

BOOLIE. Nobody does. That's why I called.

DAISY. I found some candles. It reminds me of gaslight back on Forsyth Street. Seems like we had ice storms all the time back then.

BOOLIE. I can't come after you because my driveway is a sheet of ice. I'm sure yours is too.

DAISY. I'm all right, Boolie.

BOOLIE. I imagine they're working on the lines now. I'll go listen to my car radio and call you back. Don't go anywhere.

DAISY. Really? I thought I'd take a jog around the neighborhood.

BOOLIE. You're a doodle, Mama.

DAISY. Love to Florine.

BOOLIE. Uh huh. (*Light out on Boolie. Daisy talks to herself.*)

DAISY. Well, I guess that's the biggest lie I'll tell today. (*She tries to read by the candlelight without much success. She hears the door to outside open and close and then footsteps. She stands alarmed.*) Who is it? (*Hoke enters carrying a paper bag and wearing an overcoat and galoshes.*)

HOKE. Mornin' Miz Daisy.

DAISY. Hoke. What in the world?

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

DAISY. (*Touched.*) How sweet of you, Hoke. (*He sips his own coffee.*)

HOKE. We ain' had good coffee 'roun' heah since Idella pass.

DAISY. You're right. I can fix her biscuits and you can fry her chicken, but nobody can make Idella's coffee. I wonder how she did it.

HOKE. I doan' nome. Every time the *Hit Parade* come on TV, it put me in mind of Idella.

DAISY. Yes.

HOKE. Sittin' up in de chair, her daughter say, spry as de flowers in springtime, watchin' the *Hit Parade* like she done ev'ry Sad'dy the Lawd sent and then, durin' the Lucky Strike Extra all of sudden, she belch and she gone.

DAISY. Idella was lucky.

HOKE. Yassum. I 'spec she was. (*He starts to exit.*)

DAISY. Where are you going?

HOKE. Put deseheah 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. Well, I don't know what you can do around here except keep me company.

HOKE. I see can I light us a fire.

DAISY. Eat anything you want out of the ice box. It's all going to spoil anyway.

HOKE. Yassum.

DAISY. And wipe up what you tracked onto my kitchen floor.

HOKE. Now Miz Daisy, what you think I am? A mess? *(This is an old routine between them and not without affection.)*

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

HOKE. All right, then. All right. *(He exits. She sits contented in her chair. The phone rings.)*

DAISY. Hello? *(Light on Boolie.)*

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? Have I got the right number? I never heard you say loving things about Hoke before.

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

BOOLIE. Uh huh.

DAISY. Honestly, Boolie. Are you trying to irritate me in the middle of an ice storm? *(She hangs up the phone. Light out on her. Boolie stands a moment in wonder. Light out on him. In the dark we hear the sounds of horns blaring. A serious traffic jam. When the lights come up, Daisy is in the car, wearing a hat. She is anxious, twisting in her seat, looking out the window. Hoke enters.)* 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!

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