

TOM. I found out what your "drugstores" were.

GATSBY. What about them?

TOM. He and this Wolfsheim bought up a lot of side-street drugstores here and in Chicago and sold grain alcohol over the counter. That's just one of his little stunts. I picked you for a bootlegger the first time I saw you and I wasn't far wrong.

GATSBY. It's Prohibition. Nobody cares. And where do you get your booze from, old sport?

TOM. Stop calling me "OLD SPORT"! *(Tom is on him now, cornering him.)* This drugstore business? It's just small change. *(He shoves Gatsby.)* You've got something on now that everyone's afraid to tell me about. Something to do with Wolfsheim. *(Shoves Gatsby again.)* Something really big. But I'll find out about it. Oh, yeah, I'll find out about it, OLD SPORT, you can bet your ass about that! *(He shoves Gatsby one last time. Gatsby makes a quick, threatening move at Tom. For an instant we see Gatsby for the street tough that he is, dangerous, ready to kill. Tom grabs an ice pick and brandishes it as a weapon.)*

DAISY. Please! Please! I CAN'T STAND THIS ANYMORE! *(Tom has the ice pick at Gatsby's throat. Gatsby holds his ground. Long beat.)*

GATSBY. Are you going to kill me, old sport? *(Daisy screams and runs out. Tom keeps the weapon at Gatsby's throat. Finally, Nick crosses in and bravely holds out his hand. Long standoff. Tom hesitates, then gives Nick the weapon.)* My car keys, please. *(Gatsby and Tom exchange keys.)* If you'll excuse me. *(Gatsby exits after Daisy. Tom grabs the bottle of whiskey.)*

TOM. Want any of this stuff? Jordan? ... Nick? *(No answer.)* Nick?

NICK. What?

TOM. Want any?

NICK. No.

TOM. What the hell's the matter with you? *(Nick looks at the weapon in his hand.)*

NICK. I just realized that today's my birthday ... I'm thirty ... I'm thirty years old. *(Lights shift as Nick becomes isolated in a spot. To audience.)* I was thirty, and before me stretched the menacing road of a new decade. It was seven o'clock when we finally got into the coupe and started to Long Island. Tom talked incessantly, exulting and laughing as if he'd won a football match. Human sympathy has its limits. And beside me, her head on my shoulder, Jordan nestled close ... but I didn't know her anymore. Thirty — the promise of

a decade of loneliness, a thinning list of single men to know, a thinning briefcase of enthusiasm, thinning hair. So we drove on — toward death — through the cooling twilight. *(Wilson's sign and the Valley of Ashes appear. Wilson enters with a suitcase and Myrtle's clothes. Myrtle runs in after him.)*

WILSON. You can fool me, but you can't fool God!

MYRTLE. What are you doin', George?

WILSON. "His wife's man." That's what they say. Think I don't hear that? "His wife's man." No more, Myrtle, no more.

MYRTLE. George, what are you doin' with my clothes?

WILSON. We're leaving. Day after tomorrow. Soon as I sell that car.

MYRTLE. You're crazy! *(He pulls a dog leash from his pocket.)*

WILSON. I found this yesterday. Hidden in the bureau.

MYRTLE. You got no right —

WILSON. Think I'm stupid, Myrtle?

MYRTLE. It's for my sister ... for her dog.

WILSON. Think I'm stupid 'cuz all I own is a GARAGE?!

MYRTLE. No, no, George, I —

WILSON. I got things figured out, Myrtle. I ain't stupid.

MYRTLE. I never said —

WILSON. Comin' back with your face all busted up.

MYRTLE. It ain't right what you're doin'.

WILSON. Somethin's not right, that's for sure.

MYRTLE. Give me back my clothes! You got no RIGHT! *(She grabs for the suitcase. They fight over it, scattering clothes all over the stage. She slaps him hard across the face.)* I hate you. I've hated every minute with you! *(He grabs her.)* WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? BEAT ME? HUH? YOU GOING TO BEAT ME, GEORGE? *(She breaks free and starts stuffing her clothes into the suitcase.)*

WILSON. I'm sorry, Myrtle, I didn't mean ... It's just that —

MYRTLE. SHUT UP SHUT UP SHUT UP! I CAN'T STAND YOUR VOICE. IT'S LIKE A SLUG, A SLUG CRAWLING IN THE DIRT. I SHOULD HAVE LEFT YOU A LONG TIME AGO!

WILSON. Please, Myrtle. Don't leave me! I'm getting the money. Just like I promised. I'm getting the money! *(Sound of a car approaching. Swerving headlights. She sees the car.)*

MYRTLE. He's come back. Oh, my God! He's come back for me! Wait! *(She runs toward the headlights, waving her arms.)*

WILSON. Myrtle!