

Columbia Workshop  
SOMETIME EVERY SUMMERTIME

MUSIC. [A Summer theme: slow, lazy, faraway, out at (X).]

(NOTE: Throughout opening sequence, the music enters simultaneously with McFedries' narrations, dissolving at their end. No transitions, no ups. Here and there it becomes ironic, mocking the stated mood.)

McFEDRIES. [Thirty, pleasant, unperceptive.] It was one of those unimportant affairs that you associate with a certain time of your life, a certain season and a certain place. Unimportant, but the kind of thing that sticks in your memory, and whenever something turns up to remind you of that time, and that season, and that place, you remember it. There were three of us that summer: Charlie Hayes and myself, and Clem Waldron. It was a warm-cool August before the war, and all we wanted was two weeks of a good time.

SOUND. [Bow wave in and behind.]

McFEDRIES. Going up to the island on the boat, standing at the rail, Charlie said: (X)

HAYES. [A little older, cheerful, irrepressible.] I want to die. I want to sit in the sun, and sweat, and die. For two weeks, brothers, all I want to do is die.

McFEDRIES. That'll last about one day -- Hey, look at the sloop.

HAYES. Trim.

McFEDRIES. Very.

WALDRON. [Not yet thirty, quiet, solemn.] Why don't we hurry up and get there? I hate boats.

McFEDRIES. Not long now, Clem. That's the island over there. The other side of us. To port.

HAYES. Starboard.

McFEDRIES. All right, starboard -- the bay's just around the corner.

WALDRON. Is it? Good.

HAYES. [Chuckling.] Corner!

McFEDRIES. All right, all right. [Pause.] In a minute, she'll--

SOUND. [Boat whistle.]

McFEDRIES. She did. Let's collect our stuff. Your turn to carry the beer,  
Waldron.

WALDRON. If we're here, I'll carry anything.

HAYES. [Fading.] In half an hour, I will be sitting in the sun on the porch  
of our little cottage, prepared to die.

SOUND. [Fades out with voice.]

MUSIC. [In and behind. Out at (X).]

McFEDRIES. It was that kind of summer, and we were feeling that kind of crazy  
--- the island was one of those little islands about two hours run from  
Vancouver; a resort, a vacation community, alive less than six months  
of the  
year. There were a lot of ordinary summer houses sloping up from a  
pocket  
harbor at the southern end of the island, a lot of ordinary summer  
noises and  
smells, and a lot of unbelievably wonderful summer girls wearing very  
little  
more than their suntans.

The three of us worked in an advertising agency, and it was a pretty  
soft  
routine, but empty and unsatisfactory enough to make it good to get  
away. We  
got three weeks every year -- two in July or August, one at Christmas -  
- and  
Charlie and I had always gone off someplace for those weeks and  
pretended we  
hated the advertising racket, and acted like the foolish bachelors that  
we  
surely were. That summer was Waldron's first vacation since joining the  
agency, and we asked him along because we had lunched and partied  
together a  
few times in town and he was a nice guy and didn't know many people in  
Vancouver. After we had cleaned out the cottage, and had some supper,  
and  
looked the place over -- the stores, wharf, boat houses, hotel, the  
open-air  
dance hall, picnic grounds, nothing changed, only grayer and older by  
one  
winter -- we sat on the porch and smoked.

SOUND. [Night crickets in and behind. At intervals, distant boat  
whistles.]

McfEDRIES. It was about ten o'clock, and fully dark, Charlie said: (X)

HAYES. I liked the cottage we had last year better.

WALDRON. Why? This place's all right.

HAYES. Last year's had screens on the screen-doors.

McfEDRIES. We can fix that. One at the back's the only bad one.

WALDRON. Where are we from the place you had last year?

HAYES. Not far. Around the other side of the bluffs. Cottages here are all the same. Operated by a syndicate. Rent's the same. Dirt's the same...

SOUND. [Women's laughter, off.]

McfEDRIES. Female merriment. That sounds interesting.

HAYES. Next door, is it?

WALDRON. No, the one ahead -- to the left -- the edge of the bluffs. There's three of them. They're alone.

HAYES. How neat. And when did you get this encyclopaedic information, Waldron?

