

*Barnette exits. Babe looks around the room for a moment, then goes over to her white suitcase and opens it up. She takes out her pink hair curlers and a brush. She begins brushing her hair.*

Goodbye, Becky. Goodbye, Barnette. Goodbye, Becky. Oooh.

*Lenny enters. She is fuming. Babe is rolling her hair throughout most of the following scene.*

Lenny, hi!

LENNY. Hi.

BABE. Where's Meg?

LENNY. Oh, she had to go by the store and pick some things up. I don't know what.

BABE. Well, how's Old Granddaddy?

LENNY. *(As she picks up Babe's bowl of oatmeal.)* He's fine. Wonderful! Never been better!

→ BABE. Lenny, what's wrong? What's the matter?

LENNY. It's Meg! I could just wring her neck! I could just wring it!

BABE. Why? What'd she do?

LENNY. She lied! She sat in that hospital room and shamelessly lied to Old Granddaddy. She went on and on telling such untrue stories and lies.

BABE. Well, what? What did she say?

LENNY. Well, for one thing she said she was gonna have a RCA record coming out with her picture on the cover, eating pineapples under a palm tree.

BABE. Well, gosh, Lenny, maybe she is! Don't you think she really is?

LENNY. Babe, she sat here this very afternoon and told me how all that she's done this whole year is work as a clerk for a dog food company.

BABE. Oh, shoot. I'm disappointed.

LENNY. And then she goes on to say that she'll be appearing on the Johnny Carson show in two weeks' time. Two weeks' time! Why, Old Granddaddy's got a TV set right in his room. Imagine what a letdown it's gonna be.

BABE. Why, mercy me.

LENNY. (*Slamming the coffeepot on.*) Oh, and she told him the reason she didn't use the money he sent her to come home Christmas was that she was right in the middle of making a huge multi-million-dollar motion picture and was just under too much pressure.

BABE. My word!

LENNY. The movie's coming out this spring. It's called *Singing in a Shoe Factory*. But she only has a small leading role—not a large leading role.

BABE. (*Laughing.*) For heaven's sake—

LENNY. I'm sizzling. Oh, I just can't help it! I'm sizzling!

BABE. Sometimes Meg does such strange things.

LENNY. (*Slowly, as she picks up the opened box of birthday candy.*) Who ate this candy?

BABE. (*Hesitantly.*) Meg.

LENNY. My one birthday present, and look what she does! Why, she's taken one little bite out of each piece and then just put it back in! Ooh! That's just like her! That is just like her!

BABE. Lenny, please—

LENNY. I can't help it! It gets me mad! It gets me upset! Why, Meg's always run wild—she started smoking and drinking when she was fourteen years old, she never made good grades—never made her own bed! But somehow she always seemed to get what she wanted. She's the one who got singing and dancing lessons; and a store-bought dress to wear to her senior prom. Why do you remember how Meg always got to wear twelve jingle bells on her petticoats, while we were only allowed to wear three apiece? Why?! Why should Old Grandmama let her sew twelve golden jingle bells on her petticoats and us only three!!!

BABE. (*Who has heard all this before.*) I don't know!! Maybe she didn't jingle them as much!

→ LENNY. I can't help it! It gets me mad! I resent it. I do.

BABE. Oh, don't resent Meg. Things have been hard for Meg. After all, she was the one who found Mama.

LENNY. Oh, I know; she's the one who found Mama. But that's always been the excuse.