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A COLLECTION OF ORIGINAL WORK

by

Anne E. Daughtridge

Submitted as an Honors Paper  
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Greensboro  
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## A Month of Snows

It's been a month of snows  
And each day comes quieter than before  
As if the land is choking  
On the black smoke that winds from  
Country fires around here.  
Yesterday, when it was nearing supper time,  
I sat by the front window watching  
snow geese rustle together  
Like old corn stalks in a field  
As they paddled in drunken circles  
By the swamp.

Lately the nights seem thick  
As if the soot from neighbors' fires  
Was covering the land worse than the snow.  
And I dream the same dream  
Night after night when it's black  
And I fall asleep before the burned out fire.  
A lonely white bird drifts  
Before me  
And white specks wind in circles  
Behind the lone bird  
Until the dark is blotted by  
Thousands of wings  
Beating the air.

Once, I remember, there was a flash fire  
In the swamp. Rows of trees  
Glowed with white fire  
Until they fell into the mud and  
Only a few stumps rose as dark men  
Keeping watch over the purification  
Of the land  
And the air was filled with black smoke  
everywhere and it seemed like  
Night at mid-day

And I heard the cries of the geese  
As they spiraled above the swamp.  
Thousands of forms climbing  
From the smoke until some  
Fell burning from the sky  
As if they had flown too near  
the sun.

(cont.)

# A Month of Snows (cont.)

It's been a long time  
 Since the geese came  
 And most of the people that  
 remember are gone  
 And I had forgotten how ugly they  
 look as they stretch out across the snow.

In soundless flames,  
 Dried, dead things  
 Spattered the beach  
 Victim or victor of some long-since game  
 That was only a game.

Sea-birds tumbled in arcs  
 Over the tide-  
 Bird-shadow against Wind-shadow  
 Until there was only the sea  
 Mirroring the sea.

Once  
 From some childless child-play,  
 I remember  
 They said there would be another deep wind  
 And blood-witched moon  
 Where the old ships would break  
 The sea at Fall tide.

And then to watch  
 Day after day  
 For the wind and tide  
 That would die into dark-shadows  
 At mid-day---  
 To watch for the phantom ships  
 And sun-bleached pirate crew  
 Facing in endless noon-draw  
 Ships and men buried now  
 In fading pictures above the neat fireplaces  
 Of dead widows,  
 Who bore children  
 Who aged before the same fire  
 That mirrored the same shadow  
 Against the wall  
 Year after year---  
 Not old or young or anything,  
 Just a shadow against the wall.

(cont.)

## Dreams I

In the still, grey hours  
Before the storm,  
Water-caverns burned  
Into shadow---  
As if grass-fires scorched  
The mid-day dusk  
In soundless flames.  
Dried, dead things  
Spattered the beach:  
Victor or victim of some long-since game  
That was only a game.

Sea-birds tumbled in crests  
Over the tide-  
Bird-shadow against wind-shadow  
Until there was only the sea  
Mirroring the sea.

Once  
From some childless child-play,  
I remember  
They said there would be another deep wind  
And blood-witched moon  
Where the old ships would break  
The sea at full tide.

And then to watch  
Day after day  
For the wind and tide  
That would die into dusk-shadows  
At mid-day---  
To watch for the phantom ships  
And sun-bleached pirate crew  
Pacing in endless noon-dusk:  
Ships and men buried now  
In fading pictures above the neat fireplaces  
Of dead widows,  
Who bore children  
Who aged before the same fire  
That mirrored the same shadow  
Against the wall  
Year after year---  
Not old or young or anything,  
Just a shadow against the wall.

(cont.)



Dreams I (cont.)

But now  
The wind meets the dusk  
In shafts of dark,  
And I know the ships will come  
In silent bird-shadows;  
I know the ships will come.

In ash-blonde marks on the dust.

In old women quivered with dream:  
"Find the water-falls of green marshlands  
And lovers who leave their nights with  
river-babies."

In marsh-grass,  
I once found a mid-yellow ditch  
Yeast-filled on hidden graves  
Of no-name people.

# Dreams II New England Park

Summer froze the sky  
 In heat-clouds,  
 And drought-crops burned  
 In ash-talon marks on the dust.

An old woman quivered with dreams:  
 "Find the water-falls of green marshlands  
 And lovers who bathe their thighs with  
 river-berries."

In marsh-grass,  
 I once found a mud-yellow ditch  
 That spilled on hidden graves  
 Of no-name people.

# Late August in a New England Park

(Providence)

There comes a time each summer  
 When the geese fly away  
 To some southern swamp  
 To some place where grasses wind around  
 The marshes in the depth of winter.  
 There comes a time when the wind  
 Blows a different smell from the sea  
 While gulls clamor with the old knowledge  
 Of change.  
 And so, in this sad season,  
 We meet on hills  
 To lie on the grass with our blankets  
 Under us, To blow tunes on reed whistles,  
 To listen to the last park concert.  
 And we move as mourners  
 As we watch the eternal flight of the geese  
 From such seasons.

I hurry out among the city  
 Following the black footfalls  
 Before and behind me, feet draw around me,  
 Beak-like, I hunch before the lay winds,  
 Turning streets with other hunched shapes  
 Box on row of marching troops that halt  
 Near the bus signs.  
 "This one is Warwick, take me to Broad Street.  
 Hurry, you'll be late."  
 The quarter hour chime is weak  
 And buses leave on schedule.  
 Before the final talon-fall,  
 The sky goes farm-like  
 As savings from the beggar's knife,  
 And the wooden clicking of clocks below  
 Echoes the sound  
 Of closing time in Providence.

The City Beggar

(Providence)

The usual five o'clock bells drift  
Over the city and shop-owners  
Draw the shutters close and motion  
To the lingering customers.  
"It's closing time by the clock."

I, too, hurry a drowsy old man  
From my shop as he casually fingers  
The Samurai sword bought from the collection  
Of another drowsy old man.  
"Come, it's closing time by the clock."

Outside, sudden shadows of winter hover  
As wings in flight before the talon-fall  
And I pass the stump legged beggar  
At the north corner and drop a coin  
In the box to receive, in turn,  
The soap carving still edged with  
Shavings from his knife.  
"It's closing time," I mutter,  
Disturbed at his deafness to the bells.

I hurry out among the city  
Following the bleak footfalls  
Before and behind me. Coat drawn around me,  
Beetle-like, I hunch before the icy winds,  
Turning streets with other hunched shapes:  
Row on row of marching troops that halt  
Near the bus signs.  
"This one to Warwick, this one to Broad Street.  
Hurry, you'll be late."  
The quarter hour chime is near  
And buses leave on schedule.