WALDRON. Before supper. When I went out for cigarettes.

McfEDRIES. And you didn't think it would make worthwhile conversation at table?

WALDRON. I forgot about it.

HAYES. Oh. Are they that bad?

WALDRON. I've only seen one of them. She was hanging out washing. We talked for a minute.

HAYES. Domestic tableau. What'd she look like?

McfEDRIES. How old was she?

WALDRON. You wolves. Quite plain, as a matter of fact. But not unattractive. Twenty-five or six, I'd say.

HAYES. What'd you talk about?

WALDRON. The island. The weather. Vacations. Uh -- neighbors.

HAYES. That's more like it. How long've they been here?

WALDRON. They came yesterday.

McFEDRIES. Shall we take our chances?

HAYES. We will. Where's the flashlight? Oh -- here.

WALDRON. Go ahead.

HAYES. Well, what's the matter with you? Sitting there mumping on that pipe.

One of the others might be more--

WALDRON. I came up here to relax, Charlie.

HAYES. Oh, for Pete's sake, Waldron.

WALDRON. Go ahead. Don't let me stop you.

McFEDRIES. You -- you'll co-operate though, won't you, Clem?

WALDRON. Sure, Mac. I'll talk to one of them.

HAYES. That's better. It may not even turn out, you know.

WALDRON. Go ahead.

McFEDRIES. Do your stuff, Charlie. If they don't look-- uh -- intelligent, don't feel badly about coming back alone.

HAYES. [Fading.] You know me, Mac. I'm a trustworthy guy. Get out your prayer rugs.

SOUND. [B.G. fades out with voice.]

MUSIC. [In and behind. Out at (X).]

McFEDRIES. Charlie disappeared in the darkness, and we watched his flashlight swing along the path to the cottage on the bluffs. We heard him knock on their door, and the door opened with a splash of light. Charlie talked and laughed with them for a few minutes, and then we saw them all coming out the front door, and the door closed.

SOUND. [Night crickets, distant boat whistles, in and behind.]

McFEDRIES. It was dark again, and there was only Charlie's flashlight coming along the path, leading the way. (X)

HAYES. [Off.] Hoy! Let's have some light on the porch!

WALDRON. Better light the lamp, Mac.

McFEDRIES. [Excited.] Lamp? Oh, sure. Got a match?

WALDRON. They're on the table there.

SOUND. [Laughter and voices approaching.]

McFEDRIES. Okay. Got 'em.

SOUND. [Rattle of lamp and match struck with:]

McFEDRIES. I hope Charlie wasn't too nasty.

HAYES. [Coming on.] Three lonely men and three lonely women not knowing each other. That sort of thing must be attended to, you know.

SOUND. [Several pairs of feet mounting steps.]

HAYES. Ah! A glow of welcome. Now, let me see if I can get all the names straight. Uh -- Fran. This is Clem Waldron and Mac McFedries. Fran Howard.

BIZ. [Exchange of greeting.]

HAYES. And Helen -- what's your last name again?

HELEN. Rowley.

HAYES. Rowley, that's it. Uh -- Clem Waldron. Helen--

HELEN. We met at supertime. Hello.

WALDRON. Hello. Washing all finished?

HAYES. All right, Waldron. Let me get the formalities over with. Uh -- and Mac McFedries. Helen Rowley.

HELEN. Hello.

McFEDRIES. Call me Mac.

HAYES. And-- uh --where's--?

FRAN. [Giggling.] Mary -- don't hide.

HELEN. Oh, come on, Mary.

HAYES. [Pleasantly.] There you are! Uh -- Mary Thomas -- it is Thomas, isn't it?

FRAN. Mary's kind of shy. She likes to just nod her head.

HAYES. Mary-- uh -- Mac McFedries.

McFEDRIES. Hello, Mary.

HAYES. --and Clem Waldron.

BIZ. [Pause.]

WALDRON. Hello -- Mary.

HAYES. [Aware of the spark.] Uh -- yes, well, let's sit down, shall we? Mac, any refreshment?

BIZ. [Ad lib small talk and laughter.]

SOUND. [Chairs scraping on porch, fading out with voices and crickets.]

MUSIC. [In and behind, out at (X).]

