

HARRY. Classical or flamenco?

ELLEN. Flamenco.

HARRY. Me, too. (*Sings a few bars of a flamenco melody. There is no response. A slight pause. Harry points out over audience.*) That's the Empire State Building over there.

ELLEN. (*Without looking, wrapped in her own suffering.*) I know.

HARRY. I'd like to go there sometime.

ELLEN. I wouldn't.

HARRY. You wouldn't?

ELLEN. I wouldn't.

HARRY. You're probably right. (*Takes off tie and puts it back into his pocket, unbuttons collar and jacket, moves back to the bench and sits L. A pause. Harry looks up.*) A star . . . First one. You can hardly see it, it's so weak. "Starlight, starbright, first star I see tonight, wish I may, wish I might . . ." (*To Ellen.*) Make a wish.

ELLEN. I wish . . . I wish I was a lesbian.

HARRY. (*Slowly turns and looks at her.*) You don't mean that.

ELLEN. (*Throws down cigarette and grinds it under her shoe.*) I do. I certainly do. Then I wouldn't have all these demeaning problems. (*Again leans against lamppost.*)

HARRY. You'd have other problems.

ELLEN. Like what?

HARRY. Like picking up girls, for one.

ELLEN. (*Bitterly.*) That would be simple. All I'd have to do is learn how to be a liar and a hypocrite.

HARRY. There's a lot more to it than that. Do you know what you have to pay for a haircut these days?

ELLEN. I'd pay for it. Gladly. Anything but this heartache; anything. (*Puts her hand up and grabs lamppost.*)

HARRY. Look, you don't have to stay if you don't want to. I can tell Milt . . .

ELLEN. I have nothing else to do.

HARRY. The same here. (*Pause. Ellen leans against the lamppost, stares up at the sky, one hand clutching the post and one foot pressed to it. She starts to sing in a deep lugubrious voice, softly at first, almost to herself, but with obvious feeling. She is indifferent to Harry who shifts about on the bench nervously.*)

ELLEN. (*Sings.*)

Love cast its shadow over my heart.

Love changed my life right from the start.

HARRY. (*Uncomfortably.*) I know, Milt told me everything.

ELLEN. (*Sings.*)

I cried it couldn't be,
Then Love laughed back at me.

HARRY. It'll work out all right.

ELLEN. (*Sings.*)

Why did you come?
Why did you stay?

HARRY. You have to be patient with him.

ELLEN. (*Sings, opening her coat.*)

Why did you take me,
Only to play.
Oh, Love. Love. Love. Love.
Look what you've done to me.

HARRY. (*Sbrugging, with a sigh.*) Well . . . Sometimes it happens that way.

ELLEN. (*Wipes a tear from her eye.*) I am sorry. I'm afraid I'm not myself tonight.

HARRY. Don't apologize.

ELLEN. (*Leaves post and looks about.*) It is nice out.

HARRY. Probably rain soon.

ELLEN. (*Moves D. and looks out over audience.*) How far down do you think it is?

HARRY. Far enough.

ELLEN. You know, I'm afraid of water. I can't swim a stroke. But tonight . . . with the moon shining on it, it looks quite beautiful and . . . and almost inviting.

HARRY. You shouldn't talk like that.

ELLEN. Shouldn't I? Harry, what do you think I did with my life? What do you think made me the way I am? You don't have to answer that. When I look back . . . (*Looks out once more.*) It couldn't have worked out very differently. My childhood was impossible, absolutely impossible. My parents separated when I was three. I spent six months with one, six months with the other; they passed me back and forth like an old sack.

HARRY. That was a lot better than I did. (*Rises, moves L.*) My folks left me with my grandparents. I saw them maybe once every four or five years. It was hell, Ellen; believe me, it was hell.

ELLEN. Not as bad as what I went through, Harry. Oh, no.

HARRY. Worse than what you went through, Ellen; lots worse.

ELLEN. You ever live with an alcoholic?