

AMANDA. Of course you'll wear them.

LAURA. Why should I?

AMANDA. Well, to tell you the truth, honey, you're just a little bit flat-chested.

LAURA. You make it seem like we were setting a trap.

AMANDA. We are. All pretty girls are a trap and men expect them to be traps. Now look at yourself in that galss. (*Laura crosses R. Looks at mirror, invisible to audience, which is in darkness up R. of R. door.*) See? You look just like an angel on a postcard. Isn't that lovely? Now you just wait. I'm going to dress myself up. You're going to be astonished at your mother's appearance.

(END OF MUSIC CUE. End of Music Cue leads into dance music,¹ which then leads in MUSIC CUE #14, a few lines below, at stage direction. Amanda exits through curtains up-stage off L. in dining-room. Laura looks in mirror for a moment. Removes "Gay Deceivers," hides them under mattress of day-bed. Sits on small table R. of day-bed for a moment, goes out to fire-escape landing, listens to dance music, until Amanda's entrance. Amanda, off.)

I found an old dress in the trunk. But what do you know? I had to do a lot to it but it broke my heart when I had to let it go. Now, Laura, just look at your mother. Oh, no! Laura, come look at me now! (*Enters dining-room L. door. Comes down through living-room curtain to living-room c.* MUSIC CUE #14.)

LAURA. (*Re-enters from fire-escape landing. Sits on L. arm of armchair.*) Oh, Mother, how lovely! (*Amanda wears a girlish frock. She carries a bunch of jonquils.*)

AMANDA. (*Standing c., holding flowers.*) It used to be. It used to be. It had a lot of flowers on it, but they got awful tired so I had to take them all off. I led the cotillion in this dress years ago. I won the cake-walk twice at Sunset Hill, and I wore it to the Governor's ball in Jackson. You should have seen your mother. You should have seen your mother how she just sashayed around (*Crossing around L. of day-bed back to c.*) the ballroom, just like that. I had it on the day I met your father. I had malaria fever, too. The change of climate from East Tennessee to the Delta—weakened my resistance. Not enough to be dangerous, just enough to make me restless and giddy. Oh, it was lovely. Invitations poured in from all over. My mother said, "You can't go any place because you have a fever. You have to stay in bed." I said I wouldn't and I

took quinine and kept on going and going. Dances every evening and long rides in the country in the afternoon and picnics. That country—that country—so lovely—so lovely in May, all lacy with dogwood and simply flooded with jonquils. My mother said, "You can't bring any more jonquils in this house." I said, "I will," and I kept on bringing them in anyhow. Whenever I saw them I said, "Wait a minute, I see jonquils," and I'd make my gentlemen callers get out of the carriage and help me gather some. To tell you the truth, Laura, it got to be a kind of a joke. "Look out," they'd say, "here comes that girl and we'll have to spend the afternoon picking jonquils." My mother said, "You can't bring any more jonquils in the house, there aren't any more vases to hold them." "That's quite all right," I said, "I can hold some myself." Malaria fever, your father and jonquils. (*Amanda puts jonquils in Laura's lap and goes out on to fire-escape landing. MUSIC CUE #14 STOPS. THUNDER HEARD.*) I hope they get here before it starts to rain. ~~Have~~ your brother a little extra change so he and Mr. O'Connor could take the service car home. (*Laura puts flowers on armchair R., and crosses to door R.*)

LAURA. Mother!

AMANDA. What's the matter now? (*Re-entering room.*)

LAURA. What did you say his name was?

AMANDA. O'Connor. Why?

LAURA. What is his first name?

AMANDA. (*Crosses to armchair R.*) I don't remember — Oh, yes, I do too—it was—Jim! (*Picks up flowers.*)

LAURA. Oh, Mother, not Jim O'Connor!

AMANDA. Yes, that was it, it was Jim! I've never known a Jim that wasn't nice. (*Crosses L., behind day-bed, puts flowers in vase.*)

LAURA. Are you sure his name was Jim O'Connor?

AMANDA. Why, sure I'm sure. Why?

LAURA. Is he the one that Tom used to know in high school?

AMANDA. He didn't say so. I think he just got to know him— (*Sits on day-bed.*) at the warehouse.

LAURA. There was a Jim O'Connor we both knew in high school. If that is the one that Tom is bringing home to dinner — Oh, Mother, you'd have to excuse me, I wouldn't come to the table!

AMANDA. What's this now? What sort of silly talk is this?

LAURA. You asked me once if I'd ever liked a boy. Don't you remember I showed you this boy's picture?

¹ Optional. Not on regular records of incidental music to the play.