

1

2

SECOND STRIKE OF LIGHTNING: ROMANCE

3

Announcer

4

BB—

Brycey—8 years old. Burning desire to get his folks back together.

5

6

Bryce—GREGG

in 1946, he's 26. Married at 18, divorced at 22. Big guy, Irish temper. Enjoyed fighting other men with his fists.

7

8

9

Lorene—MARY

in 1946 she's 30. Married to Bryce at 22. 4'11", petite. Always worked in beauty shops since a teenager. Throws plates when angry.

10

11

12

Esther*—

Bryce's mother. Resented him from birth, and never had a good thing to say about him, within the family.

13

14

15

Pop Jackson/Announcer

Bryce's dad. A gentle soul, dominated by Esther.

16

17

Roy*—

driver of the carpool at Lake City Ammo.

18

Dottie—MELINDA

in the carpool

19

Darlene*—JOY

beautician friend of Lorene's

20

Chuck*—

in the carpool

21

Boss--

Shift boss at Lake City ammo

22

Helen --

in 1943, she's 33 (Bryce is 23)Worked at the music store; from San Francisco. The Marshalls are old family in SF—cultured

23

24

25

Lois--

Helen's chum

26

Minister—PAT M

27

1 MUSIC WE'LL MEET AGAIN

2 SFX PHONE RING/RING/RING

3 SFX PHONE PICKUP

4 **BB(FILTER)** Hello, Mommy!

5 **LORENE** Brycey! How are you, son?

6 **DARLENE** (OFF) Who is it, Jackie? Tell him we're goin'
7 bowling.

8 **LORENE (LAUGHING)** It's my son, Darlene.

9 **DARLENE** (OFF) You never know these days. Tell him he
10 can come along, too.

11 **LORENE** Would you like to go bowling with us?

12 **BB (F)(SUSPICIOUS)** Who's us?

13 **LORENE** Just Darlene and me.

14 **BB (F)** Naw. There's someone here with me. I was gonna
15 ask if you'd come over for supper next Saturday.

16 **LORENE (SORRY)** I'm sorry, honey. I'm going out that night.

17 **BB (F)(SUSPICIOUS)** With who?

18 **LORENE (RELUCTANT)** Oh, I'm having dinner with Joe
19 Timberlakes. And we MIGHT go out dancing
20 afterwards.

21 **BB (F)** Joe Timberlakes? Who's he?

22 **LORENE** Bryce Jackson—you know who Joe is! I promised
23 him I'd go.

24 **BB (f) (disappointed)** I know. You're always saying a promise is a
25 promise.

26 **LORENE (TEASING)** Why, Brycey, are you jealous? (FONDLY) Silly kid.
27 Can't it wait until I come out on Sunday?

28 **BB (F)** That might be too late.

29 **LORENE** Too late for what?

30 **BB (INNOCENT)** Oh, nothin'.

31 **LORENE (LAUGHING)** I always come out on Sunday

32 **BB** Momene always likes having you come over.

33

1 **LORENE (IRONIC)** Particularly if I fix her hair. That's always the rub
2 with being a beautician. I can't get together with
3 my mother-in-law without it becoming a busman's
4 holiday. I'm always in hot water, one way or
5 another.

6 **MUSIC BRIDGE**

7 **POP JACKSON** American Radio Theater presents an unusual
8 romance: We call it "Second Strike of Lightning".
9 Written by Joy Jackson, it's based on true events.
10 World War II made a lot of changes in a lot of
11 lives. This is the story of one of them. And I
12 should know, since it happened in my family. We
13 return to 1946...

14 **MUSIC OUT**

15 **SFX** **PHONE HANG-UP**

16 **BRYCE** By the sour look on your face, she didn't fall for it.

17 **BB** Aw, Gee whiz, Daddy...she's going out that night.
18 Dinner and dancing.

19 **BRYCE** Dancing, huh? With Joe Timberlakes, so I hear.
20 Lahrene didn't used to do that. Interesting.

21 **BB** I didn't tell her you were here.

22 **BRYCE** Well, I didn't think it'd be that easy. In fact, I'm
23 not even sure it's a good idea.

24 **BB** Can you be here on Sunday?

25 **POP** That's when she normally comes over.

26 **ESTHER (CATTILY)** Lorene's turned into quite a dancer, son.

27 **POP** And she's gotten prettier than ever.

28 **BB** Cuts a mean rug.

29 **ESTHER (PUTTING IN A KNIFE)** She's having too much fun to think
30 about the likes of you or her son. Out every night
31 with a different man.

32 **BRYCE** Doesn't sound like the Lahrene I know.

33 **POP** And as sweet a gal you'll never find. How you ever
34 let her slip through your fingers...

35 **ESTHER** 'Course I never understood why she married you
36 in the first place, Bryce. I always thought she was
37 brighter than that.

1 **BRYCE** Mom, I thought you liked her.

2 **ESTHER** Oh, I do. We're great friends. I just don't think she
3 should ruin her life getting back with you. Once
4 was bad enough. Well, I've got to go do the dishes.
5 Brycey-Billy, you come help me.

6 **SFX: FOOTSTEPS GOING AWAY**

7 **BB (NOT ENTHUSED)** Yeah.

8 **BRYCE** Well, it's about time I start back to base. I'll
9 wangle another pass for next weekend.

10 **BB (STRICKEN)** You gotta go?

11 **BRYCE** Sorry, son. The Army still owns my soul. Tell ya
12 what. I'll try to get a pass for Friday, and maybe
13 we could surprise her with a dinner at her place.

14 **BB** But I can't cook!

15 **BRYCE (LAUGHING)** Oh, I can. I peel a good spud as well—I've had a
16 lot of practice with that.

17 **POP** Do you think that's wise, son? You hurt her pretty
18 bad when you left. Don't you think you should just
19 leave her alone?

20 **BRYCE** Pop, it's been bothering me a lot. When I stopped
21 on my way to Florida a couple of months ago, I
22 caught a glimpse of her. And...it just about ripped
23 my heart out.

24 **POP** I bet our young squire here caused that to
25 happen, didn't you?

26 **BB** Yep! She was bowling. We just "happened" to stop
27 in the bowling alley for a hamburger.

28 **BRYCE** Just looking at her put a knife into me. At what
29 I'd thrown away. And I realized that I'd made a
30 big, big mistake.

31 **POP** You sure did. But son, you can't go back.

32 **BRYCE** No, I know that. **(PASSIONATE FIRE)** But there
33 might be a future. I have to find out. I gotta find
34 out if there's a second chance for happiness. Pop,
35 she won't leave my dreams alone.

36 **POP** What happened with that gal you married in
37 Frisco?

1 **BRYCE (DISGUST)** Oh, Her...You know she turned out to be a lot like
2 Mom?

3 **POP (AMUSED)** That bad?

4 **BRYCE** Pop, I don't know how you stand it.

5 **POP** Stand what?

6 **BRYCE** The complaining, the belittling, the fights...

7 **POP (WITH A TWINKLE)** Well, the vows said for better or for worse. It
8 was pretty good in the beginning, and still has its
9 moments.

10 **BRYCE** Well, Helen couldn't come close to what I lost with
11 Lahrene. But I didn't know it at the time.

12 **POP** Lorene's pretty special. A gal like that only comes
13 along once in a lifetime.

14 **BRYCE** And I want her back. I want this hole in my heart
15 to be filled.

16 **POP** You mean you finally learned that you can't run
17 from your troubles? I've been waiting a long time
18 to hear that.

19 **BRYCE** It took me a while to figure out. They come back
20 and nip you in the butt.

21 **POP** You'll have to prove to her you've had a change of
22 heart. She won't be easy to convince this time.

23 **BRYCE** She wasn't all that easy the last time, but I gotta
24 try, Pop. I gotta try!

25 **BB** You'll come back next weekend? For sure?

26 **BRYCE** Where's your confidence in your ol' dad? I better
27 get on the road, before the weather gets much
28 worse. See ya then, kiddo.

29 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS. DOOR OPEN,

30 **SFX** CRASH OF THUNDER/LIGHTING

31 **SFX** DOOR CLOSE

32 **SOUND** RAIN IN BACKGROUND LOW, UNDER

33 **SFX:** FOOTSTEPS ON LINOLEUM

34 **ESTHER (CALLING)** Brycey! **(MUTTERING)** Where has that boy got
35 himself off to now. **(CALLING)** Brycey! Bryce-
36 William! You answer me, boy!