McFEDRIES. Mary was an Italian girl, two generations removed from the Old Land, and the Thomas was for Tomasino, a grandfather's gesture to citizenship in his adopted home. She was slim and dark and quiet, very beautiful and very real. Waldron reacted to her like a hit on the head the moment she stepped out of the shadows into the lamplight on the porch that night. I won't say it was love at first sight, though Waldron always insisted it was exactly that. I think it was just a sharp awareness of a bachelor's loneliness and the sudden shock of finding unexpected beauty as a neighbor in a summer place like the island. Not much more. Mary and Helen were elevator operators in a Vancouver department store, and Fran, the third girl, was a waitress. Helen was only plain according to Clem, and we got along fine. Fran and Charlie hit it off too, getting a kick out of trying to talk each other's language, laughing a lot and enjoying themselves without having very much in common. Both Charlie and I leaned pretty heavily on that easy intimacy that goes with romps on the beach, the shared preparation of meals, and warm summer nights with nothing on your mind but the weight of the stars. At first it looked like a good holiday.

SOUND. [Birds singing, a distant whistle or two, faraway voices, in and behind.]

McFEDRIES. Beginning the next morning, after a long night sitting out on the porch getting to know each other, we talked back and forth as if we

were all  
living in the same cottage, ignoring the 100 yards that separated us.

FRAN. [Far off, at the next cottage: Shouting.] Charlie! You going down  
to  
the beach?

McfEDRIES. It's Fran.

HAYES. [Shouting back.] I'm ready whenever you are. Now?

FRAN. About two minutes.

HAYES. Right.

HELEN. [Same perspective as Fran.] You going down, Mac?

McfEDRIES. [Shouting back.] Sure, Helen.

HAYES. Better get into your trunks.

McfEDRIES. [Shouting.] I'll be just a shake getting changed. We'll pick  
you  
up.

HELEN. Okay.

McfEDRIES. Where's Waldron?

HAYES. Where do you think? He and Mary went down an hour ago.

McfEDRIES. I wondered where-- [Clicks his tongue.] It's going to be  
like  
that, eh?

HAYES. Looks like it. Will you keep me company, Mac, old friend?

McfEDRIES. I'll keep you company.

BIZ. [They chuckle together, fading out.]

SOUND. [Fades out with laughter.]

MUSIC. [In and behind.]

McfEDRIES. Waldron and Mary kept their own hours, had their own meals -  
- at  
the hotel, or a box-lunch at the beach or out in a rented boat, and the  
four  
of us were left to ourselves. We kidded Waldron about it every night,  
and  
Waldron said:

WALDRON. [Flatly.] I'm in love.

McfEDRIES. He said it often, but he said it as if he were trying to  
convince

himself.

WALDRON. I'm in love. I love that girl ...

McFEDRIES. It was embarrassing, even for Charlie and me, who knew him pretty well. And Helen and Fran told us that Mary didn't say anything much about it at night when the girls went to bed; just told them that Waldron had said he was in love with her and gave them no indication whatsoever of her own feelings. All six of us seldom got together, and whenever we saw Waldron and Mary -- at the beach, or the dance, or in a boat, or sitting out on the bluffs at night, talking and smoking -- it was like seeing a couple of strangers. Charlie and I always thought of Waldron's painful words:

WALDRON. I'm in love. I love that girl ...

McFEDRIES. Mary stayed over an extra day and the four of us went back together. But Charlie and I might just as well have been on another boat, for all it mattered. I think Waldron took her out a few times in town, but we didn't hear much about it from him. He was transferred to another office of the agency about a month later, and we weren't really close enough friends to correspond. The whole business was pretty trivial, I guess, but I often remember it whenever I see a girl that looks like Mary -- you know, that olive skin, that exotic thing about pretty girls of the Latin type -- or when I go to a place like the island for a holiday, or just happen to think about people you meet in the summertime. It was one of those things.

MUSIC. [Continues for a few moments, then fades out.]

BIZ. [Pause.]

WALDRON. [Slightly filtered.] Hello -- Mary.

BIZ. [Pause.]