Before the final talon-fall,  
The sky ices form-like  
As carvings from the beggar's knife.  
And the wooden clicking of clocks below  
Echoes the sound  
Of closing time in Providence.

# The Hunt

It is said  
 There was idiocy in the murmurs she heard  
 Blotting the pre-dawn dark,  
 And dark forms bent to the water-troughs  
 In beast-odor stables---  
 Forms swirling in savage motion  
 Or frozen in waxen poses, broken  
 Only by the blood beat.

The morning of the hunt:  
 And the sand and pine wooded land  
 Were clotted by ugly wind shapes.  
 She rode a black horse  
 Drifting through shadow  
 Riding in the hunt as one beast-shape  
 Stalking another

As if a burial procession  
 Moved across the silent land.  
 And squealing dogs spun  
 In long circles  
 As the dark forms of the wood watched  
 the game  
 That lingered in long morning shadows.

And then  
 To hear the rifle shot  
 Spattering the sand-  
 Seeming as stones indifferently tossed  
 In a day wind.

Long nights ago  
 She stared at old hoofs beating into the sand,  
 Monotonous silent hoof sounds against the sand,  
 Shadow poses merging in drifting  
 fading patterns  
 Until they became wooden things  
 Of every night, over over

(cont.)



The Hunt (cont.)

And in the black secret night  
 With the summer heat-winds gutting  
 The land, she hid her breast  
 In pale white gauze,  
 Her breath sighed in wind-ripples  
 As she stroked her husband's thighs  
 With dutiful fingers  
 As some long dead child.

# Lunch-time : Die in Winter

I walked the city  
 streets under the sound  
 of bells tolling  
 the twelfth hour  
 and passed an old pushcart  
 and woman bending over  
 as a stooping bird placing  
 apples neatly to be sold  
 to lunch hour customers.  
 Only a nickel, but I pushed  
 along the corridors of the  
 city and came to the bay  
 where I saw the belly of a gull  
 puffed up from noon-time,  
 flying in long circles above  
 the sound of bells.

And from the long shadows  
 Of every afternoon  
 To reach beside the mirror  
 To find shadow  
 Just from shadow.

Earlier winter nights  
 And the same fall in sleeping shadows  
 Gliding the sound of the wind  
 The heat of the sun-bath  
 Held in water and the wind  
 Liked the mirror's face  
 Of many years  
 and shadows turned back at last.

For each  
 I wake  
 Beside the night-lit street  
 and shaking fingers  
 That wiped around blood  
 From my lips.

Stepmothers Die In Winter

(cont.)

# Stepmothers Die In Winter

Then only  
To remember the snow,  
To hear their drone,  
Not long, not long--

In winter nights  
That smoked with ashes  
Of forgotten fires  
And wind-soot,  
She told me the witches' tale-  
Of skinny fingers  
Brushed against tear-stained ovens.  
I hid behind the covers  
And shivered at her age-drugged whispers.

Grey grasslands  
Of winter  
Hid the forest of gingerbread.  
Buried, they said-  
Stepmothers die in winter.

And from the long shadows  
Of snowy afternoons-  
To hunch beside ice-mirrors,  
To find shadow  
Cast from shadow.

Earlier winter nights  
And the snow fell in deepening mounds  
Clouding the sound of her whispers.  
The heat of the gas-light,  
Held to watch our good-night kiss,  
Licked the burning flesh  
Of many ovens.  
And whispers hovered over my bed.

Too soon  
I woke  
Beside the night-lit fires,  
And shaking fingers  
That wiped burned kisses  
From my lips.

(cont.)

Stepmothers Die In Winter

(cont.)

Then only a shadow  
To remember the snows,  
To hear them drone,  
Not long, not long---  
Stepmothers die in winter.

Dying is a shadow  
Like summer storms that wander near the shore  
Like fogs that bank against the sea-wall stones:  
A gentle falling moment broken only  
By the lightning split against the stone or sea.

Dying is a Shadow

Dying is a shadow  
Like summer storms that wander near the shore  
Like fogs that bank against the sea-wall stones:  
A gentle falling moment broken only  
By the lightning spit against the stone or sea.



## Galilee

It seemed as if Galilee smoldered  
 In smoke-haze  
 Or water-fog in the spring wind.  
 And the old story-teller  
 By the wharf  
 Whispered his stories  
 While I watched the sinking, rippling  
 Of his face in sea-water.

Somewhere,  
 In rain-swollen ports  
 Winter seas heave and fall  
 Under muddy ice-banks;  
 And cries of death  
 Or birth  
 Echo through the grey haze  
 As fishermen watch the clotted wood  
 And waves slosh  
 As if in blood-beat.

Somewhere,  
 Artic storms rip the trawls  
 And frozen sea grasses  
 From ice choked water banks,  
 And new sewn fishing nets  
 Mirror web patterns  
 Against the Galilee fogs.

But now, the old face-shadow blurs  
 Under a wailing gull-shadow.

(cont.)

## Bear Country

It was bear country stretched out for miles  
 Where man killings were legend,  
 Where dark forests swept across pastures  
 Long deserted.  
 Spring rains rutted the soil  
 And ditches were swollen with  
 water sloshing towards the bay.  
 Stooping from the winds  
 Old river-birds circled the inland  
 Waiting for drier months:  
 Their coughing cries echoed from the pastures.

In a far nothern pasture,  
 The aged woman moved from her cabin  
 Towards the place where seven oaks,  
 Planted by the grandfather of her grandfather,  
 once stood, oaks that had spread  
 Towards the heavens  
 Like this Seven Oaks Farm had spread  
 Over the earth  
 Claiming and reclaiming the forests  
 and pasture-lands.  
 She moved towards the two oaks still standing,  
 One dead from lightning,  
 To hang the first wash of spring.  
 Her mother once said it was sunning  
 That made things smell fresh again  
 After winter settled into them.

But the spring sun hung  
 Heavy overhead, and the earth moved  
 dream-like in tremors,  
 Separated, loose in air.  
 Old images of the past reached out  
 And workers once more flung tobacco leaves  
 To the crates, pile after pile,  
 And dark, giggling boys slopped water in buckets  
 For the workers in the fields.  
 "This land is yours"

(cont.)

## Bear Country

(cont.)

Beyond the half-burned tobacco shed,  
 And so, creeping in suspicion to her cabin,  
 The claiming almost finished,  
 She answered the intruding bird cries  
 That by land rights staked in a past generation  
 This land was hers.

And the boy sank into the earth---  
 Spotting his over-washed trousers.

