

SCENE 9

(1946. ASHEVILLE. SOUTHERN JOURNAL OFFICE.)

(It's 10AM. DARYL and LUCY are there.)

DARYL

Where is she? She's an hour and a half late. This is not like her.

LUCY

She got a notice from the post office that there's a special delivery letter.

DARYL

If they can send a notice why can't they send the letter?

LUCY

She went over there with Jimmy Ray to pick it up.

DARYL

She's pretty cozy with Jimmy Ray.

LUCY

He's attractive, don't you think?

DARYL

Oh Lucy, I don't know how to judge if a man's attractive.

LUCY

Yes, you do.

(Then a commotion. ALICE and JIMMY RAY enter the office, holding a manuscript, laughing hysterically.)

JIMMY RAY

(points to a line)

Read the next line!

ALICE

(reading)

Oh, my lord!

(to DARYL)

Daryl, this is the funniest thing I've ever read. We've got to run this in our humor column right away.

(She hands him the manuscript.)

DARYL

What is it?

ALICE

It's a hilarious piece by a writer I've never even heard of. Lillian Jones.

LUCY

Lillian Jones? Congratulations Daryl!

ALICE

What?

DARYL

(excited)

Lillian Jones is my new pen name!

ALICE

Good for you!

LUCY

Miss Murphy, you have been on a tear lately.

DARYL

You have. Miss Murphy, may I be frank?

ALICE

Well, it'll take a while to get used to calling you that, but sure.

DARYL

What's come over you? I really miss the dark layer of gloom that you brought to work with you every day.

ALICE

Oh, all right. Look, everyone's going to find out sooner or later. Years ago I had a child.

LUCY

Daryl, you owe me five dollars.

ALICE

Well, I found out he's alive and well, and raised by another family. He's a fine young man, and it turns out he works for me.

LUCY

Works for...? Oh my God. It's Daryl!

ALICE

It's Billy.

DARYL

Billy?

(LUCY and DARYL gasp.)

LUCY

When was the last time you spoke to him?

ALICE

The night he found out. A month now. He hasn't written or called. But these things take time, don't you think?

JIMMY RAY

I'm thinking of taking a trip just to lay eyes on him. I wouldn't know him if I saw him. ←

END

(BILLY enters, with MARGO.)

BILLY CANE

Hello.

JIMMY RAY

Oh my God.

ALICE

Hello.

BILLY CANE

(to JIMMY RAY)

Hello. Billy Cane.

JIMMY RAY

You're a handsome boy. You take after your father. And that would be me.