

## J - Chris & Keller

KELLER. What's she going to say? Maybe we ought to tell her before she sees it.

CHRIS. She saw it.

KELLER. How could she see it? I was the first one up. She was still in bed.

CHRIS. She was out here when it broke.

KELLER. When?

CHRIS. About four this morning. *(Indicating window above them.)* I heard it cracking and I woke up and looked out. She was standing right here when it cracked.

KELLER. What was she doing out here four in the morning?

CHRIS. I don't know. When it cracked she ran back into the house and cried in the kitchen.

KELLER. Did you talk to her?

CHRIS. No, I...I figured the best thing was to leave her alone. *(Pause.)*

KELLER. *(Deeply touched.)* She cried hard?

CHRIS. I could hear her right through the floor of my room.

KELLER. *(Slight pause.)* What was she doing out here at that hour? *(Chris silent. An undertone of anger showing.)* She's dreaming about him again. She's walking around at night.

CHRIS. I guess she is.

KELLER. She's getting just like after he died. *(Slight pause.)* What's the meaning of that?

CHRIS. I don't know the meaning of it. *(Slight pause.)* But I know one thing, Dad. We've made a terrible mistake with Mother.

KELLER. What?

CHRIS. Being dishonest with her. That kind of thing always pays off, and now it's paying off.

KELLER. What do you mean, dishonest?

CHRIS. You know Larry's not coming back and I know it. Why do we allow her to go on thinking that we believe with her?

KELLER. What do you want to do, argue with her?

CHRIS. I don't want to argue with her, but it's time she realized that nobody believes Larry is alive anymore. *(Keller simply moves away, thinking, looking at the ground.)* Why shouldn't she dream of him, walk the nights waiting for him? Do we contradict her? Do we say straight out that we have no hope anymore? That we haven't had any hope for years now?

KELLER. *(Frightened at the thought.)* You can't say that to her.

CHRIS. We've got to say it to her.

KELLER. How're you going to prove it? Can you prove it?

CHRIS. For God's sake, three years! Nobody comes back after three years. It's insane.

KELLER. To you it is, and to me. But not to her. You can talk yourself blue in the face, but there's no body and there's no grave, so where are you?

CHRIS. Sit down, Dad. I want to talk to you.

KELLER. *(Looks at him searchingly a moment, and sitting...)* The trouble is the Goddam newspapers. Every month some boy turns up from nowhere, so the next one is going to be Larry, so...

CHRIS. All right, all right, listen to me. *(Slight pause. Keller sits on settee.)* You know why I asked Annie here, don't you?

KELLER. *(He knows, but...)* Why?

CHRIS. You know.

KELLER. Well, I got an idea, but... What's the story?

CHRIS. I'm going to ask her to marry me. *(Slight pause.)*

KELLER. *(Nods.)* Well, that's only your business, Chris.

CHRIS. You know it's not only my business.

KELLER. What do you want me to do? You're old enough to know your own mind.

CHRIS. *(Asking, annoyed.)* Then it's all right, I'll go ahead with it?

KELLER. Well, you want to be sure Mother isn't going to...

CHRIS. Then it isn't just my business.

KELLER. I'm just sayin'...

CHRIS. Sometimes you infuriate me, you know that? Isn't it your