Yesterday,  
 It was yesterday when it happened,  
 When his uncle had used the gun  
 That flashed blue in sunlight---  
 The gun usually sheltered in quiet  
 Behind the wooden cabinet doors---  
 Like a snake stretched  
 Quiet in the shade  
 To strike and move  
 In old stories.

Like summer lightning  
 That woke him from sleep some nights,  
 The sudden, crackling sound  
 Woke him from his afternoon nap.  
 And he had looked at the window  
 And blue streaks burned  
 From the woods in spiraling circles.

The squirrel wasn't really  
 his friend,  
 Old Cyrus, the stableman, comforted him,  
 And told him of men and the hunt and  
 How squirrels fell every day.

And as he had stolen,  
 Not comforted or knowing why,  
 Into the wood-shed to take  
 The squirrel and place him where  
 Cyrus said was best ground,  
 The small wet thing in wet earth,  
 And vowed not to touch the bone,  
 Sometimes, to this ground  
 And not to risk his uncle's  
 Fur dinner on Branches.

## Poem

Beyond the half burned tobacco shed,  
 Beyond the red mud banks that folded  
 Over the crop soil,  
 The old family grave-yard was swollen  
 With a new mound,  
 Small red mud grave,  
 And the boy sunk into the earth---  
 Spotting his over-washed trousers.

Yesterday,  
 It was yesterday when it happened,  
 When his uncle had used the gun  
 That flashed blue in sunlight---  
 The gun usually sheltered in quiet  
 Behind the wooden cabinet doors---  
 Like a snake stretched  
 quiet in the shade  
 To strike from the dark  
 In old stories.

Like summer lightning  
 That woke him from sleep some nights,  
 The sudden, crackling sound  
 Woke him from his afternoon nap.  
 And he had looked to the window  
 And blue streaks burned  
 From the woods in spiraling circles.

The squirrel wasn't really  
 his friend,  
 Old Cyrus, the stableman, comforted him,  
 And told him of man and the hunt and  
 How squirrels fell every day.

And so he had stolen,  
 Not comforted or knowing why,  
 Into the wood-shed to take  
 The squirrel and place him where  
 Cyrus said was holy ground,  
 The small wet thing in wet earth,  
 And vowed not to forget to come,  
 Sometimes, to this ground  
 And not to visit his uncle  
 For dinner on Sundays.

# The Visit

Night was falling  
 And another day ended  
 With only twelve to follow  
 As Richard wandered over the docks  
 Nodding to fishermen  
 Mending their nets.  
 Ships lay at rest by the docks  
 And piles of fish rotted  
 On the top decks  
 With the heat washing over them.  
 The bay waters seemed as if steam  
 Rose in eternal circles,  
 Catching low flying gulls  
 Singeing them until they squealed  
 And dove in furious motion.  
 Others seemed to drift  
 Against the summer wind  
 Like dead waxen things.  
 And they melted as they went higher  
 Towards the sun.  
 The days and nights were hot  
 With only the dark making any difference  
 Between them.

With sleep  
 Richard dreamed of gulls  
 Soaring over the docks,  
 Flying closer and closer  
 Until he would wake in the night  
 To hear their cries echoing  
 From the bay.

It seemed long ago,  
 The day he first opened the letter  
 From his daughter  
 Asking him to visit.  
 Excited and proud, he strutted out  
 among the day  
 To tell his friends  
 He was going visiting.  
 And they helped him decide  
 What to take on the trip.  
 The leather suitcase Luther got  
 As a present two Christmases ago  
 Was offered, and fancy letters  
 Were stitched on his handkerchiefs  
 By Lucia, the head nurse of the home.

(cont.)

(cont.)



And later, on the train,  
 Taking him twenty-one counties away,  
 Richard sat fastened to the left-side window  
 Watching the dark forests  
 And bright blue waters pass.  
 Watching and watching  
 Until the clicking monotony  
 Of the wheels made his head  
 bend against the window in sleep.

The fine home of his daughter  
 Rested on a hill  
 Watching over the bay  
 And there were velvet covered chairs,  
 A mirror over the fireplace,  
 A thick pink rug  
 That felt good with bare feet.  
 But each morning, she left  
 In the early fog  
 That drifted yellow from the sunrise.  
 And Richard was alone again.

Thus  
 He began to wander over the docks,  
 And he climbed the jutting bay breakwater  
 To dangle his feet in salt water  
 To catch pieces of seaweed  
 Floating by  
 To pop the air filled seaweed leaves  
 Until they rubbed soft in his fingers.  
 And he often wondered about his friends  
 And who was ahead in checkers  
 That day.

And so, night was falling  
 And old fishermen sat on the docks  
 Doing the day's mending,  
 Their laughter drifted through the heat  
 And Richard stopped to hear their tales.  
 He heard of old whaling ships  
 Where dead captains were stuffed  
 In pickle barrels  
 For land burials.  
 Where others were just thrown  
 In the murky waters with the dead fish.  
 He heard of following tuna schools  
 Down the gulf stream.  
 Then finally the voices grew quiet.

(cont.)

And Richard turned towards the breakwater,  
Massive in the low tide,  
wondering if John might be telling Luther now  
About some old bear hunt.  
And he shuddered again  
As he thought of dead men and pickle barrels.

Gulls strayed over the stones  
Dropping clams  
Attacking the shattered prey,  
And Richard thought of the stories he would tell,  
Stories of a fine home with velvet chairs,  
Of the fishing wharves,  
Of the gulf stream filled with tuna.  
As he nodded against the breakwater,  
he was sure John was ahead in checkers,  
And soon, the long line of gulls  
Descended from the heat  
Smothering Richard with their soft wings.

List of Characters:

Stephanie DelSesto

Louie DelSesto

Madine DelSesto

Saul

Mark

John

Police, group of five

DAMASCUS

(a play in two acts)

### List of Characters:

Stephanie DelSesto

Louie DelSesto

Nadine DelSesto

Saul

Mark

John

Priest, group of five fishermen

## Introduction

The New England coast was born from the violent meeting of winds and sea and land. From the Artic, frozen ocean currents pounded against the warmer gulf stream flowing near the New England shoreline. From the old sea, a **rocky**, heaving land was formed--- the people living there through the years followed the sea and its wind for their trades. And sons of sons were born children of this sea society.

In one of the smaller seaports of this land, this ancient form of existence continued into the twentieth century. Wooden homes were clustered near the docks; and the men sailed the old ships in search of the fast moving schools of fish along the gulf stream. As the play opens it is a hot summer day in August; Louie and Saul sit on the rocky coastline near the docks. Only the sound of a few gulls and the ocean waves hovers over the rocks.