MARY. Clem was tall. Clem was very tall and thin, and he looked at me in a funny way when we were first introduced. "Hello, Mary," he said -- only in a funny way, like he knew me before, or was scared of me or something. It was at a summer camp I went to one year with Helen Rowley and Frannie Howard. We took a cottage at the camp, the three of us, putting all our vacation money together to pay the rent and have enough for food for the two weeks, and



everything.

It was a lovely cottage overlooking the lovely bay at the camp, and the three boys were in another cottage just back of us. Clem, I mean, and his friends. Clem talked to Helen one night while she was hanging washing, and then one of Clem's friends -- I forget his name -- came over later and talked to all of us, and asked us to come and be sociable with our neighbors, and we all went. That was when I met Clem, when we all went over to their place, and he spoke to me in that funny way. We talked on their porch for hours and hours that night, and Clem's friends were really funny telling jokes and asking crazy questions. Clem was very nice to me and talked to me a lot more than he talked to Helen or Frannie, and we had a lovely time. The next day Clem took me to the beach, and out to lunch at the hotel, and then out in a boat he rented for the afternoon, and then to the hotel again for supper. After that, we went for a long walk around the island, and we got cushions and a rug and went and sat on the bluffs a little ways down below the front of our cottage and looked down at the bay and the boats that were always there. It was a lovely evening, and Clem was very nice.

SOUND. [Crickets, distant lap of water, small boat whistles and intermittent night calls and voices far away.]

MARY. Clem was always very nice to me. I can remember almost everything he said.

BIZ. [Pause.]

WALDRON. How old are you, Mary?

MARY. Guess.

WALDRON. I could, but I think I'd be wrong.

MARY. Try.

WALDRON. Oh, I'm sure I'd be wrong.

MARY. Go on. Guess.

WALDRON [After a moment.] Twenty-two [Pause.] Twenty-two? Am I right?

MARY. [Disappointed.] Yes.

WALDRON. Oh, I spoiled it. I had to go and guess it correctly. Did you want me to think you were older?

MARY. No.

WALDRON. Younger?

MARY. No.

WALDRON. Well, what then?

MARY. I guess I just didn't want you to guess right, that's all. It's no fun when somebody guesses right.

WALDRON. I know. Well, I was going to say twenty-three. I almost said twenty-three.

MARY. Did you?

BIZ. [Pause. A youthful voice can be heard shouting in the distance: "Sally! Oh, Sally!"]

WALDRON. You're very, very beautiful, Mary.

MARY. Oh, you.

WALDRON. So brown, so-- Where did you get all that sun?

MARY. Well, that isn't just sun.

WALDRON. [Remembering.] Of course not. I forgot. What's the Thomas for?

MARY. Tomasino.

WALDRON. That's your real name, is it?

MARY. Thomas is my real name now. Tomasino was my great-grandfather's name, at home.

WALDRON. Were you born here?

MARY. Oh yes.

WALDRON. In Vancouver?

MARY. Yes.

WALDRON. Why didn't I ever meet you before?

MARY. [With a self-conscious laugh.] There's a lot of people in

Vancouver. A lot of girls. I bet you know a lot of girls in Vancouver, Clem.

WALDRON. Not many. None at all like you.

MARY. Oh, you.

HELEN. [Far off.] Is that you down there, Mary?

MARY. [Calling back.] Yes.

FRAN. [Far off.] Are you all right?

MARY. Yes.

FRAN. Okay.

BIZ. [Pause.]

MARY. [Embarrassedly.] Helen and Frannie -- always worrying.

WALDRON. How many in your family?

MARY. A lot.

WALDRON. How many?

MARY. Seven.

WALDRON. That's not really many.

MARY. You should hear them.

WALDRON. Brothers? Sisters?

MARY. Five brothers. One sister. So noisy.

WALDRON. Your sister?

MARY. All of them.

WALDRON. Do they tease you much?

MARY. George. George does. And Tina.

WALDRON. Is your sister older or younger than you?

MARY. Oh, younger. I'm the oldest of them all.

WALDRON. Are you? I would have thought you were the youngest.

MARY. Me? Are you kidding?

WALDRON. [Wonderingly.] I would have thought that.

BIZ. [Pause.]

MARY. It's lovely out here. [Pause.] Moon. [Pause.] When I came out on the porch this morning, early, the moon was still out.

