

three months afterward.* But she was such a sweet woman—and such a good cook we didn't want to lose her—so brother married her.

MORTIMER. I'm—not—really—a—Brewster?

MARTHA. Now, don't feel badly about it, dear.

ABBY. And Elaine, it won't make any difference to you?

MORTIMER. (*Turning slowly to face Elaine. His voice rising.*)
Elaine! Did you hear? Do you understand? I'm a bastard!

(Elaine leaps into his arms. The two aunts watch them, then Martha starts U. L. a few steps.)

MARTHA. Well, now I really must see about breakfast.

ELAINE. (*Leading Mortimer to R. door; opening door.*) Mortimer's coming over to my house. Father's gone to Philadelphia, and Mortimer and I are going to have breakfast together.

MORTIMER. Yes, I need some coffee—I've had quite a night.

ABBY. In that case I should think you'd want to get to bed.

MORTIMER. (*With a sidelong glance at Elaine.*) I do. (*They exit R., closing door.*)

(Witherspoon enters on balcony, carrying two canteens. He starts downstairs when Teddy enters carrying large canoe paddle. He is dressed in Panama outfit with pack on his back.)

TEDDY. One moment, Witherspoon. Take this with you! (*He exits off balcony again as Witherspoon comes on downstairs to sofa. He puts canteens on sofa and leans paddle against wall.*)

(At the same time Rooney and the two cops with Jonathan between them enter. The cops have twistlers around Jonathan's wrists. Rooney enters first and crosses to R. C. The other three stop D. L. of table. The aunts are R. of the table.)

ROONEY. We won't need the wagon. My car's out front.

MARTHA. Oh, you leaving now, Jonathan?

ROONEY. Yeah—he's going back to Indiana. There's some people

* Directors who may wish to modify the situation mentioned by Abby may add the following to the text after the words "three months afterward": "...her poor husband had just died, and she was such," etc. Then add, "So we adopted the baby and brought him up ourselves." Mortimer's line "I'm a bastard" will, in this case, be omitted.

there want to take care of him for the rest of his life. Come on.

(Rooney opens door as the two cops and Jonathan cross to R. C. Abby steps D.S. after they pass.)

ABBY. Well, Jonathan, it's nice to know you have some place to go.

MARTHA. We're leaving too.

ABBY. Yes, we're going to Happy Dale.

JONATHAN. Then this house is seeing the last of the Brewsters.

MARTHA. Unless Mortimer wants to live here.

JONATHAN. I have a suggestion to make. Why don't you turn this property over to the church?

ABBY. Well, we never thought of that.

JONATHAN. After all, it *should* be part of the cemetery.

ROONEY. All right, get going, I'm a busy man.

JONATHAN. *(Holding his ground for his one last word.)* Goodbye, Aunties. Well, I can't better my record now but neither can you—at least I have that satisfaction. The score stands even, *twelve to twelve.* *(Jonathan and the cops exit R., as the aunts look out after them.)*

(Witherspoon crosses above to window seat and stands quietly looking out the window. His back is to the aunts.)

MARTHA. *(Starting toward R. door to close it.)* Jonathan always was a mean boy. Never could stand to see anyone get ahead of him. *(She closes door.)*

ABBY. *(Turning slowly around L. as she speaks.)* I wish we could show him he isn't so smart! *(Her eyes fall on Witherspoon. She studies him. Martha turns from door and sees Abby's contemplation. Abby speaks sweetly.)* Mr. Witherspoon? *(Witherspoon turns around facing them.)* Does your family live with you at Happy Dale?

WITHERSPOON. I have no family.

ABBY. Oh—

MARTHA. *(Stepping into room.)* Well, I suppose you consider everyone at Happy Dale your family?

WITHERSPOON. I'm afraid you don't quite understand. As head of the institution, I have to keep quite aloof.

ABBY. That must make it very lonely for you.

WITHERSPOON. It does. But my duty is my duty.

ABBY. *(Turning to Martha.)* Well, Martha— *(Martha takes her cue*

and goes to sideboard for bottle of wine. Bottle in L. cupboard is empty. She puts it back and takes out full bottle from R. cupboard. She brings bottle and wine glass to table. Abby continues talking.) If Mr. Witherspoon won't join us for breakfast, I think at least we should offer him a glass of elderberry wine.

WITHERSPOON. (*Severely.*) Elderberry wine?

MARTHA. We make it ourselves.

WITHERSPOON. (*Melting slightly.*) Why, yes... (*Severely again.*) Of course, at Happy Dale our relationship will be more formal—but here— (*He sits in chair L. of table as Martha pours wine. Abby is beside Martha.*) You don't see much elderberry wine nowadays—I thought I'd had my last glass of it.

ABBY. Oh, no—

MARTHA. (*Handing him glass of wine.*) No, here it is.

(Witherspoon toasts the ladies and lifts glass to his lips, but the curtain falls before he does...)

(For a curtain call it is suggested the twelve elderly gentlemen file out of the cellar entrance, stand in a line across the stage, and bow.)

THE END