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SF PERUSALS

Not About Nightingales

by Tennessee Willliams

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH

FOUNDED 1830

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ISBN 978-0-573-62711-8 Printed in U.S.A. #16110

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NOT ABOUT NIGHTINGALES
is presented by arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.
on behalf of The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee.

Originally Produced on Broadway in New York City by
Carole Shorenstein Hays, Stuart Thompson, Marsha Williams,
Kelly Gonda, Royal National Theatre, Alley Theatre and
Moving Theatre

CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THEODORE MANN and PAUL LIBIN

Carole Shorenstein Hays Stuart Thompson Marsha Garces Williams Kelly Gonda

Royal National Theatre Alley Theatre Moving Theatre

Present

Corin Redgrave Finbar Lynch

James Black Sherri Parker Lee

in

NOT ABOUT NIGHTINGALES

BY

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

With

Jude Akuwudike Chico Andrade Mark Dexter Sandra Searles Dickinson

Alex Giannini Dion Graham Tom Hodgkins Bruce Kirkpatrick Joel Leffert J.P. Linton

Matthew Floyd Miller Noble Shropshire Daniel Freedom Stewart Richard Ziman

Designed by
Richard Hoover

Costume Design by
Karyl Newman

Lighting Design by
Chris Parry

Associate Director
Stephen Rayne

Sound Design by
Christopher Shutt

Music by
Steven Edis

Casting by
Liz Woodman

Fights by
Malcolm Ranson

General Manager
Florie Seery

Technical Supervisor
Aurora Productions

Production Stage Manager
Michael Brunner

Associate Producer
Phyllis Wattis

Directed by
Trevor Nunn

"Not About Nightingales" is presented through special arrangement with The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee.

The producers wish to express their appreciation to Theatre Development Fund for its support of this production.

NOT ABOUT NIGHTINGALES opened in New York on February 25, 1999 at Circle in the Square Theatre. It was directed by Trevor Nunn, Set Design by Richard Hoover, Costume Design by Karyl Newman, Lighting Design by Chris Parry, Sound Design by Christopher Shutt, Music Arranged by Steven Edis, Production Supervisor was Aurora Productions and Production Stage Manager was Michael Brunner.

CAST LIST
(In Order of Appearance)

THE VOICE OF THE LORELEI ..... Mark Heenehan
MRS. BRISTOL ..... Sandra Searles Dickinson
EVA CRANE ..... Sherri Parker Lee
JIM ALLISON (Canary Jim) ..... Finbar Lynch
BOSS WHALEN, the Warden ..... Corin Redgrave
JACK BRISTOL (Sailor Jack) ..... Matthew Miller
SCHULTZ, a Guard ..... Richard Ziman
BUTCH O'FALLON ..... James Black
THE QUEEN ..... Juke Akuwudike
JOE ..... Alex Giannini
McBURNEY, a Guard ..... J.P. Linton
OLIVER ARMSTED (Ollie) ..... Dion Graham
SHAPIRO ..... Joel Leffert
JEREMY TROUT (Swifty) ..... Mark Dexter
MEX ..... Chico Andrade
KRAUSE ..... Daniel Stewart
ALBERTS ..... Noble Shropshire
TOM ..... Tom Hodgkins
CHAPLAIN ..... Tom Hodgkins
REVEREND HOOKER ..... Noble Shropshire
GOLDIE ..... Sandra Searles Dickinson
CHICK ..... Bruce Kirkpatrick
GUARDS, CONVICTS, TROOPERS ..... Chico Andrade
Tom Hodgkins
Bruce Kirkpatrick
Matthew Miller
Daniel Stewart

The action of the play takes place in a large American prison
during the summer of 1938.
The conditions which the play presents are those
of no particular prison but a composite picture of many.

ACT I

Opening

LOUD-SPEAKER. "Yeah, this is the Lorelei excursion steamer. All-day trip around Sandy-Point. Leaves 8 A.M., return at Midnight. Sight-seeing, dancing. Magnificent skyline of the city against the early morning sunlight. It's still a little misty around the tops of them big towers downtown. Hear them bells ringing? It's eight o'clock sharp. Sun's bright as a dollar, swell day, bright, warm, makes you mighty proud to be alive. Yes, Ma'am! There it is! You can see it now, folks. That's the Island. Sort of misty still. See them big stone walls. Dynamite-proof, escape-proof! Thirty-five hundred men in there, folks, and lots of 'em 'll never get out! Oh, oh! There goes the band, folks! Dancing on the Upper deck! Dancing, folks! Lorelei Lou and her eight Lorelights! Dancing on the Upper deck - dancing! - dancing! - dancing ...