WALDRON. Was it?

MARY. How old are you, Clem? How--? Oh, please, please, don't. [Her last word is muted as he kisses her.]

WALDRON... . Mary.

MARY. You shouldn't do that.

WALDRON. Why not?

MARY. I don't know you. I don't know you hardly at all. You shouldn't do that if--

WALDRON. Know me? [Quickly, impatiently.] I'm twenty-nine years old, born in Grand Forks, British Columbia, went to school in Grand Forks, and Vancouver, and the University of -- oh -- a brother and two sisters, work in an advertising-- Six-foot-two-inches tall, 155 pounds, unmarried, unattached, unhappy, and I think you're-- [Close.] Kiss me again.

MARY. Clem, no.

WALDRON. Mary.

MARY. ... Yes. You're bad.

SOUND. [Dissolves.]

MARY. Clem wasn't really bad, even though after a few days he started to look at me more and more in that funny way he looked at me when we were first introduced. I seen other boys look at me like that, and I never liked it, but when Clem looked at me that way, it seemed all right because Clem was such a fine person. He took me everywheres on the island and at the end of a week there wasn't a place left we didn't go to. We just lay on the beach after that, and went to the hotel for lunch, and sat out on the bluffs at night after dancing. Clem told me he loved me one night and asked me if I loved him and I couldn't tell him if I did or not because I didn't know, and when I told Helen and Frannie that Clem said he loved me, they asked me how I felt

and I couldn't tell them either, one way or the other. I just didn't know.  
Summertime fools a girl about love, you know. And besides, I even had to remember to ask Clem how he spelled his last name. W-A-L-D-R-O-N, it was.

SOUND. [Lap and wash -- close, and a distant radio.]

MARY. The second to last night at the camp we went down to the wharf and sat at the end and dropped matches in the water below us until very late.

WALDRON. That must be a radio on one of the boats out there.

MARY. It's lovely.

WALDRON. What don't we dance?

MARY. Dance here?

WALDRON. Why not? [Scrambling to his feet.] Come on -- up you get.

MARY. Oh, Clem -- the matches! And your cigarettes!

WALDRON. [Chuckles.] Never mind.

MARY. The whole package went over! Have you got any more?

WALDRON. It doesn't matter. Come on.

MARY. It's rough on the planks.

WALDRON.. Pick up your feet.

MARY. [Having difficulty.] Oh, Clem, I can't--

WALDRON. Of course you can.

BIZ. [They dance for a moment. Only their breathing.]

WALDRON. [Down.] Sorry, darling. Don't you know that step?

MARY. [Embarrassed.] No, I-- I--

WALDRON. Look. Look down. Watch my feet.

MARY. I--I don't know that one. It's hard to hear the music now, isn't it?

WALDRON. It's the wind.

MARY. Please, Clem. Let's stop. Let's just sit.

WALDRON. All right.

MARY. Give me your hand while I get down--

WALDRON. Watch yourself--

MARY. [Sitting.] There. What are you doing?

WALDRON. Your wonderful hair. Feels like--like ... so soft.

MARY. Oh, you. It's just old hair.

WALDRON. No. [With effort: sitting down.] No. It isn't.

MARY. Careful.

WALDRON. [Relaxing.] I'm all right. Here. Give me your hand. [Pause.] Beautiful hand.

MARY. Dirty. These planks.

WALDRON. A ring would look--look wonderful on that finger.

MARY. [Wide-eyed shock.] Clem! You shouldn't say that!

WALDRON. Say what?

MARY. You shouldn't say that about rings. You shouldn't even say things like that unless you mean it.

WALDRON. I mean it.

MARY. [After a moment.] No.

WALDRON. Yes. I do.

MARY. Clem, please ...

WALDRON. Would you marry me, if I asked you to?

MARY. Oh no, Clem, you mustn't say that.

WALDRON. Why! I-- I -- I'm --

MARY. No. It don't seem right--when--

WALDRON. --When?

MARY. When that's not what you want. That's not what you want, Clem.

WALDRON. I want you.

MARY. Yes. That's not the same.

WALDRON. Mary ...

MARY. [After a long pause.] No, Clem.