1 **POP** Esther, he's not in here.

2 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS STOP

3 **ESTHER** The way that boy disappears! I have a devil of a
4 time getting him to do a lick of work.

5 **POP** Esther, do you always have to yell at the boy? He
6 might be easier...

7 **ESTHER (VICIOUS** cuts him off)

8 And that son of mine! Dumping a sniveling little
9 kid on his poor mother.

10 **POP** Honey... If you dislike the boy so much, why don't
11 you have him live with his mother?

12 **ESTHER** Now what would Lorene do with him? She's got a
13 beauty shop to run—got no time to raise a boy.

14 **POP** But she said...

15 **ESTHER (PROUDLY)** I got saddled with him when that son of mine
16 skedaddled. Brycey was given to me—I'm gonna
17 keep him.

18 **POP** But there's tears in her eyes when she leaves.

19 **ESTHER** That's just your imagination. Brycey would just
20 interfere with her dancing.

21 **POP** Esther, that's not true.

22 **ESTHER** She's having the time of her life, without being
23 shackled with a kid.

24 **POP** Honey...

25 **ESTHER** Are you jealous?

26 **POP** Me? Good grief.

27 **ESTHER (SMUG)** She's way too smart to be hooked up with that
28 worthless son of mine. She's learned her lesson.
29 (FADING) I guess I'll have to dry the dishes
30 myself.

31 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS LEAVING

32 **POP** She's gone now, son. Come on out from under that
33 table.

34 **BB** Okay. (EFFORT AS HE MOVES FROM UNDER
35 THE TABLE) Pop, why couldn't they get back
36 together?

1 **POP** Frankly I think it'd be a grand idea. Your mother
2 was the best thing that ever happened to your
3 dad.

4 **BB (VOWING TO HIMSELF)** I'll make them get back together. I will!
5 Somehow, I will!

6 **POP** And I'll help. But we can't let your grandmother
7 know. It'll be our secret.

8 **BB** Oh boy! Shake hands on it?

9 **POP** You bet. Now make yourself scarce, before she
10 comes back.

11 **MUSIC** REMEMBER PEARL HARBOR up and under

12 **POP** As I remember it, my son Bryce eloped with
13 Lorene in 1938. They were happy, even if the rest
14 of us weren't and had a child. Lorene worked in a
15 beauty shop, and Bryce worked in a record store.
16 But Bryce was pretty young, and he had straying
17 eyes. The trouble started back in 1942...

18 **SFX** DISHES FOR BREAKFAST

19 **LORENE** Turn off the radio, Brycey.

20 **BB** But it's a good tune!

21 **LORENE** Not for breakfast.

22 **SFX** CLICK OF RADIO DIAL (MUSIC out)

23 **LORENE** Brycey, eat your cereal.

24 **BB** Aw, Mommy, I'm not hungry.

25 **LORENE** More coffee, honey?

26 **BRYCE** Maybe just a little to warm it up.

27 **SFX** POURING COFFEE

28 **LORENE** You'll be hungry in two minutes, young man, so
29 you might as well start now.

30 **BRYCE** Or do we have to chew it for you?

31 **BB** I can do it myself.

32 **LORENE** Honey, you certainly were noisy last night. You
33 must have fallen asleep eventually.

34 **BRYCE** Sure, why wouldn't I?

35 **LORENE** You kept calling out.

1 **BRYCE (WORRIED)** What did I say?
2 **LORENE (LAUGHING)**“Helen, I love you! I love you!” Anyone I know?
3 **BRYCE (AGGRESSIVE)** No—no. It must have been a nightmare.
4 **LORENE** Helen who?
5 **BRYCE** There’s dozens of girls named Helen.
6 **LORENE** Do I know this one?
7 **BRYCE** Even one of the girls at work is named Helen.
8 **LORENE** I saw you a couple of days ago at Palmroses.
9 There was a girl in the car you called Helen.
10 **BRYCE (AGGRESSIVE)** Just your imagination. You’ve got Helen on
11 the brain. What were you doing out?
12 **LORENE** The beauty shop needed some supplies.
13 **SFX** CUP PUT ON SAUCER ON THE TABLE
14 **BRYCE (IN A HURRY)** Look at the time! Listen, I gotta go.
15 **LORENE** But you don’t go to work until 4.
16 **BRYCE** I got something I have to do this morning.
17 **BB** Daddy, you promised to take me to the zoo today.
18 **BRYCE** Sorry, son, maybe tomorrow.
19 **LORENE** Oh, look at the time. The day’s starting with a
20 permanent wave appointment. See you for lunch?
21 **BRYCE** Sure, I’ll be there.
22 **MUSIC** BRIDGE SHOO-SHOO BABY
23 **SOUND** BEAUTY SHOP SOUNDS (DRIER & SCISSORS)
24 **SFX** DOOR OPENS, WITH SHOP/TINKLY BELL,
25 FOOTSTEPS
26 **DARLENE (off, calling)** Be with you in just a minute.
27 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS
28 **DARLENE** (on mic) Now, what can I do for you ladies?
29 **HELEN** I have an appointment with Ethel. Lois’s just
30 keeping me company.
31 **DARLENE** Let me look in the book. Let’s see...12:00, she’s got
32 a Helen Marshall. That you?
33 **HELEN** Yeah, no relation to the General.

1 **DARLENE (NOT AMUSED)** Really. Say, Ethel's running behind. Would
2 it be okay if someone else did your shampoo and
3 set?

4 **HELEN** No problem. I've only got an hour for lunch.

5 **DARLENE** (calling) Jackie! You have time to take care of a
6 shampoo and set?

7 **HELEN (ADDING)** Oh, and a facial. You can do that in an hour, right?

8 **LORENE** Sure, Darlene.

9 **HELEN** Lois, you stay out here. Hold my purse.

10 **LOIS** Sure thing, cutie. Don't let her drown ya. Do you
11 mind if I sit in this chair?

12 **DARLENE** Go ahead, but you'll have to leave when my
13 appointment comes in.

14 **LOIS** Thanks. I'll just turn on the radio and wait.

15 **MUSIC** **VIC AND SADE**

16 **SOUND** **SQUEAK OF LEATHER CHAIR**

17 **LORENE** You want a standard set or do you want the
18 pageboy look?

19 **HELEN** Standard would be fine.

20 **LORENE** Darlene, do you another packet of pins?

21 **SFX** **DRAWER BEING PULLED OUT, RUMMAGE,**
22 **DRAWER SHUT**

23 **DARLENE** Sure, doll. Here they are.

24 **SFX** **PACKET BEING THROWN AND CAUGHT.**

25 **LOIS** Helen, I haven't seen you around much. You must
26 have a new beau.

27 **HELEN** Do I! He's got kisses to die for.

28 **LORENE (TO SELF)** Another Helen. They're everywhere.

29 **LOIS** Tell me more! Where did you find such a catch?

30 **HELEN** New guy at the music store, in accounting. Works
31 the swing-shift. Tall, six foot one, handsome, and
32 (LEERING) twenty-two!

33 **LOIS** Twenty-two! Are't you robbing the cradle? What's
34 he doing out of the Army?

1 HELEN (LAUGHING) He's got flat feet! Can you believe that'd keep you
2 out of the fight? Everything, and I mean
3 everything else works real well.

4 LOIS So, what's he look like?

5 HELEN I told you!

6 LOIS Yeah, tall, handsome...Two eyes, a nose and oh,
7 that mouth.

8 HELEN Square jawed, piercing dark blue eyes, sandy
9 brown hair. The straightest nose you've ever seen.

10 LOIS This hunk of man have a name?

11 HELEN It's very Anglo-Saxon.

12 LOIS (Giggling) What, Axelrod?

13 HELEN Oh, you! But he goes by his middle name...Bryce.
14 Owww! Watch it with that bobby-pin, sister! That
15 hurt.

16 LORENE (TIGHT-LIPPED) Sorry. It slipped.

17 HELEN He told me he'd be coming by this shop around
18 noon today. I thought I'd surprise him.

19 LOIS Hmm. Here comes a likely candidate. Tall,
20 handsome, and oh-la-la.

21 SFX DOOR OPEN, BELL TINKLE, DOOR CLOSE

22 BRYCE(SPOTS HELEN AND HIS WIFE)(SOTTO VOCE) Uh-oh. Bad
23 news. There's Helen..and she's with Lahrene!
24 Think it'd be a good idea to be scarce.