(Blackout)

Episode One

Afternoon of Monday, July 25th, 1938
"Miss Crane Applies for a Job"

(Spot MRS. BRISTOL is seated outside WARDEN's office on bench. MRS. BRISTOL is a worn matron in black, holding a napkin-covered basket on her lap. EVA enters and sits on bench, nervously. She grips her pocket-book tensely and stares straight ahead.)

MRS. B. Your hat!

EVA. My hat?
MRS. B. Yes, look!
EVA. Oh, dear!
MRS. B. It's those pigeons, the little rascals!
EVA. Yes, they're much too casual about things.
MRS. B. Here.

(MRS. BRISTOL hands EVA a handkerchief.)

EVA. Thanks.
MRS. B. It's such a nice hat, too.
EVA. Oh, it's quite old.

(She puts the hat back on and drops her purse.)

MRS. B. You're nervous.
EVA. So nervous I could scream!
MRS. B. Is it your husband?
EVA. Who?
MRS. B. That you're coming to see about?
EVA. Oh, no. No I'm coming to see about a job.
MRS. B. A job? Here?
EVA. Yes, here. I've heard there's a vacancy.
MRS. B. But wouldn't you find it an awfully depressing sort of place to work in?
EVA. I don't think so. It's not an ordinary prison. It's supposed to be a model institution. Everything's done scientifically they say. They've got experts - in psychology and sociology and things like that you know!
MRS. B. Well!
EVA. The old idea used to be punishment of crime but nowadays it's social rehabilitation.
MRS. B. Now just imagine! How did you come to know?
EVA. I read all about it in the Sunday Supplement! *(JIM enters.)* May I see the Warden?
JIM. Sorry. He's not back yet.

(Exits into office.)

EVA. Oh.

MRS. B. I've got a son in here. He used to be a sailor. Jack's his name.

EVA. A sailor?

MRS. B. Yes, he was one of Uncle Sam's navy boys. Till he got in trouble over some kind of a woman.

EVA. What a shame!

MRS. B. Yes, wasn't it though - the common slut! - Excuse me but that's what she was. Oh, my Scott!

EVA. What?

MRS. B. I've got the most awful palpitations!

EVA. You're sick? Let me get you some water!

MRS. B. No thanks, dear. I'll just take one of my phenobarbital tablets and I'll be all right in a jiffy. I've been under such a strain lately with Jack on my mind all the time.

EVA. You shouldn't be worried. They have less serious trouble here than any penitentiary in the country. Mr. Whalen, the Warden, is very highly respected.

MRS. B. Well, I do hope you're right for Jack's sake. But I haven't gotten much comfort out of his letters. Especially the last one. It was that one which upset me so. It was scribbled in such a bad hand and - well - it sounded sort of - *feverish* to me! - What is Klondike?

EVA. Klondike? Part of Alaska!

MRS. B. That's what I thought. But in Jack's letter he said he'd been sent down there and it was as hot as - well. He said they wouldn't let him write me about it if they knew, so he was sneakin' the letter out by one of the boys.

EVA. How long does he have to stay here?

MRS. B. Three years!

EVA. Oh, that's not so long.

MRS. B. It seems like forever to me.

EVA. He'll probably come out a better and stronger boy than before he went in.

MRS. B. Oh, no. They couldn't make a better and stronger boy than Jack was.

EVA. I'm going right in and make that young fellow tell me when Mr. Whalen will be here.

MRS. B. Yes, do! Tell him how long I've been waiting!

(EVA enters the office.)

EVA. I beg your pardon.

JIM. For what?

EVA. For intruding like this. But I couldn't sit still any longer. When can I see Mr. Whalen?

JIM. What about?

EVA. A job.

JIM. He's out right now. Inspecting the grounds.

EVA. Oh. Will it take him long?

JIM. That depends on how much grounds he feels like inspecting.

EVA. Oh.

JIM. Sometimes inspecting the grounds doesn't mean inspecting the grounds.

EVA. Doesn't it?

JIM. No. Sometimes it's an idiomatic expression for having a couple of beers in the back room at Tony's which is a sort of unofficial club-house for the prison-staff - Would you like to sit down?

EVA. About how long do you suppose I'd have to wait?

JIM. It's a hot afternoon. He might do a lot of ground-inspection and then again he might not. His actions are pretty unpredictable. That's a good word.

EVA. What?

JIM. Unpredictable. Anything with five syllables is a good word.

EVA. You like long words.

JIM. They're my stock-in-trade. I'm supposed to use a lot of 'em to impress you with my erudition. There's another one right there!

EVA. Erudition?