WALDRON. All right. [Pause: ruefully.] Wish I had a cigarette.

SOUND. [Dissolves.]

MARY. I stayed over at the camp an extra day -- I had an extra day owing from a day I worked at Christmas -- and went back to the city with Clem and his friends. It was a lovely trip, and Clem made me promise to let him take me out the next night. He had a car, but it was being fixed while he was on his holiday. He wanted to take me home in a taxi from the boat, but I didn't want him to. I didn't want him to come out before I could tell about him to Mama and Papa. I told them about him when I got home, when they asked me about the summer camp and the kind of time I had. Mama was happy but Papa was angry because he always said he had to look at a boy before I went out with him, and I was glad that I didn't say nothing -- like that Clem said he loved me or that he wanted to marry me.

The next night Clem come around for me about eight. I wasn't ready so he talked to Papa and George, and I don't think they got along because when we went out he acted as if he was mad about something. I had on my white suit, just cleaned, and we went dancing but Clem said it was too crowded and he was tired, so we left and went to a show, When he took me home he said something about calling me and we would go dancing or something like that where it wasn't too crowded, but I didn't hear from him again. Helen saw one of Clem's friends on the street one day and she said he told her that Clem had been transferred to some other office. I guess he was too busy when he left to call me or let me know somehow about his going away.

That was four or five years ago, but every year since when I've gone to a camp and met other boys I think of Clem. Even last year, after I was married, when Frank and me had the same cottage as Helen and Frannie and me had that summer, I thought of him. I really think of him quite a lot -- that funny way he looked at me when we were introduced. Frank never looks at me that way.

BIZ. [Pause.]

WALDRON. [Slightly filtered.] Hello -- Mary.

MUSIC. [The summer theme again: The irony more positive now, the mocking echoes more pointed, in and behind. Out at (X).]

WALDRON. She was one of the most beautiful women I've ever known. She wasn't a woman, really -- a girl, a beautiful animal, a wonderful gesture of Nature. She was Italian, Canadian-born, and we met at a summer place, a West Coast island resort I went to one year with McFedries and Hayes when I was in the Vancouver office. I only knew her a little more than two weeks, but sometime every summer since then I've thought of her. In all honesty, I don't know how I felt about her. I think, at first, I was in love with her. At one point, I even considered marrying her. Whatever it was, I wanted her, and it was like a fever. It wasn't normal, it was very foolish and untidy, and I went about it like a schoolboy. I remember overhearing McFedries and Hayes talking about it one night.

SOUND. [Night crickets, in and behind:]

WALDRON. They were out on the porch, and hadn't heard me come in the back door. (X)

[Both voices slightly off.]

McFEDRIES. He says he's in love with her.

HAYES. That could mean any one of a dozen things.

McFEDRIES. Sure. But not the way he says it.

HAYES. [Yawningly.] I don't know why he says it at all. He keeps saying it, that's the thing that confuses me. He keeps insisting on it.

McFEDRIES. That's not like Waldron. He takes 'em or leaves 'em. Oh, politely, yes, but don't we all?

HAYES. She is beautiful, Mac.

McFEDRIES. I'll give you that, sure. But hardly Waldron's type.

HAYES. What do you mean by that?

McFEDRIES. An elevator operator, maybe only a year of high school --



maybe  
not even that.

HAYES. If you say "poor but honest," I'll leave this conversation.

McFEDRIES. [Chuckling.] Okay, okay. But you know what I mean. At least,  
you  
know Waldron.

HAYES. Superficially. But I suppose you're right.

McFEDRIES. I don't know. What is it they say about summer romances?

HAYES. Couldn't tell you.

McFEDRIES. [Fading.] Oh, you could make it up I guess, for all it  
matters.  
Pretty obvious example with Waldron, I think.

SOUND. [Fades out with voice.]

MUSIC. [In and behind, out at (X).]