25 SFX DOOR OPEN, TINKLE BELL, DOOR CLOSE

26 LOIS Hey, no fair. He spotted us, and went back out
27 again.

28 HELEN (DISAPPOINTED) Oh, shoot! I was hoping he'd have lunch
29 with us.

30 LORENE (HOLDING TOGETHER) That's the last pin.

31 HELEN Thank God. I've felt every one of the last half-
32 dozen you put in. You're the roughest beautician
33 I've ever had!

34 LORENE (TIGHTLIPPED) Time to go under the dryer with you.

1 LOIS Helen, I'll just dash across to the drugstore for a
2 soda while you dry. Maybe I'll see him over
3 there.

4 HELEN Look, Lois, I saw him first!

5 LORENE (OFF) Oh, no. Can this be THAT Helen?

6

7 SFX DRYER MOTOR; FOOTSTEPS

8 LORENE (ON EDGE, CALLING, OFF MIC) Darlene, can I speak with
9 you?

10 DARLENE Sure, Jackie. Be right back, honey.

11 SFX FOOTSTEPS

12 LORENE (ANXIOUS) Darlene! That girl I'm working on—I think she
13 was talking about Bryce. My Bryce!

14 DARLENE Oh, honey, how can that be?

15 LORENE I think she came in to make trouble.

16 DARLENE Looks like she did a good job at that. I'm so sorry.
17 Do you want me to take over?

18 LORENE No, I can do it. You've got a customer coming.

19 DARLENE Then pull yourself together, kiddo. Remember--
20 you're a professional!

21 LORENE Right. When all I want to do is pull her hair out!
22 Okay, but you'll need to buy me a drink
23 afterwards.

24 DARLENE (LAUGHING) I promise. Go play nice now.

25 LORENE Are you sure I can't scratch her eyes out?

26 DARLENE (AMUSED) You'd have to charge her for a cut-rate facial!
27 Now, now...

28 MUSIC FIGHTING MUSIC/STORMY

29 SFX DISHES

30 LORENE Brycey, I'm not going to tell you again. Eat your
31 breakfast!

32 BRYCE What's the matter, honey? You sound a little out of
33 sorts.

34 LORENE Where were you last night, Bryce?

35 BRYCE (AGGRESSIVELY DEFENSIVE) I was working late.

1 **LORENE** I thought you were going to pick me up at the
2 movies, when you got off work.

3 **BRYCE** I couldn't.

4 **LORENE** You couldn't? Why not?

5 **BRYCE** It didn't work out.

6 **LORENE** I had to walk home. Broke a heel off. And got
7 blisters.

8 **SFX** THUMP OF DISH ON TABLE

9 **BRYCE (IN A HURRY)** I'll make it up to you, but right now I gotta go.

10 **LORENE** Where are you going this morning?

11 **BRYCE** I got a meeting.

12 **BB** I thought you were going to take me to the zoo.

13 **BRYCE** Maybe tomorrow.

14 **BB** But...Daddy!

15 **BRYCE** I'm late for my meeting now.

16 **LORENE** Is that secretary part of that meeting?

17 **BRYCE (AGGRESSIVE)** What if she is?

18 **LORENE** I saw her yesterday, and I saw how you run when
19 you saw us together.

20 **BRYCE (DESPERATE)** I gotta go. I forgot something at work.

21 **LORENE** Yeah, you forgot you were married! How could
22 you!

23 **BRYCE** Lahrene! Nothing happened.

24 **SFX** PLATE SMASHING AGAINST WALL

25 **BB (SCARED)** Mommy!

26 **LORENE** I'll just BET nothing happened!

27 **SFX** PLATE SMASHING AGAINST WALL

28 **BRYCE** Lahrene! Get ahold of yourself.

29 **LORENE** I got plenty of plates to go! Two-timing son of a ...

30 **SFX** PLATE SMASHING AGAINST WALL

31 **BB** Mommy! You almost hit Daddy!

32 **BRYCE** Honey! Put down that plate!

33 **BB** Better run, Daddy!

1 **SFX** DOOR OPENING, SLAMMING SHUT PLATE
2 SHATTERING
3 **LORENE** (WAILS) Oh, Bryce!
4 **MUSIC** I'll Never Smile again
5 **SFX** DOOR CLOSE
6 **LORENE (MOANING)** Oh, my god. Oh, god.
7 **DARLENE** What's the matter, honey?
8 **LORENE** Darlene, I just went home for lunch. You know I
9 had a fight with Bryce this morning.
10 **DARLENE** Yeah, you told me about it three times.
11 **LORENE** I told him I wasn't coming back. So when I went
12 home for lunch, everything's gone!
13 **DARLENE (STAGGERED)** Gone? You can't be serious.
14 **LORENE** Every stick of furniture, every dish that I hadn't
15 broken, and my husband. All of our clothes.
16 Everything.
17 **DARLENE** What about your kid?
18 **LORENE** He's gone too. Darlene, I.. don't know what I'm
19 gonna do.
20 **DARLENE** Oh, honey, I'm sorry.
21 **LORENE** But why'd he take Brycey? Why did he take my
22 son?
23 **DARLENE (SOOTHING)** Why, I bet he took the kid over to his
24 mother's.
25 **LORENE** Gee, do you think so?
26 **DARLENE** Sure. Didn't you do that as a rule?
27 **LORENE** Oh, I'm just sick about this.
28 **DARLENE** Jackie, is there somethin' I can do?
29 **LORENE** Can you spell me for a while? I need...
30 **DARLENE (KNOWING)** You'd like to check with your mother-in-
31 law?
32 **LORENE** Yes, just to make sure.
33 **DARLENE** You bet.
34 **LORENE** There's another thing that worries me.

1 **DARLENE** What's that, doll?

2 **LORENE** I don't think I can face another go round with that
3 **Helen. She's bound to come back and rub my face**
4 **in it.**

5 **DARLENE** Well, maybe a change of scene would be a good
6 **idea. Somewhere you wouldn't be seeing Helen**
7 **Marshall.**

8 **LORENE** You mean going somewhere else? What would that
9 **solve? It'd just be another beauty shop.**

10 **DARLENE** I had somethin' else in mind.

11 **LORENE** But beauty work is all I know.

12 **DARLENE** I hear Lake City Ammunition Company is hiring
13 **women. And I'm pretty sure Miss nose-in-the-air**
14 **Marshall would never turn in an honest day's**
15 **work.**

16 **LORENE** Does it pay pretty good? I've got a kid to support.
17 **Assuming Esther has him.**

18 **DARLENE** Yep, way better than what you're getting now.

19 **LORENE** Do you think so?

20 **DARLENE** Doll, you need an absolute change. No more
21 **dealing with snitty women.**

22 **LORENE** Sounds better and better. But it'll leave you short-
23 **handed.**

24 **DARLENE** Jackie, we'll get by. You need to do what you need
25 **to do.**

26 **LORENE** But I don't really want to leave here.

27 **DARLENE** Just think about this--All you'll have to do is
28 **please your boss—and he'll be a male.**

29 **LORENE (BRIGHT)** Uncle Sam needs me! I'll do it.

30 **MUSIC** CALIFORNIA HERE I COME or REMEMBER
31 PEARL HARBOR

32 **SOUND** TRAIN under

33 **BRYCE** Oh, Helen! I've got you snug on the train, going
34 **west, going west, going west.**

35 **HELEN** Bryce, It might take quite a fire to get you lit.
36 **But when you get going, you really plunge ahead.**

1 BRYCE You're worth the candle.
2 HELEN But anything to have you to myself.
3 BRYCE I'm all yours. Happy, honey?
4 HELEN You bet I am. I've been stuck in that drink-water
5 town of Kansas City for too long. Thank God I'm
6 going home to the sights and sounds of San
7 Francisco.
8 BRYCE Never been there. You think I'll like it?
9 HELEN You'll really like my family. The Marshalls have
10 been in San Francisco for decades, and we know
11 everybody. We have a box at the Opera. Mama is
12 swell. (GRINS) Oh, and it never snows there.
13 BRYCE Sounds like heaven. Well, I got nothing left to go
14 back for. My family didn't like me much before my
15 marriage. They'll hate me now.
16 HELEN You never said why.
17 BRYCE This is gonna sound awful.
18 HELEN (TEASING) That's not possible.
19 BRYCE You asked for it. I think it's my Mom.
20 HELEN Your mother? That can't be.
21 BRYCE I was never able to please her. Never.
22 HELEN That's silly.
23 BRYCE My aunt one time said that Mom resented me for
24 making her grow up.
25 HELEN Well, how old was your mother when she had you?
26 BRYCE Oh, 26.
27 HELEN Surely that's old enough to be grown up.
28 BRYCE But she got married at 16, and Pop didn't want to
29 have kids.
30 HELEN (AMUSED) Obviously someone slipped up.
31 BRYCE That's a low blow!
32 HELEN Surely you have brothers or sisters?
33 BRYCE She had my sister, Lolabelle, four years after I
34 popped out.
35 HELEN Didn't that take the pressure off you?