JIM. Yes, only four but it's unusual. I get 'em all out of this big book.

EVA. Dictionary?

JIM. Webster's Unabridged. Y'see I'm one of the exhibition pieces.

EVA. Are you really!

JIM. I'm supposed to tell you that when I came in here I was just an ordinary grifter. But look at me now. I'm reading Spengler's *Decline of the West* and I'm editor of the Prison Monthly. Ask me what is an archaeopteryx.

EVA. What is it?

JIM. An extinct species of reptile-bird. Here's our latest issue.

EVA. Of - what?

JIM. The Archaeopteryx. Our monthly publication.

EVA. Why do you call it that?

JIM. It sounds impressive. Do you know what an amaranth is?

EVA. No. What is it?

JIM. A flower that never dies. *(Lifts book.)* I came across it in here. One of the classical poets compares it to love. What's your opinion of that?

EVA. Well, I - what's yours?

JIM. I wouldn't know. I started my present career at the age of sixteen.

EVA. That early.

JIM. Yes, the usual case of bad influences. And at that age of course - love is something you dream about and blush when you look at yourself in the mirror next morning! Say, d'you know that song?

EVA. What song?

JIM. "Ah, tis love and love alone the world is seeking!" A guy sang it in chapel last night - Is that on the level?

EVA. Well, I - not exactly.

JIM. You're inclined to admit a few qualifications?

EVA. Yes. For instance what I'm seeking is a job. And a new pair of stockings.

JIM. They look good to me.

EVA. They're worn to shreds!

JIM. Well, perhaps I'm prejudiced!

(EVA clears her throat. JIM clears his.)

EVA. *(Picking up newspaper.)* "Prison: the Door to Opportunity!"

JIM. Yes, that's one of my best editorials. I got ten years of copper for writing that.

EVA. Copper?

JIM. Time off your sentence for good behavior. I've got ten years of copper stashed away in the files and most of it's for extoling the inspirational qualities of prison life - *(MRS. BRISTOL enters timidly, clutching her basket.)* Hello.

MRS. B. How do you do? Is Mr. Whalen in yet?

JIM. No, he's still inspecting the grounds.

MRS. B. Oh, I do so want to see him this afternoon. I'm - I'm Jack Bristol's mother.

JIM. Sailor Jack?

MRS. B. Yes - yes! You - you know him?

JIM. Slightly.

MRS. B. How is my boy?

JIM. Sorry. I'm not allowed to give out information.

MRS. B. Oh.

JIM. You'd better talk to Mr. Whalen tomorrow morning.

MRS. B. What time, please?

JIM. Ten o'clock.

MRS. B. Ten o'clock. Could you give him these now? *(Sets basket down.)* I'm afraid they'll get stale if they're kept any longer. They're for my boy.

(She turns slowly and goes out.)

EVA. Couldn't you tell her something to relieve her mind?

JIM. Not about Sailor Jack!

EVA. Why not?

JIM. He's gone - stir-bugs.

EVA. You mean?

JIM. *(Touching forehead.)* Cracked up in here. It's sort of an occupational disease among convicts.

EVA. But they said in the Sunday Supplement -

JIM. I know. They interviewed me and the Warden.

EVA. You didn't tell them the truth?

JIM. What is it that Plato said about truth? Truth is - truth is - Funny I can't remember! Was it the Sunday Supplement that gave you the idea of getting a job in here?

EVA. That and my land-lady. Her brother-in-law is Mr. McBurney one of the prison guards.

JIM. Mac's a pretty good screw.

EVA. What?

JIM. That means a guard in here. Here's one of our sample menus. It shows what a connie gets to eat every day. You can see that it compares quite favorably with the bill-of-fare at any well-known boarding school.

(BOSS WHALEN enters. He is a powerful man, but with coarse good looks.)

BOSS. Hello, hello there! Breezy day, hot breezy day! *(Belches)* Too much ground-inspection! Excuse me, lady, I'm going to do a strip-tease! Yep, it's a mighty wind - feels like it comes out of an oven! Reminds me of those - those beautiful golden-brown biscuits my old mother used to bake! What's this? *(Removes cover from basket.)* Speak of biscuits and what turns up but a nice batch of home-made cookies! Have one young lady - Jim boy! *(JIM takes two.)* Uh-huh, you've got an awful big paw, Jimmy! *(Laughs)* Show the new Arky-what's-it to Miss Daily news - or is it the Morning Star? Have a chair! I'll be right with you - *(Vanishes for a moment downstairs.)* Sweat, sweat, sweat's all I do these hot breezy days!

JIM. *(Sotto voce.)* He thinks you're a newspaper woman.