WALDRON. I was too annoyed to walk in on the conversation. And I  
suppose I  
didn't particularly want them to know I'd been listening. Nobody likes  
that  
kind of thing. That was the night I asked her to marry me. She refused,  
of  
course, and was very embarrassed with my asking. I must have sounded  
pretty  
hollow, now that I think back on it. I felt something big and important  
inside me and I made a mistake about it. I think it was simply a case  
of not  
being aware of that nice difference between love and desire. But she  
knew,  
she knew. Nevertheless, we had an exciting two weeks. Exciting for me,  
anyway. She was a thrilling kind of girl, long and-- When she wasn't in  
her  
bathing suit, she wore bright blouses and slacks. She was one of the  
few  
women I've ever known who looked well in slacks. A lot of women must  
have  
hated her for her loveliness. I think I hated her a little myself --  
she  
wasn't mine. (X)

[A pause.] Then we went back to town, we took the late evening boat  
and the  
moonlight at sea helped to stretch out the last few hours of the  
holiday. It  
was more than a holiday to me, of course. It was another world, and I  
was  
afraid to leave it. She wanted to go home alone, refusing to let me  
take her  
out in a taxi, so I got her address and made arrangements to call for  
her the

following night. It was an address in the far east side of the city,  
and when  
I drove out in my car the next night I had trouble finding it. It was  
a  
narrow two-story house between a confectionery and a metal-work shop.  
It was  
still daylight, no lights on, and if a radio hadn't been going inside  
you  
wouldn't have thought anybody lived there.

SOUND. [A muted radio: "Roll Out the Barrel," and feet on stairs and porch.]

WALDRON. I went loudly up the steps of the low porch to the door,  
trying to  
trample down with my feet the thoughts that were running through my  
head.

SOUND. [Door opens. Radio louder.]

GEORGE. [Sixteen.] How ya?

WALDRON. Good evening. I-- is--?

GEORGE. You Mr. Waldurn?

WALDRON. Yes. Is--?

GEORGE. I'm George. We saw your car pull up. She just shouted down  
that'd  
she'd only be a minute. Come on in.

WALDRON. Uh --thank you.

SOUND. [Door closes.]

GEORGE. In here'll be okay.

SOUND. [Radio louder.]

THOMAS. [Off.] Good evening-- George! Turn down that radio!

GEORGE. [Slightly off.] Sure, Papa.

WALDRON. Are you--? Are you Mr--?

THOMAS. Sit down, Mr. Waldron. Excuse us the supper dishes. Mama took  
the  
children to the movie theatre early.

SOUND. [The radio has been reduced in level.]

GEORGE. [Off.] I seen the picture. It's lousy.

THOMAS. Shut up -- Nice to see you, Mr. Waldron. I don't think she'll  
be so  
long. Girls. You know.

WALDRON. Of course. It's perfectly all right. [Pause.] Lots of time.

THOMAS. What business you in, Mr. Waldron?

WALDRON. [Nervously.] Business? Oh, I--I'm with an advertising agency here.

Everett, Fuller and--

THOMAS. I'm in the grocery business myself. You happen to notice my store down in the next block?

WALDRON. Next door?

THOMAS. No, that's old Woczinski -- I'm down the next block.

WALDRON. No, I didn't notice it. [Pause.] No.

GEORGE. What do you do in the advertising agency business, Mr. Waldurn? Billboards and all like that?

WALDRON. Uh -- yes. Yes. All like that.

GEORGE. Uh-huh. Business good?

WALDRON. Yes. Yes. Pretty good.

THOMAS. We're doing good, too. Oh yes.

SOUND. [Footsteps on stairs.]

GEORGE. Here she is. All got up. [Fading.] All got up to go places. Gee, don't she smell good ...

SOUND. [Fades out with voice.]

MUSIC. [In and behind, growing in intensity.]

WALDRON. This time she was wearing a white cotton suit that had been laundered too often and was too small for her, her hair was done up in a sort of braid wound around her head, and she wasn't the same girl at all. We went dancing and it wasn't any good -- we didn't dance the same way. Then we went to a late movie, and then coffee at a drive-in, and then out to her house. None of it was the same, none of it was any good. I told her I'd phone her, and drove back to my apartment the long way. I got word that I was to be transferred a couple of days later, and I didn't call her. I couldn't. [Pause.] It's very difficult for a man to get over realizing that he's a snob.

MUSIC. [Tightens, and subsides.]

WALDRON. Funny, it was so important, and yet I can't even remember her name.

MUSIC. [Lingers for a few moments, and dies away.]

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