1 BRYCE Yeah it did. Then she flat-out ignored me. My
2 mother doted on Lolabelle.

3 HELEN Poor baby...

4 BRYCE But then... Belle died..

5 HELEN She died! When did that happen?

6 BRYCE She was just twelve. I was 16.

7 HELEN How did it happen?

8 BRYCE She was fine at school that day, came home and
9 just...died. Meningetis, they said.

10 HELEN How awful!!

11 BRYCE That wasn't all.

12 HELEN You mean there's more?

13 BRYCE How'd you like to hear your mother hiss at you, "I
14 wish it'd been you!"

15 HELEN Oh, no! I can't believe your mother would say that.

16 BRYCE Well, that's how it sounded. I think she actually
17 said "Why'd it have to be my daughter."

18 HELEN I'd be out of my mind with grief. She must have
19 been too.

20 BRYCE It was worse after that. I couldn't do nothing right
21 in her eyes. Or do anything but just sit in a room

22 HELEN Probably afraid of loosing you too

23 BRYCE She wouldn't even let me go out and play baseball.

24 HELEN Honey, just worried about you getting hurt.

25 BRYCE Uh-huh. Then explain to me why she poisoned the
26 whole family against me? My mother can be so
27 sweet to her friends or even total strangers, but
28 that's not what I get to see.

29 HELEN You got me on that one. Dear, you're in good
30 hands now. It's a shame I can't go on to Hawaii
31 with you.

32 BRYCE They wouldn't let me in the army, so I took this
33 construction job.

34 HELEN Did it have to be in Hawaii? You could have just
35 stopped at San Francisco. And stayed with me.

1 BRYCE You hadn't asked me before.
2 HELEN What are you going to be constructing there?
3 BRYCE (whisper) Secret stuff, but I think they're underground oil
4 tanks.
5 HELEN You be careful! I'll be with my family in San
6 Francisco, and we can write.
7 BRYCE I'll write every day.
8 HELEN When you come back from Hawaii, we'll get
9 married.
10 BRYCE Aren't you jumping the gun a little?
11 HELEN When you're my age, you can't afford to wait for
12 the right moment.
13 BRYCE Come on, you're not that much older than me.
14 HELEN (TEASING) Care to guess, dear?
15 BRYCE (LEER) You're not older where it counts.
16 HELEN Boy, what a tongue on ya!
17 BRYCE (LEER) That's not all it can do!
18 HELEN Bryce, we're in public! Show some respect to your
19 elders!
20 BRYCE Ten years?
21 HELEN You looked at my passport!
22 BRYCE (LEER) No, but I've looked at everything else.
23 HELEN Surely it wasn't my age that drew you my way.
24 BRYCE Oh, Helen! You're tall, and bright, and so refined.
25 HELEN I'm glad someone appreciates that fact.
26 BRYCE And I don't have to stoop to kiss you.
27 HELEN Bryce! Not here on the train!
28 MUSIC PRAISE THE LORD AND PASS THE AMMUNITION
29 POP Lorene wasn't sitting still at home, crying her
30 eyes out. Instead she followed Darlene's
31 suggestion, and got hired at Lake City
32 Ammunition. She was too busy and tired for tears.
33 SOUND CAR HORN BEEP BEEP
34 SFX DOOR SLAM

1 **LORENE (OFF)** I'm coming! I'm coming.
2 **SFX** RUNNING FOOTSTEPS
3 **ROY** You must be Lorene Jackson.
4 **LORENE** Yeah, that's me. But my friends call me Jackie.
5 **SFX** CAR DOOR OPEN, CLOSE, SPEEDS UP; UNDER
6 **LORENE** I'm not used to catching a carpool.
7 **BIZ** AD-LIBS AS EACH IS INTRODUCED
8 **ROY** Well, that's Chuck, Dottie, Mackie is the one
9 sleeping in the corner, and Mary Sue is squeezed
10 into the other side.
11 **CHUCK** We're all on C shift. Not A or B but stupendous C!
12 **DOTTIE** Together through thin and thick!
13 **ROY** Jackie, I'll pick you up at this time till the end of
14 the week but starting on Monday, it'll be just after
15 3 pm.
16 **CHUCK** Flexible, that's us!
17 **LORENE** Why the change?
18 **ROY** Each shift is rotated every two weeks.
19 **DOTTIE** So it's 2 weeks on swing shift—that's from 4 to
20 midnight...
21 **ROY** and then it's 2 weeks on graveyard.
22 **DOTTIE** Yeah, that's the toughest. Midnight to 8 am.
23 **CHUCK** As we go merrily rolling along, along...
24 **LORENE** Boy, that's complicated.
25 **CHUCK** Oh, you get used to it.
26 **DOTTIE** Just hand over your ration book to good old Roy.
27 That way he has enough points to run this jalopy.
28 **ROY** Did you get your fingerprints worked out?
29 **CHUCK** What was that?
30 **LORENE (CHUCKLE)** When I was hired, last week, they needed to get
31 my fingerprints.
32 **CHUCK** Yeah—all of us did that.
33 **LORENE** Well, I didn't have any.
34 **CHUCK** How can that be?

1 **LORENE** I am, or rather I was, a beautician. Shampooing
2 all that hair wore my fingerprints off.

3 **ROY** Oh-ho! We'll just call you our gun-moll.

4 **LORENE** They grow back!

5 **BIZ** LAUGHTER

6 **DOTTIE** Is your guy in the Army? Is that why you're
7 working here?

8 **LORENE** Nope. My "guy" is in San Francisco, shacked up
9 with another woman.

10 **CHUCK** Divorce?

11 **LORENE** Would you stay married to someone who did that?
12 I'm foot-loose and free. My son is staying with my
13 mother-in-law.

14 **CHUCK (SEXY)** Jackie, I'd be pleased to teach you how to dance.
15 After work, that is.

16 **ROY** Just remember you're married, Chuckie.

17 **CHUCK** Aw, Roy—ya didn't have to mention that!

18 **DOTTIE** I tell ya, if Chuckie here can teach a klutz like me
19 to dance the two-step, he can teach anyone.

20 **LORENE** I just might take you up on that. Anything to
21 avoid staying home thinking about what went
22 wrong.

23 **ROY** Stick with us, kiddo, and you'll come out of your
24 shell. We've got things to teach.

25 **LORENE** And I can see I've got things to learn.

26 **CHUCK** That's it, doll! We'll have fun. Just wait and see.

27

28 **MUSIC BRIDGE—AMMO THEME**

29 **EFX** **FACTORY NOISES**

30 **POP** Lake Hills Ammunition was a whole different
31 world from the beauty shop. Inside the plant,
32 women in dungarees, their heads covered with
33 scarfs, stood beside long lines of conveyor belts.
34 And over everything was the incredible racket of
35 the rattling shell-cases.

1 DOTTIE Jackie, you're on my team. We're looking for any
2 flaws in the casings of the bullets.

3 LORENE Like chips or bulges?

4 DOTTIE Yeah, anything out of the normal. The best way is
5 to grab a handful, give them a quick glance, but
6 rub your fingers over the edges.

7 LORENE But isn't that dangerous? These are live bullets,
8 with gunpowder inside them!

9 DOTTIE Just as long as you avoid hitting the end of them,
10 they're safe.

11 LORENE And after that they're put into a box?

12 DOTTIE The boys load them onto the carts, and roll them
13 over to that fenced in area.

14 LORENE What's over there?

15 DOTTIE The U. S. Government. When they accept the
16 boxes, it's out of our hands and Lake City gets
17 paid. And the ammo goes off to war.

