

**ANNIE**

Thanks.

*(MAC exits L. ANNIE looks at the clipping, wishing she could read it.)*

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Start

**LITTLE JAKE**

*(Crossing to sit on trunk.)*

Did ye stedy yer homework?

**ANNIE**

*(Crossing to sit next to LITTLE JAKE.)*

Didn't git no chance. I been practicin' my fancy trick on the motor-bicycle.

**LITTLE JAKE**

How kin I larn ye if'n ye don't do no homework?

**ANNIE**

Ye gotta larn me and ye gotta larn me fast! What's Frank think if'n he knew I couldn't read'n write? You gotta ejjicate me, Jake!

**LITTLE JAKE**

I cain't write myself yet.

**ANNIE**

Never mind. I wisht I was as smart as you, Little Jake.

*(Handing him the clipping.)*

Say, kin ye make this out?

*(He looks at it.)*

**LITTLE JAKE**

*(Handing it back.)*

I cain't read that readin'. I kin only read *my* readin'.

*(Handing ANNIE the primer.)*

Come on. Start here.

**ANNIE**

*(Working hard over the words.)*

I know that word — it's "the."

## LITTLE JAKE

Keep a-goin'.

## ANNIE

*(Pointing the words out, reading with difficulty.)*

"The ... boy ... had ... a ... dog."

*(Delighted, LITTLE JAKE nods; ANNIE nods.)*

"The ... dog's ... name ... was ... " What's that word?

## LITTLE JAKE

Sound it out.

## ANNIE

*(Phonetically, with great exaggeration.)*

"Fff ... rrr ... aaa ... nnn ... kkk." Now that I did it, what the hell is it?

## LITTLE JAKE

*(After a pause.)*

Frank.

## ANNIE

Frank? That's a purdy word ...

## LITTLE JAKE

Go on!

## ANNIE

"The ... boy's ... name ... was ... "

*(She spells it out.)*

"... S-T-E-P-H-E-N." What is it, Jake?

## LITTLE JAKE

*(Looks at book, looks front, then scratches his head.)*

Joe!

## ANNIE

*(Looks at LITTLE JAKE, then pauses.)*

Seems a lot fer jest Joe.

**LITTLE JAKE**

Well, readin's funny sometimes. Go on.

**ANNIE**

"The ... dog ... was ..."

*(Phonetically again.)*

"... Sss ... kkk ... rrr ... aaa ... ttt ..."

*(FRANK enters R.)*

"... ch — ch — ch ..."

**FRANK**

God bless you. Did you catch cold?

*(ANNIE quickly gives LITTLE JAKE the primer and stands.)*

**ANNIE**

Jest tryin' to larn Little Jake here how to do his readin', but he's shore thick-headed — ain't ye, Jake?

**LITTLE JAKE**

*(To FRANK.)*

I'm sure thick headed, ...

*(To ANNIE.)*

... ain't I, Annie?

**ANNIE**

You go in the eatin' car and git yer supper.

**LITTLE JAKE**

Annie reads good.

*(Holding primer out to her.)*

Show him, Annie! Start here.

**ANNIE**

Git ... Git ...

*(He runs off laughing.)*

I was jest lookin' at something about me in this paper.

*(Holding clipping out to FRANK.)*

Wanna read it?

FRANK

No, you read it to me.

ANNIE

No, ... you read it. I wanna hear how it sounds when you speak it!  
*(He takes the clipping and she sits on the trunk.)*

FRANK

"Mr. Butler's assistant, whose name is not on the program, performed only one trick, but she promises to become a fine marksman."

ANNIE

Real nice of that paper man.

*(FRANK hands clipping back to ANNIE and sits next to her on trunk. She puts clipping in her pocket.)*

FRANK

People are beginning to notice you, Annie. The other day I talked Charlie into putting your name someplace on the billboard.

ANNIE

*(Thrilled)*

On the program too?

FRANK

Yep. And I told him I was gonna let you shoot the egg off the poodle's head! Think you can do it?

ANNIE

Kin I! I kin do it without breakin' the yolk!

FRANK

Well, honey, you do it in Minneapolis.

ANNIE

Thanks, Frank. But I got a real fancy trick I bin practicin' to surprise you with.

FRANK

Well, I'd like to see it sometime. What is it?

**ANNIE**

I ain't talkin'. It's a surprise.

**FRANK**

That's fine. I like you to be ambitious. I want you to improve, but it'll take time.

**ANNIE**

All I wanna be is a pink and white woman like the kind ye said he liked.

**FRANK**

You're gettin' pinker and whiter every day!

**ANNIE**

That ain't pig-wash, is it?

*(FRANK gets idea, rises and crosses D.R.)*

**FRANK**

What'd you say if some day I might even be willing to make you my partner?

*(As if seeing it on a marquis.)*

"Butler and Oakley."

**ANNIE**

*(Overcome)*

Oh, no!

**FRANK**

Never wanted a partner before, but now maybe I might.

**ANNIE**

*(Dreaming)*

"Oakley and Butler."

**FRANK**

*(Not dreaming.)*

"Butler and Oakley."

**ANNIE**

*(Innocently)*

What's the difference?

FRANK

*(Crossing to ANNIE.)*

You've got to do it in alphabetical order.

*(Putting his foot on the trunk.)*

Annie, have you ever loved anybody?

ANNIE

Somebody who loved me back?

FRANK

Yeah.

ANNIE

End Then I ain't. But I heard tell about it!

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### Music 13: THEY SAY IT'S WONDERFUL

RUMORS FLY AND YOU CAN'T TELL WHERE THEY START,  
'SPEC'LLY WHEN IT CONCERNS A PERSON'S HEART.  
I'VE HEARD TALES THAT COULD SET MY HEART AGLOW.  
WISH I KNEW IF THE THINGS I HEARD ARE SO.

THEY SAY THAT FALLING IN LOVE IS WONDERFUL,  
IT'S WONDERFUL, SO THEY SAY.  
AND WITH A MOON UP ABOVE IT'S WONDERFUL,  
IT'S WONDERFUL, SO THEY TELL ME.

I CAN'T RECALL WHO SAID IT,  
I KNOW I NEVER READ IT.  
I ONLY KNOW THEY TELL ME THAT LOVE IS GRAND,  
AND  
THE THING THAT'S KNOWN AS ROMANCE IS WONDERFUL,  
WONDERFUL IN EV'RY WAY,  
SO THEY SAY.

FRANK

RUMORS FLY AND THEY OFTEN LEAVE A DOUBT,  
BUT YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE TO FIND OUT.  
EV'RYTHING THAT YOU'VE HEARD IS REALLY SO.  
I'VE BEEN THERE ONCE OR TWICE AND I SHOULD KNOW.