## Act 1: scene 1

Setting: On a rocky beach along the New England coastline, two men sit staring at the ocean. One of the men, Louie, whittles an old piece of driftwood into shapes of sea things. Patches of white sploch his sun-worn face; and his hands quiver as he strokes his wood creations. He is somewhere in his middle fourties--- yet he looks ageless, neither young nor old. His friend, Saul, paces the beach with a bottle of whiskey dangling from his hands. Every now and then, he gulps mouthfuls of his drink as he swaggers back and forth imitation some fearless sea-master. Heat from the August sun burns the mid-day mists into swirls of smoke-fog. Saul is old, older then old; and he stumbles from age as much as from the heat or the whiskey.

Saul: Them big fish is really going now--- see, all the bait fish are heading into shallow water. What happens is they're scared, right scared they is. (Silence for a moment) Be going soon, I guess. Captain, he wants us to follow that school down the gulf stream--- yeah, running fast now.

Louie: I don't guess it matters much how many they are--- half our catch rotted last time. Those fish just rolled around the deck with the sun beating on em and the night as hot as the day.

Saul: Yeah, my belly was sick with heat. You feel it like you feel your pulse beating at night. Always there until it's part of you, and you don't care any more. Even those stupid scavenger gulls seemed to float on the wind like they was dead. They looked like little paper things flying; I kinda felt like pulling in the string--- like they was kites, I guess--- only I know there wasn't string hanging down. Just lots of dead heat and gulls.

Louie: It won't be much longer for me, though. I almost got enough money now.

Saul: You been saying that for three years. Louie, you know that ship's got us both. We can't do nothing besides work that ship. But you know, when I'm on the top deck looking toward the masts and feeling that sun beating into me, I feel like I was something, like I was the old master sailing rich treasures under the hold and watching the silent eyes of those silent slave people and they is looking at me oh so scared and admiring all at once. And I drink the best rum straight and hold it so that everyone says---"He can really hold his--- yes, he can do anything." And they say it scared cause they know I'm the master.

Louie: You always did like to imagine things. (Laughs)  
I don't mean to laugh, Saul, but you don't look much like the master of any ship.

Saul: I don't, eh. Well, I'll tell you something. Remember that time we was run aground about twelve years ago, and we all had to stay on that crumy, hot island, while we fixed the ship? Lousy hot on that island, I remember.

Louie: I remember you always snuck around at night and made damn much noise when you snuck back in. I never figured on a full night's sleep when I had to listen to you crawling around the room and giggling like some woman.

Saul: I ain't talking about that. Some boy there wanted to paint me as the captain of that ship. Looked like an angel right out of the heavens. Blessed Mary, he looked like an angel. Saw a face like that in one of the stained windows of St. Peter's. Peering down at me--- me the captain, do you hear. It's been the lousy breaks for me. But that boy knew what I was here--- inside. (Beats his head with fist) (In a low voice) I need another drink. (Begins drinking again)

(Nadine enters from right)

Nadine: Louie, Mama says to get home for supper. And right now. You've been loafing enough today, she says.

Louie: Your Mama's always complaining about something. She acts like one of them gulls--- always squealing in that high, crying sound just so people know they was alive.

Nadine: (In an angry tone) Louie, if you don't---

Louie: All right, all right, I'm coming with you. Just you be quiet. (Rises slowly) See you, Saul.

Saul: O.K. Louie, see you. (Waves him off as in a dream)  
(Exit Louie and Nadine)

Saul: (Slowly, in low voice) I remember now what that island boy said, We were sitting by the sea one afternoon, and he was looking at his face sinking in the water. And

then a bird's shadow made it dark where he was looking into the water--- just for a moment. "Vultures blot out my youth--- whether the ones in the sky or here in me, And all my images are distorted, and I paint the same tree that <sup>was</sup> green but now my picture is black--- a stump that juts from a swamp instead of a forest. And I don't understand why it isn't good any more. I just see it when my picture's done. And then I know it's not the same as before." Boy, those damn vultures have got us all. (Shouts) (Then giggles) But boy, I took down what you said cause I thought it sounded nice, and I wrote it in a letter to a woman cause it sounded nice. But I didn't know then, boy, I didn't know.

(Enter Mark):

Mark: You're drunk again, aren't you, Saul?

Saul: I'm so hot. It's hot again, Louie.

Mark: This is Mark.

Saul: It's hot again. Always so hot around here.

Mark: You'll find yourself in worse fires than you feel from that bottle someday.

Saul: Is there a fire around here? Did somebody light a fire in this kind of weather? Everybody's crazy around here.

Mark: You're drunk. (Starts off then hesitates) Can you remember if you've seen Nadine. I've been looking for her--- want to talk with her.



Saul: Nadine, Nadine, let me think. Does she walk like  
a sea gull and call "Time for supper, time for supper"  
up and down the beach? (Laughs)

Mark: You're pathetic, old man.

Saul: (Muttering) pathetic, pathetic, pathetic. Pathetic  
world, pathetic bottle  
(Spits out his words)

Mark: Don't you ever stay quiet?

Saul: Pathetic people, pathetic everything (Doesn't seem  
to hear Mark)

(Exit Mark)

Saul sinks onto rock and strokes his bottle.



## scene 2

Setting: in the main room of the DelSesto home, Stephanie sits staring at the faded picture of an old schooner where men spill over the deck with posed spears and shadows spin in the sea. The picture hangs on the wooden walls as if burying by decay the men and ships caught in a frozen moment--- and frozen in smiles, the crew waits for the long voyage to end.

Louie enters through the main door of the house.

Louie: Stephanie

Stephanie: (startled) Oh, I didn't hear you come in. (Then in a blank tone) You're going soon, aren't you? I heard it in town when they were telling about a lot of fish swimming near here. Every boat's going after them. That's what they say in town.

Louie: The ship will be sailing any day now; there's a big school of tuna out there, Stephanie. Maybe we'll get a good catch this trip.

Stephanie: You always say that.

Louie: Well, we could get a good catch.

Stephanie: (Sneering) With that old box you sail on?

Louie: Well, it feeds you.

Stephanie: I didn't say I was complaining.

Louie: (Hesitates a moment) I've been wanting to talk with you, Stephanie; but I always feel so strange with you like I was bothering you. I just---

Stephanie: (in a sharp tone) Where's Nadine? She's supposed to have brought you back. Where is she?

Louie: Mark came looking for her. I guess they went down towards the docks. That's the way they were heading when I came in.