18 LORENE What's it take to be assigned over there?

19 DOTTIE You don't look that ambitious! Play your cards
20 right, and be in the right place at the right time.

21 LORENE I'm not sure how I'm going to deal with working at
22 night.

23 DOTTIE One thing we could do—when we take the evening
24 break, we could catch a catnap.

25 LORENE But the breaks are only ten minutes.

26 DOTTIE You'd be surprised how long that can be when you
27 need a rest.

28 LORENE Where'd you do that? This is a factory, not a hotel.

29 DOTTIE Oh, the ladies' lounge's got a cot. You're as short
30 as I am—we could curl up on opposite ends.

31 LORENE Suppose someone comes in?

32 DOTTIE I've heard some girls have the cleaning staff guard
33 them.

34 LORENE What if we oversleep?

1 **DOTTIE** We'll get someone else to wake us up. It works just
2 swell. Just as long as you don't show up for work
3 in your pajamas!

4 **LORENE(LAUGHING)** And curlers!

5 **EFX** **FACTORY NOISE OUT**

6

7 **MUSIC** **HAWAIIAN**

8 **POP** Meanwhile, Helen and Bryce were writing letters
9 to each other, which made for interesting reading
10 trying to figure out what the censors left in.

11 **HELEN (READING LETTER FROM BRYCE)**

12 "Dear Helen: Interesting work, building [blank].
13 Far cry from accounting. It's 85 degrees on the
14 surface, and about 75 [blank]. The other day, I
15 slipped and almost fell [blank] feet. Caught myself
16 against a rail at the last minute. Sliced a chunk
17 out of my leg.

18 **SFX** **RUSTLE OF LETTER**

19 **BRYCE (READING LETTER FROM HELEN)**

20 Dear Bryce. When you get back to [blank], we can
21 get married, and I'll follow you to your next post.
22 I'm actually working in a [blank] gas station,
23 pumping gas and counting out ration points
24 before I open the pumps. You should see me in
25 slacks. When you get here, we'll have the best
26 time, going to concerts and dances. You'll just love
27 the Opera. Counting the days."

28

29 **SFX** **CRINKLE OF PAPER**

30 **MUSIC: HAWAIIAN**

31 **HELEN** "Dear Helen: Just got another induction notice
32 from the [blank], so I've been trying to make
33 arrangements to go home. It seems that my flat
34 feet won't be keeping me out of the [blank] this
35 time. Beats me why the [blank] felt I couldn't fly
36 because of my flat feet, when every plane I flew
37 didn't care."

1 **BRYCE** “Dear Bryce. Counting the days. I’ve been saving
2 up for a special time then you into town. I’ll meet
3 you at the docks. I’ll be the one bouncing up and
4 down, clutching onto my hat.”

5 **HELEN** Well, at least he’s coming home, even if he’s going
6 in to the army! (CALLING) Mama!

7 **MUSIC** BRIDGE PASS THE AMMUNITION SOUND
8 CAR MOTOR UNDER

9 **POP** You can’t carpool to work, day after day, without
10 becoming fast friends. They shared poetry on
11 their way to work, and articles gathered from
12 newspapers and books. Shared their laughter and
13 their tears. It was bittersweet when C shift was
14 split up a year and a half later.

15

16 **CAR UNDER**

17 **ROY** Jacki, I’ve got something for you. Chuck, dig that
18 envelope out of the glove box.

19 **SFX** GLOVE BOX OPENING, CRINKLE OF ENVELOP

20 **LORENE** Oh, Roy. How sweet. What is it?

21 **CHUCK** Well, open it up, doll. Open it up.

22 **SOUND** ENVELOPE BEING OPENED

23 **LORENE (PAUSE/CUE)** Gee. That’s a great poem. (CHOKING UP)
24 That really means a lot.

25 **CHUCK (LAUGHING)** Gee, Roy, when’re you gonna write a poem for
26 me?

27 **ROY** When you look like Jackie does, knothed!

28 **DOTTIE** Hey, Jackie! You plan to get married again?

29 **LORENE** There’s a small problem with all the men being in the
30 service, Dottie. And besides, I have a little problem.

31 **CHUCK** Your son, you mean?

32 **LORENE** No, he’s not a problem. It’s just that I like the name of
33 Jackson too much. I’ll have to marry someone with
34 that name.

35 **DOTTIE** Like the boss?

36 **LORENE** Please! He’s the age of my father, and besides, he’s
37 married.

1 **DOTTIE** That wouldn't have to stop you. It hasn't stopped him
2 before.

3 **LORENE** I couldn't break up someone else's marriage!

4 **CHUCK** They did it to you!

5 **LORENE** But that doesn't make it right.

6 **ROY** Do unto others before they do unto you.

7 **LORENE (IRONIC)** I may need to think about going back to beauty
8 work.

9 **ROY** What brought that on?

10 **LORENE** The boss told me that after the war, the men are
11 going to come back and take all OUR jobs. At least
12 in the beauty shop, I can't be replaced by a man
13 with less skill.

14 **CHUCK** It'll have to wait until after the war is finished.
15 Which doesn't look like it's going to do any time
16 soon.

17 **LORENE** Ya know, they're splitting the shift up.

18 **ROY** That's because there isn't enough personnel to fill
19 out 3 shifts anymore. With so many men getting
20 drafted for the army.

21 **CHUCK** You gals just don't have the strength needed for
22 some jobs.

23 **LORENE** Wanna bet? What jobs?

24 **CHUCK** I wanna watch Little Bit here push around those
25 300 pound carts full of ammo.

26 **DOTTIE** That's pretty cheesy. I thought you knew better.

27 **LORENE** So I wrote a poem about our shift. Wanna hear it?

28 **ROY** Coming from you, I'll bet it's pretty good.

29 **CHUCK (PLEADING)** Jackie, read it to us? Pleeeeeease?

30 **LORENE (LAUGHING)** Okay, okay. It's not much.
31 "Twas nearing dawn, and cold as could be
32 The last graveyard, the last shift of old "C".
33 And I wanted to boast—at least give a toast
34 To the shift that's the best of the three."
35 **CHUCK** Whoo-hooo!

1 **DOTTIE** Hush! I want to hear this!

2 **LORENE (embarrassed)** Well, there's a lot more. But let me skip to
3 the end.

4 "Though we still can't help but regret the demise
5 Of the shift that was always healthy and wise.
6 We'll join the others to bring nearer the day
7 Of victory and peace to the U S of A."

8 **MUSIC PLAYOFF (PASS THE AMMUNITION)**

9 **ACT II**

10 **MUSIC** **WE'LL MEET AGAIN**

11 **POP** Kansas City, 1946. Lorene bought Ethel's beauty
12 shop on V-J day in 1945 and renamed it Jackie
13 Jackson's Beauty Shop. Or rather she tried to buy
14 it that day. She didn't count on the banks being
15 closed. The streets of Kansas City were awash
16 with excited people celebrating the end of the
17 war. She came home that day with her lipstick
18 smudged, and aching from all of the hugs.

19 **MUSIC OUT**

20 **SFX** **WASHING UP**

21 **LORENE** Boy! Was that a long day.

22 **DARLENE** What a madhouse! Everyone had to have their
23 hair done for tonight.

24 **LORENE** It's that Bush family wedding. Never saw such a
25 huge family.

26 **DARLENE** I think we probably saw half the town trail
27 through here tonight.

28 **LORENE** At least that's over. Are you going dancing or
29 bowling tonight? I know you're not going to the
30 wedding.

31 **DARLENE** Thank God for small favors. Think I'll go home
32 and soak my dogs in Epson salts.

33 **LORENE** See you on Monday, then.

