

GRACE    MRS FRYER

MRS. FRYER. Grace? Mr. Markley will be here any minute.

GRACE. Mr. Markley?

MRS. FRYER. He's bringing the papers for you to sign. Did you fall asleep?

GRACE. Has Miss Wiley been by?

MRS. FRYER. Miss Wiley?

GRACE. About Kathryn. She told me she might stop by. Did she come by? (MRS. FRYER turns away, straightening up the room.)

MRS. FRYER. She might have.

GRACE. Don't you know?

MRS. FRYER. Someone came to the door a while ago—I think your brother answered it. Look, Grace. Ya gotta get ready.

GRACE. They took Kathryn back to the hospital last night—

MRS. FRYER. I know, dear. I know. After ya talk to Mr. Markley, we'll go over there and see how she is. Now, put a comb through that hair.

GRACE. I dreamt she died.

MRS. FRYER. Grace. Don't speak such things.

GRACE. If she dies, it's over.

MRS. FRYER. We're three months behind on the mortgage, Grace.

GRACE. I know that.

MRS. FRYER. Ya can't let this go on.

GRACE. Fifteen hundred dollars—not even a year's wages.

MRS. FRYER. Well, it's better than nothing, ain't it?

GRACE. Is that all I'm worth? Better than nothing?

MRS. FRYER (stops). Of course not. Sweetheart. But we got to be realistic. At the rate things are going you'll never get inside that courtroom. And even if ya do—ya can't prove nothin'.

GRACE (weakly). Mr. Berry thinks we can.

MRS. FRYER. Mr. Berry ain't payin' the bills. There's the doctor—and the bank. And the coal man. We can't expect folks to treat us like charity just because you're sick.

GRACE. Not askin' for charity, Ma. I just want what's owed to me.

MRS. FRYER. Grace. I know it feels like you're lettin' Kathryn down. But if she decided to take the company's offer, would you hold it against her? No. Ya wouldn't. Now. We'll take that check and pay the bills and whatever is left—you and Tom can have. A little something to get ya started.

GRACE. There's nothing to start, Ma.

MRS. FRYER. Why do ya have to be so hard on Tommy?

GRACE. Ma. Please don't.

MRS. FRYER. Can't ya see, he just can't face the thought of yanot bein' with us?

GRACE. I have to face it. Why can't he?

MRS. FRYER. Do something with your hair, Grace