Stephanie: (Becoming very excited and angry) Oh, just with Mark! And it's getting dark outside. You let your daughter wander off with some man when it's getting dark. What are you? Or don't you care about anything. I can just see them now. They're probably walking on the beach and soon it will have shadows surrounding things til you can't see them. And that man, that man will tell her how pretty she is; and she'll feel her body shiver like a fire. I know how it is--- I know how they are---

Louie: (Shaking her) What's the matter with you? You hold on to her like she was your play thing and you can make her have your soul. You can't stand to know that she's thinking something you don't know about or sitting with a man someplace you don't know about. What's wrong with you? Every time I try to say anything to you, you turn stiff---even when I reach out for you at night you turn stiff towards me. You hate me, you've hated me for years. And you've taught my own daughter to think of me as something low and stupid.

Stephanie: Why don't you go find your own daughter now instead of standing there?

Louie: (Begging) When I'm out there on the fishing boats, I sometimes stand looking down at the sea, and it all seems so easy. Just like before. And at night, I dream about you---

I dream that you smile at me and keep running down this long dock. You keep running and running and calling me to come home. I always forget what it's really like when I'm on a run--- what you're really like. You treat me like I was dirt. You've made my home a place where it's worse than the ship. And you don't even care.

Stephanie: Please, Louie. Why don't you find Nadine?

Noise is heard outside and then laughter.  
Stephanie runs to window then turns to Louie.

Stephanie: Well, she's here now. Thank the Lord. I'm sorry, Louie. I shouldn't have yelled at you. It's not right for a wife to yell at her husband. Thank the Lord.

Nadine enters.

Nadine: Hello, Mama--- Louie. I know I'm a little late, but I was just talking with Mark.

Stephanie: Nadine, thank the Lord. Where did you go?

Louie: For the Blessed Mother's sake, why don't you leave her alone. You heard her. She was talking with Mark.

Stephanie: Louie!

Louie: I gotta go clean up.

(Exit Louie)

Nadine: Mama, you always get so upset. We only went walking along the docks.

Stephanie: Like two wharf rats sneaking around shadows--- are you afraid that I know you, Nadine? Or is your blood so hot that you don't care? Don't you see, I know you, Nadine.

Nadine: You know yourself, Mother.

Stephanie: (Almost crying) Nadine. I only want to understand.

Nadine: I only wanted to walk by the sea. That's all. The sea is different at night. Or maybe you don't know what it's like to feel something outside this place. You should get out more. There's beauty in the sea, Mama. Not like that frozen sea hanging on the wall. Sometimes, I take my shoes off and run through the shallow water when the tide's in. Then the sand is part of the ocean, and you can run without cutting yourself on the rocks. I love to feel the sand stick to my feet and peel it off when it's still wet. The salt feels sticky when it dries, you ache so bad that you start wading again to get wet.

Stephanie: I know what it feels like.

Nadine: But you never do anything but sit around here. You never even sit outside anymore.

Stephanie: (Looking very tired) I'm tired.

(A bawdy English sailing song is heard outside--- then laughter)

Nadine: You'd better get to bed for a rest, Mama. I can take care of things.

Stephanie: I've been feeling bad lately.

Nadine: (In a softer tone) Yes, I know. You better rest.

Enter Louie

Louie: What's all that noise. (Looks out window--- sighs) I'd better go after him.



Nadine goes to window, also.

Nadine: Louie, don't bring that man in here. Louie---

Louie crosses to door and calls to Saul off stage.

Louie: Come on in, Saul. (Stephanie seems to be very nervous--- keeps pacing the room)

Saul enters

Saul: (to Nadine) Ah! the one the devil man wanted. He's a devil hunter you know(winks at Nadine). I found one in my bottle and he got scared and ran away.

Nadine: (to Louie) What's he talking about? He's so drunk, it's a wonder he can say anything.

Louie: I guess he means Mark--- he probably saw him on the beach a while ago.

Saul keeps looking at Stephanie; he seems embarrassed.

Saul: I haven't seen you in a long time, Stephanie. You're looking real tired.

Stephanie: (drawing herself very straight) I'm fine,

Saul. (to Louie) You'd better put him in the kitchen for the night. There's an old cot in the back porch. You can use that.

Saul: (Seems to be very rational while he looks at Stephanie and draws towards door) I didn't mean to come, I really didn't. (Seems apologizing to Stephanie alone) I keep trying to forget, but I don't.

Louie: Don't worry, Saul. I'll take you back to the kitchen. (Guides Saul to exit. Both exit--- Saul still looking at Stephanie with a fear yet a guilt.)

Stephanie: (keeps pacing the room) I'm really very tired. I'm going to bed now. (keeps pacing the room)



Nadine: What's wrong now, Mama. I don't think he'll cause us any trouble, if you're worried about that.

Stephanie keeps pacing the room. The curtain falls and spotlight picks up Saul sitting on an old cot and Louie on a chair in front of curtain.

Saul: There was foreign people snooping round the docks today--- they wanted to see one of us sailors, I guess. But I hid myself so they couldn't see me.

Louie: I know, I was with you, Saul.

Saul: Yeah, that's right. I keep forgetting which day is which.

Saul: You know those foreign people creep all over the docks lately. They're always sticking their heads over the deck and squealing when they see the piles of fish stacked there. Then they tell each other that they're glad they don't have to work on a ship--- it's too dirty. (Laughs) And then they smile if they see you and ask you if you're a real fisherman. And you say yes you're a real fisherman and they smile again and wait till you move away so they can watch you to see if you really touch those fish piled up on the deck. Then they get in their big cars and go look for a bigger ship cause we ain't nothing but dirty looking men on a dirty looking ship. But they don't ever find no big ship like that around here. So they go home real disappointed cause they wasted a whole day down here.

Louie: It don't really matter though.

Saul: It's been a long time.

Louie: What's been a long time?

Saul: Since I saw Stephanie.

Louie: Well, you never come around here.

Saul: I mean I used to see her at church when I used to go.

Louie: You better lie down and get some sleep.

Saul: You know, I been thinking about my old mother.

She used to worry when I went to sea. She never had much you know, Louie.

Louie: Sure, sure, I know.

Saul: She sure never had much.

Louie: Come on, let's get you to bed.

Spotlight cuts off.

End scene 2

## scene 3

**Setting:** The same rocky coastline where Saul and Louie spent the afternoon. It is later in the night, and the lights are dim to indicate this. Mark enters from right, humming to herself.

**Mark:** I'm glad you came back. I was afraid your mother would be upset, and you wouldn't come.

**Nadine:** I would have come anyway. I just feel sorry for her; she's probably worrying about something right now. She always is. She has lots of nightmares, you know. She once told me she dreamed this old man wrapped her in fish cloths and put her on a boat in the middle of night. She said the sea was all silent around her, and she drifted and drifted. Clouds kept moving across the moon like shapes in a burial procession. She couldn't even move her body; she couldn't even scream. And then the boat slowly sunk under the waves with her on it --- she just kept sinking and sinking. (Shudders) It must be horrible to dream things like that.

