
I've taken most of what I want out of
the house. Is there anything you'd
like before the Goodwill comes?

HOKE
My place full to bustin' now.

BOOLIE
It feels funny to sell the house
while Mama's still alive.

HOKE
I 'gree.

BOOLIE
But she hasn't even been inside the
door for two years now.

HOKE
Don' get me in it.

BOOLIE
I'm not going to say anything to her
about it.

HOKE
You right there.

BOOLIE
I suppose you don't get out to see
Mama very much.

HOKE
Nossuh, I doan. It hard -- not
drivin'. Dat place ain' on no bus
line. I goes in a taxicab sometime.

BOOLIE
I'm sure she appreciates it.

HOKE
Some days she better than others.
Who ain't?

BOOLIE

Well, we'd better get on out there.
I guess you have a turkey dinner to
get to and so do I. Why don't we
call your granddaughter and tell her
I'll run you home.

HOKE

Now, thass mighty nice of you, Mist'
Werthan.

Boolie takes Hoke's arm as they head for the back door.

INT. BOOLIE'S MERCEDES - DAY

Traveling on a modern expressway. Boolie driving, Hoke in the
passenger seat.

BOOLIE

By the way, Hoke. Your check is
going to keep coming every week --
as long as you're there to get it.

HOKE

I 'preciate that, Mist' Werthan.

BOOLIE

You can rest easy about it.

EXT. PEACHTREE WOODS EXTENDED CARE FACILITY - DAY

A modern, impersonal, but well-kept structure -- mostly steel
and glass, eight or ten stories high. The parking lot is
fairly full. Boolie's Mercedes pulls into a space. Boolie
and Hoke emerge. They walk towards the front door, Boolie
holding Hoke's arm.

INT. PEACHTREE WOODS / THIRD FLOOR - DAY

A brightly lit, well-kept facility, as these places go, but,
despite the Thanksgiving decorations, a fairly impersonal
atmosphere. We can see the Central Nurse's Station and
corridors shooting off from it.

Down the corridors are various elderly people in motorized
wheelchairs, walking with walkers, and, in a few cases,
without any assistance. We SEE a VISITOR'S ROOM and a few
family clusters making Thanksgiving visits. The atmosphere is
brisk, hospitably at its best.

INT. DAISY'S ROOM - DAY

A large, one-bedded room with a large glass window. Through the window is a pleasant view of a young piney woods and a red clay bank. The room consists of a hospital bed, a hospital bureau, and a couple of chairs. There are several houseplants on the window sill, the only personal touch in the room.

Daisy emerges from the bathroom wearing a neat housecoat. She is ninety-seven years old. She is fragile now, walking with a walker. Her hair is neatly fixed and her face composed. She makes her way slowly to the chair by the window. When she is almost there, we HEAR a KNOCK at the door. She does not answer, but continues toward the chair.

Boolie peers through the door and enters the room. Hoke follows.

BOOLIE

Happy Thanksgiving, Mama. Look who I brought.

She looks toward Hoke. Boolie helps her into her chair.

HOKE

Mornin' Miz Daisy.

She nods.

HOKE (CONT'D)

You keepin' yoseff busy?

No response.

BOOLIE

She certainly is. She goes to jewelry making -- how many times a week is it, Mama? She makes all kinds of things. Pins and bracelets. She's a regular Tiffanys.

HOKE

Ain't that something?

Daisy sits in her chair seeming far away.

BOOLIE

Hoe, you know I thought of you the other morning on the Expressway. I saw an Avondale milk truck.

HOKE

You doan' say.

BOOLIE

A big monster of a thing, must've had sixteen wheels. I wonder how you'd have liked driving that around.

DAISY

(suddenly)

Hoke came to see me, not you.

HOKE

This one of her good days.

BOOLIE

Florine says to wish you a happy Thanksgiving. She's in Washington, you know.

(no response)

You remember, Mama. She's a Republican National Committee Woman now.

DAISY

Good God!

Hoke laughs, Boolie grins.

DAISY (CONT'D)

Boolie!

BOOLIE

What is it, Mama?

DAISY

Go charm the nurses.

BOOLIE

(to Hoke)

She wants you all to herself. You're a doodle, Mama.

He leaves the room. Daisy dozes for a minute in her chair. Then she looks at Hoke.

DAISY

Boolie payin' you still?

HOKE

Every week.

DAISY

How much?

HOKE

That between me an' him, Miz Daisy.

DAISY

Highway robbery!

She closes her eyes again. Then opens them.

DAISY (CONT'D)

How are you?

HOKE

Doin' the bes' I can.

DAISY

Me too.

HOKE

Well, thass all there is to it,
den.

She nods, smiles. He notices an untouched slice of pumpkin pie on her bedside table.

HOKE

Looka here. You ain' eat yo
Thanksgiving pie.

She tries to pick up her fork. He gently takes the plate and the fork from her.

HOKE (CONT'D)

Lemme hep you wid it.

He cuts a small piece of pie and carefully feeds it to her. She is delighted. It tastes good. He feeds her another. And another.

THE END