1 **DARLENE** How about you?
2 **LORENE** I'm going to have a light dinner and hit the sack
3 early. G'night.
4 **DARLENE** G'night.
5 **SFX** DOOR WITH SHOP/TINKLY BELL CLOSSES
6 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPENS, FOOTSTEPS, DOOR
7 CLOSSES
8 **BB** SURPRISE!
9 **LORENE (SURPRISED)** Brycey! What are you doing here?
10 **BB** Bought you some dinner, Mommy!
11 **LORENE** All by yourself? (CALLS) Esther?
12 **SFX** DOOR OPEN/CLOSE
13 **BRYCE** Hello, Lahrene.
14 **LORENE (STUNNED)** Br...Bryce. This is ... a surprise.
15 **BRYCE** Scared of being alone with me?
16 **LORENE** Not on your life. You don't frighten me. I ...I
17 ...have my boy for protection.
18 **BB** We brought dinner! Some weird stuff, but Daddy
19 says it's good to eat. Arti—arti—
20 **BRYCE** Artichokes.
21 **LORENE** Never heard of them.
22 **BRYCE** They're a relative of the thistle.
23 **LORENE** And they're supposed to be edible? Sure it's not
24 hemlock?
25 **BRYCE** Never cooked a hemlock in my life.
26 **LORENE** Okay, how do you cook it?
27 **BRYCE** In a pressure cooker for about 15 minutes, and
28 then use each leaf as a scoop into this sauce. Then
29 you eat the fleshy end of the leaf.
30 **LORENE (INTERESTED INSPITE OF HERSELF)** What's the sauce
31 made of?
32 **BRYCE** Mayonnaise, a little sugar, and lemon juice.
33 **BB** And Daddy brought some steak with him from the
34 base. Real steak.

1 BRYCE Brycey wanted to go to a movie, and we thought
2 you'd like to come along.

3 LORENE We'll see.

4 BRYCE Would you like to sit down, madam? Young man,
5 pull out a chair for the lady of the house.

6 BB (CHUCKING) If madam would... (CRACKS UP)

7 SFX CHAIRS PULLED OUT, DISHES

8 LORENE I...I didn't expect to see you here.

9 BRYCE I wrote and told you I'd be coming to town.

10 LORENE Yes, but I didn't think...Oh, that kid!

11 BRYCE It's not his fault. But we didn't think you'd come if
12 I asked.

13 LORENE And you'd be right.

14 BRYCE But since you're here, we can talk. You're looking
15 good, Lahrene.

16 LORENE You're looking...thin. Still in Khaki?

17 BRYCE (BELLY LAUGH) You can't fatten up on Army chow.

18 LORENE What are you doing here?

19 BRYCE (TWINKLE) Just in town for some dinner. (LEER) And some
20 dessert.

21 LORENE Now, Bryce...umm... How come you're still in the
22 service? The war ended six months ago.

23 BRYCE Well, they took their own sweet time drafting me--
24 stands to reason they won't let me go. Still won't
25 let me fly.

26 BB (PROUDLY) They keep guys who can do more than just fire a
27 gun.

28 LORENE (Dreamy) I remember you taking me up flying...(COMING
29 BACK TO EARTH) You were in what—the
30 quartermaster corps?

31 BRYCE GQ now. Just finished closing a base in Florida,
32 and I'm down in Oklahoma, starting to close one
33 there. This is the fourth one I've done.

34 SFX DISHES, FOOTSTEPS

35 BRYCE I wanted to thank you for the candy at Christmas.

1 **LORENE** Your mother had to sweet-talk me into doing that.
2 I didn't say it was from me.

3 **BRYCE** I could tell it was your fudge. Delicious as always.

4 **LORENE** I just couldn't let Esther down. We've been pretty
5 good friends since the...

6 **BRYCE** Since the divorce? Lahrene, you don't know how
7 sorry...

8 **LORENE (QUICKLY, CUTTIN HIM OFF)** Since she's been taking care of
9 Brycey.

10 **BRYCE** I'm so sorry. I wish...

11 **LORENE (RATTLING ON)** I don't know how I would have managed
12 trying to do a job and raise my son without my
13 mother-in-law's help.

14 **BRYCE (FRUSTRATED)** Lorene, I was a heel when I left like that! I was
15 only a kid myself...

16 **LORENE** You acted like you were a man, when we got
17 married.

18 **BRYCE** I was 18 then, for cryin' out loud.

19 **LORENE** At 22, you had some responsibilities, like a wife
20 and son.

21 **BRYCE** Yeah, but...

22 **LORENE** Running off with your secretary wasn't supposed
23 to be part of it.

24 **BRYCE** I was really screwed up. I didn't love her, not like
25 I love you.

26 **LORENE** Musta seemed like it, since you divorced me and
27 married her.

28 **BRYCE** I was wrong. I can't tell you how wrong. There
29 was never another person like you.

30 **LORENE** Oh, sure. At least when you got married to her, I
31 could stop crying.

32 **BRYCE** You cried? You didn't say anything about that.

33 **LORENE** It took me a year to get over you, MISTER. You're
34 out of my system. (SOFTENING) But—gee—it's
35 awful nice to see you.

36 **BRYCE** I'm not over you.

1 **LORENE (sad)** It's too late, Jack. I'm not the girl you married,
2 and I'm not going back there again. I can only go
3 forward.

4 **BRYCE** Look at me, Lahrene.

5 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS

6 **BB (GASP)** Mommy, you stuck your tongue out at Daddy!
7 **LORENE (EMBARRASSED)** You weren't supposed to see that.

8 **BRYCE** Prove you're over me, by going dancing with me
9 tomorrow night.

10 **LORENE** You're out of your mind. I don't want to go
11 dancing with you. I already have a date.

12 **BRYCE** How do you know if I'm a good dancer or not?
13 Break it—for me.

14 **LORENE** I don't care how good a dancer you are—I don't
15 wanna do that with you. And I don't break dates.

16 **BRYCE** I hear you cut a fine figure on the dance floor. I'd
17 like to see that.

18 **LORENE** I'm not available to satisfy your curiosity.

19 **BB** Mommy, you love to dance. Dance with Daddy!
20 **LORENE** Not on your life.

21 **BRYCE** Afraid, Lahrene? We could have a try-out right
22 now...

23 **LORENE** Not in front of witnesses.

24 **BRYCE (HOPEFUL)** Oh, you'll dance with me if we're alone?
25 **LORENE** That's n—not what I meant!

26 **BRYCE (PERSUADING)** Lawrence Welk is playing at the Playmore
27 tomorrow.

28 **LORENE** Lawrence Welk? But he plays in Chicago. (SIGH)
29 He's one of my favorites...

30 **BRYCE (TEMPTING)** He's here in Kansas City this weekend and ...I've...
31 got... tickets.

32 **LORENE (WEAKENING)** You're SO sure of yourself. Lawrence Welk,
33 huh? I'd love to go, but...

34 **BRYCE** And I promise to hold you at arm's length.

1 **LORENE (RELUCTANT)** Well...All right—but you promise to keep
2 those hands to yourself.

3 **BRYCE (GRIN)** I promise to watch myself. We always used to have
4 fun together...

5 **BB** Oh, boy! Oh, boy! Call him right now, Mommy.

6 **LORENE (DREAMY)** Call who?

7 **BB** The guy you got a date with. Wasn't his name Joe?

8 **LORENE** I'll have to call from the beauty shop.

9 **BB** Do it right now!

10 **LORENE** Who do you think you are, Blanche Bickerson?
11 Okay, okay, I'm going.

12 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE

13 **BB** How're we doing, Daddy?

14 **BRYCE** Looks promising, son. Keep your fingers crossed.

15 **BB** They're all crossed. And my toes too.

16 **BRYCE** Must make walking kinda difficult.

17 **SFX** DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE, FOOTSTEPS

18 **LORENE** Okay, I talked Joe into going out on a different
19 night. I really don't like to do that. A promise is a
20 promise.

21 **BRYCE** I'll make it up to you, honey.

22 **LORENE** I'm not your honey.

23 **BB** What movie are we gonna see tonight? It'll be just
24 like old times.

25 **BRYCE (LEER)** Like old times...

26 **LORENE (CONCERNED)** Now, wait just a minute. I'm not that
27 gullible anymore.

28 **BRYCE** Old times... like when we were a family. Come on,
29 you can't disappoint our son.

30 **LORENE** Only if you promise to behave yourself.

31 **BRYCE (MOCKING)** Lahrene—in a public place? In front of our kid?
32 What do you take me for?

33 **LORENE** I wouldn't put anything past you.

34 **BB** I could sit in the middle!