**Mark:** Nadine.

**Nadine:** What's wrong, Mark? Did I scare you? (Laughs a little)

**Mark:** Just don't talk about things like that all the time.

**Nadine:** (suddenly) Am I beautiful?

**Mark:** Well, sure. Sure you are.

You know there's going to be a dance tomorrow night. I, well I want you to go with me.

**Nadine:** I'd much rather come here. I don't like dances, really. All those people stuck in some small, stuffy room.

Mark: I- I've got to go do my lessons for tomorrow. I'm teaching the French Revolution now.

Nadine: But the dance---.

Mark: (Falters in an obvious attempt to leave) I guess you're right. I don't think I want to go either. (Stumbles away from Nadine)

Nadine: What's wrong, Mark? (Then looks at him fiercely) Don't you like me anymore? Did I scare you, Mark? But that's the way you are--- stuck in your books and nice manners. Well, I don't care. Go read about your revolution. Go on!

( Mark seems amazed at Nadine's outburst; but he still tries to leave with his set phrases that he uses constantly.)

Mark: I I--- excuse me, but I really have got to go. Maybe I'll see you soon.

Nadine: Well, why don't you go?

(Mark exits)

(Nadine throws arms out as she looks towards the sea.) So stupid! It feels like a storm's coming.

A man has been standing all this time in the back stage shadows. He is dark and has a strange wildness in his eyes. He wears grey trousers and a grey shirt; he moves in silence towards Nadine. They move towards each other like two animals caught in a hunt--- like two beast shapes drifting through the shadows. He is John, the sailor on the Canadian ship; He looks as if he is in his late twenties.

John: It's a lonely stretch of beach out here.

Nadine: (frightened) Who are you? I haven't ever seen you before in town.



John: Do you come here often?

Nadine: Who are you?

John: Why, do you know everyone in town?

Nadine: There're not many people there--- mostly fishermen.

John: Have you always lived here?

Nadine: Yes

John: And what's your name?

Nadine: I'm called Nadine. And you?

John: John. I'm from a long way off.

Nadine: Where?

John: (Ignores her question and moves closer to her--- he circles as a vulture nearing prey. His eyes are frozen as if in a death mask.) I'm with a ship at the docks---

it's tied up here for a few days. We went through a bad storm night before last.

Nadine: The Canadian ship? You're from Canada?

John: (Again ignores her question) The name John's from the Bible; do names interest you?

Nadine: That's a strange thing to say.

John: I imagine a lot of the men in town have names from the Bible. Did you ever stop to think about it. Lots of names. James, Paul, Saul---

Nadine: Why yes, Saul came to our house tonight. I never thought of his name like that. But Saul was renamed Paul in the Bible--- they were the same man.

John: (Begins to move in some suppressed fury) Not the same. (He speaks furiously now) Not the same. Two souls



in one body. But Saul had to die first. He was a heathen, no different than a murderer.

Nadine: (completely confused) I don't understand.

John: So there's a man named Saul in the village?

Nadine: Why yes, he's a friend of my father.

John: (Seems lost in thought, lost in his own memories)  
For hours I heard them pound on that wood--- like boards  
being fit for a coffin. On and on and on. And it was  
so hot through the hours. (Turns on Nadine) What's your  
father's name?

Nadine has been edging off stage. Now she turns, terrified,  
and runs.

John: (Yells after her) Go on--- run. But tell the man  
called Saul that you saw a man that looked like an angel.  
---a man that watched trees burn into stumps in an old  
swamp. ---a man attacked by vultures. Tell him that.

Curtain  
end scene 3  
end act 1

Act 11  
scene 1

Setting: The living room of the DelSesto home. Saul has left his cot and wanders slowly about the room; he continually fingers thing with his hands. Stephanie enters the room and stand motionless watching Saul with a smile. It is late in the night.

Saul: (Suddenly realizes that Stephanie is in the room with him) Stephanie!

Stephanie: Why can't you sleep?

Saul: I don't know. And you?

Stephanie: I often can't sleep. I think it's the heat.

Louie bought me a fan last year, but it doesn't help much.

It just blows the hot air instead of letting it stand.

There's not much difference.

Saul: Yeah, I guess it's the heat for me, too. I shouldn't of had so much to drink.

Stephanie: Do you drink a lot?

Saul: It's all I got really. I know I shouldn't, but I do anyway. So it all ends the same.

(There is a strained silence) Saul (in an obvious attempt to say anything): I was telling Louie tonight that it's been a long time since I seen you.

Stephanie: (blurts out in rapid sentences) Why is it so hard to talk together? It's over, and I've been paying for everything I did every day and every night. It's dead like me and so it doesn't matter what we say. (Laughs) And it's really funny--- we both look so old and ridiculous now. (Then stops) I'm sorry, Saul. I didn't mean to say that.

Saul: (Turns away from her) It's all right. I feel old and ridiculous.

Stephanie: But I never understood. That's the only thing. I never understood why you changed so. And you had written me such pretty letters while you were gone. I remember one that talked about vultures and painting. And I didn't even know that you painted. I read that letter over and over--- it's about the prettiest thing I ever read. It was like when I read about beautiful ladies and their lovers when I was in school.

Saul: (Sharply) Stephanie, will you stop it. Just forget it, please. I'm sorry. That's all I can say. I'm sorry. (Hesitates--- then slowly speaks) But you did mean a lot to me. It's just that I was no good.

Stephanie: That's not true.

Saul: It is. Now, let's not talk about it.

Stephanie: (Doesn't seem to hear him) I remember how it was. I'd get a letter from Louie and I'd get a letter from you whenever some ship happened to pick up the mail while you stayed on that island. But I didn't even care if Louie's came or not. He couldn't think of anything besides telling me what he ate or how bad the flies were. That's the way he is. We were too young when we got married--- I was only fifteen and thought he was so romantic cause he sailed on a big ship and was so strong. I remember I used to like to watch him do things just so

I could watch the muscles twist in his arms.

Saul: Stephanie! Don't talk like some child.

Stephanie: But I remember how your arms felt. They made me cry inside when I felt them. And your hair curled with water in the hot summer days all over you. I really cared.

Saul: I don't know what to say to you. I been to church a lot after we stopped--- well, I mean, I prayed for us both then.

Stephanie: There was no need to pray for me. (Draws into stiff pose) Who are you to judge me? You're the one that destroyed anything I believed.

