

BUS STOP SIDE 6  
CHERIE/ELMA

start  
CHERIE. Mebbe I'm a sap.

ELMA. Why do you say that?

CHERIE. I dunno why I don't go off to Montana and marry him. I might be a lot better off'n I am now.

ELMA. He says he *loves* you.

CHERIE. He dunno what love is.

ELMA. What makes you say that?

CHERIE. All he wants is a girl to throw his arms around and hug and kiss, that's all. The resta the time, he don't even know I exist.

ELMA. What made you decide to marry him in the first place?

CHERIE. (*Giving Elma a wise look.*) Ya ain't very experienced, are ya?

ELMA. I guess not.

CHERIE. I never *did* decide to marry him. Everything was goin' fine till he brought up *that* subjeck. Bo come in one night when I was singin' "That Old Black Magic." It's one a my best numbers. And he liked it so much, he jumped up on a chair and yelled like a Indian, and put his fingers in his mouth and whistled like a steam engine. Natur'ly, it made me feel good. Most a the customers at the Blue Dragon was too drunk to pay any attention to my songs.

ELMA. And you liked him?

CHERIE. Well . . . I thought he was awful cute. (*She shows a mischievous smile.*)

ELMA. I think he looks a little like Burt Lancaster, don't you?

CHERIE. Mebbe. Anyway . . . I'd never seen a cowboy before. Oh, I'd seen 'em in movies, a course, but never in the *flesh* . . . Anyway, he's so darn healthy lookin', I don't mind admittin', I was attracted, right from the start.

ELMA. You were?

CHERIE. But it was only what ya might call a *sexual* attraction.

ELMA. Oh!

CHERIE. The very next mornin', he wakes up and hollers, "Yip-pee! We're gittin' married." (*Bo rises, walks L. Virgil pulls him down to sit.*) I honestly thought he was crazy. But when I tried to reason with him, he wouldn't listen to a word. He stayed by my side all day long, like a shadow. At night, a course, he had to go back to the rodeo, but he was back to the Blue Dragon as soon as the rodeo was over, in time fer the midnight show. If any other fella claimed t'have a date with me, Bo'd beat him up.

ELMA. And you never told him you'd marry him?

1. CHERIE. No! He kep tellin' me all week, he and Virge'd be by the  
night the rodeo ended, and they'd pick me up and we'd all start  
back to Montana t'gether. I knew that if I was around the Blue  
Dragon that night, that's what'd happen. So I decided to beat it.  
One a the other girls at the Blue Dragon lived on a farm 'cross the  
river in Kansas. She said I could stay with her. So I went to the  
Blue Dragon last night and just sang fer the first show. Then I told  
'em I was quittin' . . . I'd been wantin' to find another job any-  
way . . . and I picked up my share of the kitty . . . but darn  
it, I had to go and tell 'em I was takin' the midnight bus. They  
had to go and tell Bo, a course, when he come in a li'l after eleven.  
He paid 'em five dollars to find out. So I went down to the bus  
station and hadn't even got my ticket, when here come Bo and  
Virge. (Bo rises walks slowly to window.) He jest steps up to the  
ticket window and says, "Three tickets to Montana!" I din know  
what to say. Then he dragged me onto the bus and I been on it  
ever since. And somewhere deep down inside me, I gotta funny  
feelin' I'm gonna end up in Montana. (She sits now in troubled  
contemplation as Elma resumes her work. On the other side of the  
stage, Bo comes D. S., straddles a chair after a period of gestation,  
begins to question Virgil.)

BO. Tell me somethin', Virge. We been t'gether since my folks  
died, and I allus wondered if mebbe I din spoil yer chances a  
settlin' down.

VIRGIL. (Laughs.) No, you never, Bo. I used to tell myself ya  
did, but I just wanted an excuse.

BO. But you been lookin' after me since I was ten.

VIRGIL. I coulda married up, too.

BO. Was ya ever in love?

VIRGIL. Oncet. B'fore I went to work on your daddy's ranch.

BO. What happened?

VIRGIL. Nuthin'.

BO. Ya ask her to marry ya?

VIRGIL. Nope.

BO. Why not?

VIRGIL. Well . . . there comes a time in every fella's life Bo,  
when he's gotta give up his own ways . . .

BO. How ya mean?

VIRGIL. Well, I was allus kinda uncomfortable around this gal,