1 **LORENE** **I'm not going.**
2 **BB** **Come on, Mommy.. You promised.**
3 **BRYCE** **I'll be good. (IRONIC) I promise.**
4 **MUSIC BRIDGE**
5 **POP** **But they didn't stay long at the movies.**
6 **SFX: FOOTSTEPS UNDER ON CONCRETE**
7
8 **LORENE (STEAMED)** **I knew going to the pictures with you would be a**
9 **bad idea. I hate it when I'm right.**
10 **BB** **But Mommy, nothing happened.**
11 **BRYCE** **Slow down, Lahrene. Brycey's got short legs.**
12 **LORENE** **Slow down nothing. First that young man promised to sit**
13 **between us...**
14 **BB** **But Mommy that was the only way we could save you a seat.**
15 **We had to put it between...**
16 **LORENE** **And then your father couldn't keep his hands to himself.**
17 **BRYCE** **You said you were cold. I was just trying to help.**
18 **LORENE** **You were all over me. I warned you I wasn't going to put up**
19 **with that.**
20 **BRYCE** **But you didn't have to stand up in the middle of the film and**
21 **make a scene.**
22 **BB** **That was swell! I've never been thrown out of a movie**
23 **theater before.**
24 **LORENE** **Yes, that was another first I could have done without.**
25 **BRYCE** **I wanted a more intimate time to say...**
26 **LORENE** **More intimate than a theater full of people?**
27 **BRYCE** **I kept the poem you sent me on my birthday.**
28 **SFX FOOTSTEPS STOP, AND SCUFF.**
29 **LORENE** **But that was years ago! Way back in '43!**
30 **BRYCE** **I've carried it with me all this time.**
31 **LORENE** **Happy now? I'm embarrassed. Thanks a lot.**

1 **SFX** FOOTSTEPS RESUME UNDER.

2 **BRYCE** It was a good poem, Lahrene. It made a big
3 difference to me.

4 **LORENE** Oh, sure. When it was way too late.

5 **BRYCE** I'm...I'm asking forgiveness now.

6 **LORENE** You have a pretty sick way to asking. Insults, lies,
7 turning my son against me, sneaking around...

8 **BRYCE** Brycey, have I been doing all that?

9 **BB** No, Daddy. I don't think so.

10 **LORENE** You men are all alike. Bryce, you're going to take my
11 son back to Esther's, aren't you?

12 **BRYCE** I'm going to take OUR son back. (BRIGHT IDEA)
13 Unless you have something else in mind? We could always stay
14 over...

15 **LORENE** Not in my one-room apartment you don't.

16 **BRYCE** Can I kiss you good night?

17 **LORENE** You can kiss my behind....

18 **BRYCE** That might be fun!

19 **LORENE** Out! Out of my sight and out of my life! (CHANGE OF
20 TONE) Goodnight, Brycey.

21 **BRYCE & BB** Good night honey!

22 **LORENE (THROWING ARMS UP)** Oh, you men!

23 **MUSIC ARTIE SHAW MY HEART STOOD STILL**

24 **POP** Lorene was sure that she was finished with that whole
25 problem. How much nastier could she be? She slept poorly that
26 night, and woke up feeling like she hadn't slept in days. She kept
27 punctuating her thoughts with slamming cupboard doors
28 throughout the day.

29 **LORENE (UPSET)** The nerve of that Bryce Jackson! Thinking
30 he can just waltz back into my life, and smooch his way into my

1 good graces. He can just get back on a train and high-tail it back
2 to that...that...Helen.

3 **SFX** **DOOR BELL, FOLLOWED BY KNOCKING**

4 **LORENE** Now, who could that be?

5 **SFX** **FOOTSTEPS, DOOR OPEN**

6 **LORENE (SURPRISED, GASPS)** Bryce Jackson! Wha..tt are you doing
7 here?

8 **BRYCE (GRIN)** Taking you out to the Playmore. You made a date
9 with me.

10 **LORENE** But...last night...

11 **BRYCE** You still got a date with me. Come on, get gussied
12 up.

13 **LORENE** You know I can't do that with you here! It's only a
14 studio apartment.

15 **BRYCE** There's the bathroom. (SMUG) I can wait.

16 **LORENE** Well, you can wait till you turn blue.

17 **BRYCE (BRIBING)** Lawrence Welk is playing tonight...

18 **LORENE (DREAMY)** Lawrence...Welk....Oh, all right. Give me ten
19 minutes.

20 **BRYCE** The clock's ticking. Ten minutes. (GRIN) If you're
21 not out by then, I'm comin' in!

22 **LORENE** Don't you dare!

23 **BRYCE (LAUGHING)** Better hurry up, Lahrene!

24 **[SCENE at the dance—he's staring]**

25 **MUSIC—ARTIE SHAW DANCING IN THE DARK**

26 **BRYCE** It's so great having you in my arms again.

27 **LORENE** Oh, it feels so nice...

28 **BRYCE** So you enjoy dancing more than having dinner
29 with our son.

30 **LORENE** That's a lie. Who told you that?

31 **BRYCE** It just seemed to me that you refused to come to
32 dinner...

33 **LORENE** Because I had a date. I keep my word and I don't
34 break dates.

1 BRYCE (SMILING) You broke one tonight.
2 LORENE (FLUSTERED) Well, that's...different. If Lawrence Welk
3 wasn't in town...
4 BRYCE (PUSHING) But you HAD a dancing date with ...
5 LORENE (RELUCTANT) Joe. He DOESN'T like Lawrence Welk. He
6 prefers Artie Shaw.
7 BRYCE (CHUCKLING) Artie Shaw, huh. Where's your integrity,
8 Lahrene?
9 LORENE (FIRE) This is just like you—Blow into town and get me
10 immediately in trouble.
11 BRYCE I'm not the one that's neglecting Brycey by going
12 dancing.
13 LORENE (FIRE) Listen, Mister, don't tell me about neglect. If it
14 wasn't for that paper you signed, I'd have gotten
15 him back long ago.
16 BRYCE (NOT FOLLOWING) What paper?
17 LORENE The one you signed, giving Esther full custody of
18 Brycey.
19 BRYCE (SERIOUS) I didn't sign anything.
20 LORENE She says you did.
21 BRYCE Naturally, SHE says. I didn't do it.
22 LORENE Swore in front of a judge.
23 BRYCE (IRONIC) I'm surprised she'd perjure herself that way.
24 LORENE You think she'd lie about that?
25 BRYCE If it would hurt me, absolutely.
26 LORENE But she's your mother!
27 BRYCE (BITTERLY) Doesn't mean that she loves me.
28 LORENE Bryce Jackson! That's an awful thing to say.
29 BRYCE It's true.
30 LORENE She's been real nice to me.
31 BRYCE You think so? She hasn't turned the boy over to
32 you, has she?
33 LORENE No—but I'm sure she's got her reasons.

1 BRYCE I'll say she's got her reasons. (SIGH) Look, Larene,
2 we're not going to agree on this.

3 LORENE I guess not. And I'd appreciate it if you'd stop
4 staring at me.

5 BRYCE You don't like me looking at you?

6 LORENE Yes, but... No.. well, people are starting to notice!

7 BRYCE Well, they should. I'm dancing with the prettiest
8 girl in the room.

9 LORENE Aw, Bryce...

10 BRYCE (SOFT) You dance like a dream.

11 LORENE Thank you. I had some good teachers.

12 BRYCE If I knew you could dance this way, I'd never have
13 left...

14 LORENE I'd say that was your fault, for not teaching me
15 when you had the chance.

16 BRYCE Well, that's something I hope to correct.

17 MUSIC ARTIE SHAW FADE OUT (GOOD NIGHT LADIES)

18 SFX FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL,

19 LORENE Did you have to park in Timbuktoo?

20 BRYCE I couldn't find anything closer than this after I
21 dropped you off at the door. It's just a little
22 further.