Saul: But you just said---.

Stephanie: Did I? I guess I did say that. Foolish old man.

Saul: What do you mean?

Stephanie: I mean you're a foolish old man. Not the same man. You're just like Louie. You don't know anything.

Saul: I never should have come here.

Stephanie: You're right. Why don't you go back to bed. You and Louie will probably be shipping out tomorrow.

Saul: I been wanting to tell you I was sorry for a long time, Stephanie.

Stephanie: (Sharply) Why don't you forget it. I have a long time ago.

Saul: But you were just saying a minute ago---.

Stephanie: I wasn't saying anything except you look tired.



Stephanie and Saul look at each other for a long moment--- it is as if some kindness or personal move could dissolve the long time between them. But they stand cold and motionless as posed figures in a mural. There is no movement. Then Saul backs towards kitchen and disappears into shadows. Stephanie bends head and stand quietly weeping.

Saul: I been watching the gulls all this morning. They keep dropping those eggs on the rocks and swooping down to give the nest before the others can get near. They're selfish, ain't they? I mean you would think they wouldn't mind leaving them there's so many places around.

end scene 1

Saul: You been watching gulls as long as I have, you must have to think about it. That's just the way they live. What have you been doing anyway sitting here all morning? I thought you was going to that summer school of Anna's teaching.

Stephanie: I stopped going. Why did you do that, child? You got a lot to learn yet.

Saul: I learn a lot more sitting here than from some thingy schoolteacher. Besides, I decided I'm too old for that sort of thing.

Stephanie: Oh, you did!

Saul: Let's not talk about school, Saul. I been thinking about something else.

Stephanie: What's that?

Saul: About your name--- I like it's Saul and not

Paul.

Stephanie: (Starts laughing) That's something to think about



scene 2

Setting: Nadine sits with Saul on the docks. The ocean hits the pilings with a steady rhythm. It is mid-day, and a haze settles over the shore.

Nadine: I been watching the gulls all this morning. They keep dropping those clams on the rocks and swooping down to pick the meat before the others can get near. They're selfish, aren't they. I mean you would think they wouldn't mind sharing when there's so many clams around.

Saul: When you been watching gulls as long as I have, you won't have to think about it. That's just the way they was born. What have you been doing anyway sitting here all morning? I thought you was going to that summer school Mark's teaching.

Nadine: I stopped going.

Saul: Why did you do that, child? You got a lot to learn yet.

Nadine: I learn a lot more sitting here than from some silly schoolteacher. Besides, I decided I'm too old for that sort of thing.

Saul: Oh, you did!

Nadine: Let's not talk about school, Saul. I been thinking about something else.

Saul: What's that?

Nadine: About your name--- and why it's Saul and not Paul.

Saul: (Starts laughing) That's something to think about

on a nice summer day.

Nadine: No, I'm serious. Why is it like that?

Saul: What ever made you think of that?

Nadine: (Without looking at Saul) Oh, nothing really.

I was just wondering.

Saul: Well, the only thing I know is that my Mama liked the name Saul better. That's the only thing I know.

Nadine: But what's the difference in them in the Bible--- that's where they come from.

Saul: I know that. Saul hated the disciples and wanted to imprison them. So he started out to the churches in an old city called Damascus to find any Christians. But God blinded him on the way and told him he'd better change. Then Saul realized about his wrong ways and changed and took a new name--- Paul. At least that's how I remember the story. It's been a long time since I been in church. (Shakes his head) I know the Blessed Mary is mad at me.

Nadine: So he changed into a new person.

Saul: Well, it's kinda like that.

Where did you start thinking about all this? And why about my name?

Nadine: I been meaning to tell you this. You see, I was sitting on the beach last night, and this strange man came up. He said he was named John and was from Canada. Or at least he was sailing on a ship from Canada. He was

— talking about Christian names, and when I said I knew

somebody named Saul, he got all excited and started saying how Saul was no good and a murderer. I didn't know about the story, but now I guess he was right--- that is about one man being two men sometimes.

Saul: (Begins to look very frightened and nervous) What'd he look like?

Nadine: He had these strange eyes, and he was dressed in grey, I think. It was so dark--- but I remember he kept one of his hands in back of him all the time. I was scared he had a knife in it. But he never showed it if he did.

Nadine: Saul, I been wanting to talk to you about Mama.

Saul: This is important. You've got to remember what that man said. Try to remember.

Nadine: I don't remember exactly. Besides, he was just some man on the beach--- nobody we know around here.

And I want to know something about why you and Mama acted so funny together when you came to our house last night.

I know she used to get a few letters from someone besides

Louie cause I found some old letters tucked in one of

Mama's drawers under her slips and things. But Mama

caught me before I could read them. I always wonder if

she did any wild and romantic thing before she got so

old. (Looks at him with narrow eyes) Do you know anything?

Saul: You talk just like your mother--- silly like a

—child. What's important now is that you tell me exactly

what that man said on the beach.

Nadine: (Whining) All I remember is he was yelling at me to tell you that I had seen a man that looked like an angel. But that's stupid, because he looked more like some devil. He was so mean looking.

Saul: (Becomes very upset) (Talks as if there is no one there) But he's dead. He is dead.

Nadine: Who's dead? what are you talking about?

Saul: He was lying there not moving, and his face was dragging in the swamp water. I saw him--- I know what I know.

Nadine: What are you talking about?

Saul realizes that Nadine is still with him. He gets up and hurries off stage wringing his hands. A group of fishermen crowd by him.

First fisherman: Saul, where you off to--- getting another bottle?

Second and third fishermen: Hi there, Saul.

First fisherman: Why aren't you shipping out yet? Or don't your captain know there's a school of tuna?

Saul pushes past them without speaking.  
Then fishermen spot Nadine.

Fourth fisherman: What's wrong with the old man?

Nadine: (Smiling and flirting with the men) How do I know?

First fisherman: Say, Louie's girl is sure getting mighty pretty--- you'll have to come along with me some night.

(All laugh)



Nadine: Why not now? Where you going?

(All laugh again)

(Curtain falls as they stand around Nadine.)

Saul: I thought you'd come.

Saul does not turn towards the voice. He continues to sit motionless.

Saul: (Sighs as if in some inner confusion--in agony) I'm dead--

Saul: I live in a swamp for hours and hear the singing of birds, clearly, evenly, a softness and a melody for my soul. And my silver--I

Saul: Don't talk so strange.

Saul: But you always said, my friend, that I looked like an angel. Why don't you look at you boy angel now?

Saul: Why can't you go away? (He is almost crying) I'm old now. Can't you see I'm old?