BOSS. Turn on that fan. *(Emerging)* Well, now, let's see -

EVA. To begin with I'm not -

BOSS. You've probably come here to question me about that ex-convicts story in that damned yellow sheet down there in Wilkes County - That stuff about getting Pellagra in here - Jimmy, hand me that sample menu!

JIM. She's not a reporter.

BOSS. Aw. - What is your business, young lady?

EVA. I understand that there's a vacancy here. Mr. McBurney, my landlady's brother-in-law, told her that you were needing a new stenographer and I'm sure that I can qualify for the position. I'm a college graduate, Mr. Whalen, I've had three years of business experience - references with me - but, oh - I've - I've had such

abominable luck these last six months - the last place I worked - the business recession set in - they had to cut down on their sales-force - they gave me a wonderful letter - I've got it with me.

(She opens her purse and spills contents on floor.)

BOSS. Yeah?

EVA. Could you give me a job? - Please, I - I'm terribly nervous, I - if I don't get a job soon I'll -

BOSS. What? Go off the deep end?

EVA. Yes, something like that!

BOSS. Well, Miss - uh -

EVA. Crane! Eva Crane!

BOSS. They call that window the "Quick Way Out!" It's the only one in the house without bars. It don't need bars. It's right over the bay. So if it's suicide you got in mind that window is at your disposal. No, Miss Crane. Next time you apply for a job don't pull a sob-story. What your business executive is interested in is your potential value, not your - your personal misfortunes!

EVA. I see. Then I -

BOSS. Hold on a minute.

EVA. Yes?

BOSS. There's just one pre-requisite for a job in this office. Jimmy will explain that to you.

EVA. Yes?

JIM. The ability to keep your mouth shut except when you're given specific instructions to speak!

BOSS. Think you could do that?

EVA. Yes.

JIM. The motor-boat leaves the dock at seven-forty-five in the morning.

EVA. Thanks - Yes, *thanks!*

(Turns quickly and goes out, blind with joy.)

BOSS. What do you think of her, Jimmy boy? Okay, huh?

JIM. Yes, Sir.

BOSS. Yes, Siree! Dizzy as hell - But she's got a shape on her that would knock the bricks out of a Federal Pen!

(Sudden booming laughter.)
(Blackout)

Episode Two

Evening of July 25th
"Sailor Jack and his Mother!"

(Guards march the convicts in.)

SCHULTZ. *(2 shrill whistles.)* Hep, hep, hep, hep. That's what you sons-a-bitches get for deliberate sabotage. Hear that, O'Fallon? Move 'em out!

(Spot on a cell. Electric lights from the corridor throw the shadow of bars across the floor. The cell is empty except for the figure of SAILOR JACK. His face has the vacant look of the schizophrenic, and he is mumbling inaudibly to himself.)

SAILOR. Where? Port Said! - And not one of 'em but woulda done it 'emselves if they'd 'ad ha'f a chance! *(Begins to sing.)*
"Auprès de ma blonde
Il fait bon, fait bon, fait bon!
Auprès de ma blonde
qu'il fait bon dormir!"
No chance for advancement, huh? What would you say if I told you that I was Admiral of the whole bitchin' navy.

SCHULTZ. Hep, hep, hep.

SAILOR.
"Je donnerai Versailles,
Paris et Saint Denis -"

SCHULTZ. *(Whistle)* Fall out! *(Long bell. Door of cell clangs open and CONVICTS enter.)* Lights out in five minutes.

(Whistle)

BUTCH. Ahh, yuh fruit, go toot yuh goddam horn outa here. Mus' think they runnin' a stinkin' sweat-shop this workin' over-time stuff. Git yuh task done or come back after supper. Goddam machine got stuck. Delib'rate sabotage, he calls it. I'd like to sabotage his guts. *(To QUEEN.)* What happened to you this mornin'?

QUEEN. I got an awful pain in the back of my neck and flipped out. When I come to I was in the hospital. They was stickin' a needle in my arm - Say! What does plus four mean?

JOE. Christ! It means -

BUTCH. Pocket yuh marbles!

QUEEN. Naw. Is it bad?

JOE. We're in swell sassiety, Butch. A lunatic an' a case a the syph!

QUEEN. The Syph? Naw! It don't mean that!

SCHULTZ. Lights out!

(Whistle. GUARDS close cell doors.)

SAILOR.

"Auprès de ma blonde
Il fait bon, fait bon, fait bon!
Auprès de ma blonde -"

SCHULTZ. Cut the cackle in there! It's after lights!

BUTCH. God damn it, can't you see he's blown his top?