23 LORENE I hope so. My feet are killing me.

24 SOUND (at X) CAR DOOR OPEN, SHUT.

25 BRYCE Here we are. (X)If madam would care to take a
26 load off...

27 LORENE Always joking...

28 BRYCE I hope this jalopy will start. Pop said it's gotten
29 tempermental.

30 SOUND TRYING TO START ENGINE.

31 SFX: HISS OF TIRE GOING FLAT.

32 BRYCE (DISGUST) NUTS. Perfect end to an evening—

33 LORENE What is it?

1 BRYCE A flat tire. Well, nothing to do but change it. I'll
2 just get the flashlight from the glove box...

3 LORENE You want me to get it for you?

4 BRYCE No, I'll come around and get it.

5 SFX DOOR OPENS, FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL, DOOR
6 OPENS.

7 BRYCE (SMOOCHING A KISS)

8 LORENE (FLUSTERED) What'd you do that for?

9 BRYCE (GRINNING) I've wanted to do that for days. Now, for that tire..

10 MUSIC THIS CAN'T BE LOVE

11 SOUND CAR PULLING TO A STOP

12 LORENE I thought you were taking me home.

13 BRYCE Lahrene, I...

14 LORENE And you're staring again. Quit running your
15 fingers up and down my arm.

16 BRYCE No one to see us now. You used to like that. Look
17 at me.

18 LORENE All...right.

19 BRYCE I've got to tell you that I'm sorry for walking out
20 on you. And causing both of us so much pain.

21 LORENE You have no idea how much pain.

22 BRYCE Quit interrupting. I want to make things right.
23 For us and for our son. Would you ever
24 consider... marryin' Bryce Jackson? Again?

25 LORENE Not... on your life... No way.

26 BRYCE (NON VERBAL—NUZZLING) Are you sure...

27 LORENE (WEAKENING) Bryce...stop...that...

28 BRYCE Lahrene, I made a huge mistake. I was too young
29 to realize it. But I've learned my lesson.

30 LORENE (WHISPERING) Bryce...stop that...

31 BRYCE Lahrene, I want you so much, I want us to be
32 together. Now and forever.

33 LORENE (WHISPERING) Bryce, I, uhh, can't think with you doing
34 that.

1 **BRYCE** Give me a chance to show you how much I've
2 changed.

3 **LORENE (DON'T STOP)** Bryce, stop that...I'm not sure that I've
4 changed that much.

5 **BRYCE (HUSKY)** I think you're changed...quite...a lot.

6 **LORENE (SIGHING)** And it wouldn't matter anyway. You're married to
7 her...

8 **BRYCE (AMUSED)** Details, just details...

9 **LORENE (FIRE)** Well, it's a pretty important detail to me..

10 **BRYCE** And if I ... do something...about that detail?

11 **LORENE (FIGHTING WITH HERSELF)** I'll... I'll think about it.

12 **BRYCE** Good... Oh, Lahrene... (BREATHY)

13 **LORENE** Bryce (BREATHY)

14 **MUSIC** **I'VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKIN**

15 **MUSIC TRAIN SONG**

16 [scene between Darlene and Lorene before she goes to the train]

17 **LORENE** Darlene, I have to go out for a while.

18 **DARLENE (SMIRKING)** Anyone I know?

19 **LORENE (UNWILLING)** Uh-huh...Bryce is coming in on the train.

20 **DARLENE** Are you sure about this?

21 **LORENE** No, I'm not. In fact my heart is right down there in
22 my boots.

23 **DARLENE** Honey, then why put yourself through this?

24 **LORENE** I can't help it. In spite of everything, I...still love
25 him. He cabled me that he's gotten the divorce.

26 **DARLENE** Well, make sure you see the paper before you get
27 yourself any further in hot water.

28 **LORENE** Or another steamy situation!

29 **DARLENE** Jackie, Do you love him that much?

30 **LORENE** Oh, Darlene, he makes me just melt inside. And
31 Heaven help me, I love looking at him, and
32 hearing his voice.

33 **DARLENE** You got it bad alright.

34 **MUSIC BRIDGE** **DELIRIUM**

1 SOUND DOOR OPEN/CLOSE FOOTSTEPS

2 **BRYCE (CALLING)** Anybody home?

3 **POP** Bryce! I thought you might be coming in today.

4 **LORENE (HESITANT)** Hi, Pop!

5 **POP** And Lorene! Well, well. Honey, Brycey's in the
6 backyard. Why don't you go out and surprise him?

7 **LORENE** Thanks, Pop—I...I guess I'll do that.

8 SFX FOOTSTEPS

9 **POP** I hope this is a good occasion.

10 **BRYCE** Pop, I want to marry Lahrene.

11 **POP** Promise me you're not going to hurt her again,
12 Bryce.

13 **BRYCE** No, sir. Never again. This time it will be to "death
14 do us part".

15 **POP** Your mother's not going to be happy about this. I
16 think I'm going to enjoy that.

17 **BRYCE** Pop, I love Lahrene. And I'll do anything I have to,
18 anything, to make it work right this time. Even..
19 brave my mother.

20 **POP** And you want my blessing?

21 **BRYCE** Well, just that it'll be okay with you.

22 **POP** Son, it's the best news I've ever had.

23 SFX DOOR OPEN AND CLOSE FOOTSTEPS on GRAVEL.

24 SOUND BIRDS UNDER

25 SFX BASEBALL THUMPING INTO GLOVE

26 **LORENE** Brycey, can you stop playing baseball for a
27 minute? I've got something to say.

28 **BB** Oh, hi Mommy! I didn't expect to see you today.

29 **LORENE** I had a change of plans. I wondered...well...would
30 you like to come and live with me?

31 **BB** Would I? But...but I thought...

32 **LORENE (NERVOUS)** I also ...uh..what do you think about your dad
33 and me getting married?

34 SFX BASEBALL OUT

1 BB Oh Mommy. That's wonderful.
2 LORENE I'm still not positive about this...
3 BB Uh-oh, here comes Gramma. She looks mad.
4 SFX FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL
5 ESTHER Lorene, tell me it's not true. Tell me you're not
6 going to marry that worthless son of mine! It
7 can't be true.
8 LORENE It might be. I...I don't know yet.
9 ESTHER You can't mean you plan to do that again! Not
10 Again!
11 LORENE I...can't promise.
12 ESTHER No one in the family wants to see you lower
13 yourself. We all care for you!
14 LORENE (GETTING ANGRY) And don't for Bryce. I understand
15 that very well.
16 ESTHER Didn't you tell me that Joe Timberlakes had
17 proposed to you? Marry him!
18 LORENE But he doesn't make my heart thump in my throat,
19 when I look at him.
20 ESTHER He's a better man than my son!
21 LORENE Are you sure of that? Because I think Bryce is
22 pretty special in his own way.
23 ESTHER I hate to see you destroy yourself again.
24 LORENE But he's your son. Don't you care for his
25 happiness?
26 ESTHER Why should I? He ain't been nothing but a trial to
27 me, since he was born.
28 LORENE He's a better man than you've ever given him
29 credit for. Maybe if you'd appreciate him more...
30 ESTHER I'm begging you, Lorene—don't marry him. Don't
31 be such a dumb bunny! He's just worthless.
32 LORENE (MADE UP HER MIND) I couldn't disagree more.
33 MUSIC— "TIRED BUT HAPPY" UP AND THEN UNDER
34 [scene having the minister marry them—part of the vows—no
35 dissecting the past?]

1 **POP** Three days later, we are standing in front of Mr
2 Lewis, the same minister who married the kids in
3 1938.

4 **MUSIC OUT**

5 **LEWIS** You're here again, Lorene?

6 **LORENE** Yes, Mr. Lewis. But it's with the same man!

7 **LEWIS** Well, that's highly unusual. You didn't want to try
8 your luck with someone else?

9 **BRYCE** Hey, I've had to work hard getting her to come
10 this time. Don't give her any other ideas!

11 **LEWIS** And is this your best man?

12 **POP** No, that would be me. We tossed for it.

13 **LEWIS** Aren't you a little old for that?

14 **BRYCE** You have something against having my old man as
15 my best man? It's taken me years to make friends
16 with him

17 **BB (PROUDLY)** I get to give her away.

18 **LEWIS** Bryce, Lorene...Are you sure it'll take this time?

19 **BRYCE** Yes, sir, we are.

20 **LEWIS** All three of you?

21 **BB** Yes, sir!

22 **POP** All four of us. Don't leave me out.

23 **BB (WHISPERING)** We did it Pop! We did it.

24 **POP (WHISPERING)** Yes, we sure did.

25 **LORENE** I...we think we're different people from those two
26 you hitched in 1938.

27 **BRYCE** Tempered in a fire into...

28 **LORENE** a totally new love.

29 **LEWIS** I'm glad to see that the war changed something
30 for the better. Very well, let's begin.

31 **MUSIC FINISH JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME**

32