Saul: (Screaming) Look at me. Look at me.

Saul: I can't.

Saul: (Screams to Saul; he grabs him and twists him around so that they face each other.)

Saul: (Holding on stiffly) See my hand. You ruined my hand. I can't even hold a paint brush any more. I can only paint the picture of a Jesus in my mind--over and over. I paint a picture in my mind.

Saul: I didn't mean to use anything but my hands. I don't know why I did it. I don't know. I don't know a honest living

## scene 3

Setting: The same lonely stretch of beach where Nadine met John. The haze spreads over the whole shoreline, giving a dusk light to the afternoon. Saul sits on rock, stooping over sea. John approaches from behind; Saul is not aware of John until he speaks.

John: I thought you'd come.

Saul does not turn towards the voice. He continues to sit motionless.

Saul: (Speaks as if in some inner confusion--- in agony)  
You're dead---

John: I lie in a swamp for hours and hear the sawing of boards, slowly, evenly, a coffin sawed and nailed for my body. And my silver---!

Saul: Don't talk so strange.

John: But you always said, my friend, that I looked like a boy angel. Why don't you look at you boy angel now?

Saul: Why can't you go away? (He is almost crying) I'm old now. Can't you see I'm old?

John: (Screaming) Look at me. Look at me.

Saul: I can't.

John rushes to Saul; he grabs him and twists him around so that they face each other.

John: (Holding ou stiffened hand) See my hand. You ruined my hand. I can't even hold a paint brush any more. I can only paint the picture of a Judas in my mind--- over and over. I paint a picture in my mind.

Saul: I didn't mean to use anything but my hands. I don't know why I did it. I don't know. I done a honest living

all my life. I didn't know it was you; it was so dark that night.

(John grabs Saul around the neck and begins shaking him.)

John: You kept sawing and sawing--- that's all I heard the whole time I was lying there.

Saul: It was only the ship they was fixing out on the beach. ---you came for me first--- I know that's what it was. I'm old now. Leave me alone. (Saul is choking with the terrible movement of John's hands)

John: I saw you face and knew it was no good anymore.

---Like a stump that has rotted into the ground and destroys every living part that's left.

Saul: I didn't mean no harm.

John: And left me to die.

Saul: But you were dead--- I saw you not moving. You was just stretched there.

John: You made filth out of me.

Saul: You been looking for me all this time.

John: There was nothing left for me but to fish like all the men of the village. You left me nothing else.

Saul: But I saw you come at me with another face--- a face like I seen of Judas once in a church. You was sweating and cursing at me.

John: (Looks at him evenly) Old man, you are dreaming. And you can die with that dream. Judas! You are the Judas!

John strangles Saul with horrible sounds coming from his throat.

Saul: (crying) I done an honest living. I'm an old man. Please don't hurt an old man. (Slides from John's hands onto rocks)

(John leaves through the early shadows that slide between the rocks.)

Second person: Did you know him?

First person: He was just some old man that hung around the docks. Sailed on that old ship at the last tie-up. Alone.

Third person: Horrible, ain't it. They say he just slipped and fell. Just think of it. Why, I fell lots of times. I swear you, it does.

Fourth person: Somebody better get hold of the priest!

Fifth person: Any family?

Sixth person: Don't know of any. Just one of those nice old men who get forgotten.

Third person: It's real sad. I wonder what the body looks like.

Second: Let's go see. Come on.

Fourth: I don't want to see no body.

(Fourth walks one way; the rest run the other, towards the breakwater.)



Part 2 of scene 3

In front of curtain, people run from one place to another.  
It is dark now.

First person: Did you see that old fisherman they dragged  
from the rocks?

Second person: Did you know him?

First person: He was just some old man that hung around  
the docks. Sailed on that old ship at the last tie-up  
place.

Third person: Horrible, ain't it. They say he just  
slipped and fell. Just think of it. Why, I fall lots  
of times. I scares you, it does.

Fourth person: Somebody better get hold of the priest!

Fifth person: Any family?

First person: Don't know of any. Just one of those nice  
old men who get forgotten.

Third person: It's real sad. I wonder what the  
body looks like.

Several: Let's go see. Come on.

Fourth: I don't want to see no body.

(Fourth walks one way; the rest run the other, towards  
the breakwater.)

## scene 64

Setting: Saul lies on table in death. As is the custom in the Church, friends watch over the wake. The fishermen cluster in one group and the women in another while the priest circles around them bowing his head and murmuring death prayers. Dusk is becoming night and some of the men leave for their homes.

Stephanie, Nadine and Louie stand together towards the front of the room.

Louie: It's a bad thing--- dying alone like that.

Nadine: He was with me on the docks just yesterday afternoon. We talked about his name, I remember.

Louie: (shaking his head) Real bad--- dying like that.

Stephanie: (Standing in her usual stiff pose) He was just an old man. Old men have to die.

Nadine: Mama, you know you don't---

Stephanie: I told you to go home, Nadine. You shouldn't be here anyway.

Louie: It's like he said once when we was looking at one of those carved gods on that island. You know those people think that wooden statues are read gods, Nadine. Anyway, he said that it was funny cause the statues had a head on the front and a head on the back. He said that's what everything was like--- you couldn't ever see anything but the front of something, no matter how you looked.

Stephanie: (Repeats to self) He was just an old man.

A scared old man. That's all.

Stephanie: I'm tired, Nadine. You'd better take me home.

I've been feeling so bad for months.

Curtain  
END

Nadine: (Looks at her in pity) Sure I will, Mama.

Louie: I'll take you.                      Please.

Stephanie: (Stiffens) You stay here with the men. It's where you belong if you care about your friend that's dead.

Louie: I only thought you might want me to come.

Stephanie: (Looks off in distance and shrugs) It doesn't matter.

Nadine, I've been thinking about my room--- I think it's the light shining in that makes me sick in the mornings. You close the shutters tonight and get Louie to nail them closed tomorrow. I don't want them banging open anymore.

Nadine:(quietly) Yes, Mama.

Louie: I'll see to it, Stephanie.

Stephanie walks quietly away from them--- Nadine runs after her, and they leave together.

Louie moves slowly towards the body. The priest cries out.

Priest: The heavens rain out glory on the dead. I saw the glory, and I tell you it will come to you, also.

Three fishermen: Amen, Father, Amen.

Priest: He has worked an honest living. And like his namesake in the Bible, he'll be blinded by the glory of the Lord.

One fisherman: Yes, Father. He's on his way to Damascus. Amen, Father.

(Louie touches the body and then turns quickly away and walks (off stage) towards his home.)

Priest: Pray for such glory, brothers, pray.

Curtain  
END