JOE. Yeah, get him out of here!

SCHULTZ. He's putting on an act.

SAILOR.

"Je donnerai Versailles,
Paris et saint Denis -"

SCHULTZ. You take another trip to Klondike, Sailor, it won't be on a round-trip ticket!

BUTCH. It's Klondike that got him like this. He's been ravin' ever since you brung him upstairs. You must've cooked his brains out of him down there, Schultz.

SAILOR. "Le tour d'Eiffel aussi!"

SCHULTZ. Dummy up, the lot of you! One more squawk an' I'll call the strong-arm squad!

QUEEN. Mr. Schultz!
SCHULTZ. Yeah?
QUEEN. What does plus four mean?

(SCHULTZ laughs and moves off.)

BUTCH. If I wasn' scared of losin' all my copper I'd reach through an' grab that bastard. I'd rattle them pea-pod brains of his 'n roll 'em out on the floor like a pair of dice. What time is it?
JOE. Ten-thirty.
BUTCH. Mac comes on duty now.
JOE. You think he'll take the Sailor out?
BUTCH. I'll tell him to.
QUEEN. Naw. It's just indigestion. That's what I told 'em, I said the food is no good. It don't set good in my stomach. Spaghetti, spaghetti, spaghetti! I said I'm sick a spaghetti!
SAILOR.
"Auprès de ma blonde
Il fait bon, fait bon, fait bon!
Auprès de ma blonde
qu'il fair bon dormir!"

(BUTCH clips him with a fist.)

JOE. What did you do that for?
BUTCH. You wanta tangle with the Strong-arm Squadron on account of him? *(McBURNEY - whistle: Doors clang.)* They're changin' now. Who's 'at? McBurney?
MAC. What do you want, Butch?
BUTCH. For Chrissake git this kid outta here.
MAC. Which kid?
BUTCH. Sailor Jack. He's been stir-bugs since they brung him upstairs a week ago Tuesday.
MAC. What's he doing?
BUTCH. He's out right now. I had to conk him one.
MAC. What did they tell you about roughin' up the boys?
BUTCH. Roughin? ME? Lissen! - Ask Joe, ask anybody, ask the Canary - the kid had blown his top - Schultz was gonna call the Strong

Arm squad an' have us all thrown in Klondike cause he wouldn't quit singin' them dirty French songs! Ain't that right Joe?

JOE. Sure, Mac.

(Whistle)

MAC. Well, it's no put in front of mine. He should've done his task in the shop.

MAC. He done his task pretty good.

JOE. That boy worked hard.

MAC. Not hard enough to suit the Boss. *(Enter GUARDS.)* Awright, git him outta here. Put him in isolation tonight an' have him looked after tomorrow.

QUEEN. Mr. McBurney ... What does plus four mean?

JIM. *(Entering)* Hey, Mac.

QUEEN. Mr. McBurney -

(MAC goes out with GUARDS carrying SAILOR. Bird calls in hall.)

BUTCH. Who's at? Allison?

SAILOR. *(Down hall.)*

"Auprès de ma blonde
Il fait bon, fait bon, fait bon!"

BUTCH. Hey, Canary! Allison!

JIM. What do you want, Butch?

BUTCH. Next time you're in a huddle with the boss tell him the Angels in Hall C have put another black mark on his name for Sailor Jack.

JIM. I'll tell him that.

BUTCH. Tell him some day we're going to appoint a special committee of one to come down there an' settle up the score - You hear me, Stool?

JIM. I hear you.

BUTCH. Just think - I used to be cell-mates with him. I lie awake at night regrettin' all the times I had a chance to split his guts - but didn't!

JOE. Why didnt'cha?

BUTCH. That was before he started workin' for the boss. But now he's number three on the Angel's Records. First Whalen, then Schultz and then the Stool! You hear that, Stool?

JIM. Yes, I hear you, Butch.

BUTCH. That's good. I'm glad you do.

JIM. I know you're glad.

JOE. What's he say?

BUTCH. He says he knows I'm glad.

JOE. He oughta know. Wonder he don't go stir-bugs, too. Nobody have nothin' to do with him but Ollie.

QUEEN. Allison! Hey! Jim! What does plus four mean?

JIM. Who got plus four?

QUEEN. I have. What does it mean, Jim?

JIM. It means your physical condition is four points above perfect.

QUEEN. Aw. These bastards had me worried.

BUTCH. Foghorns. It's thick as soup outside - Lissen!

JOE. What?

BUTCH. Excursion steamer.

JOE. Which one?

BUTCH. The Lorelei.

JOE. Lookit them lights on her, will yuh. Red, white, green, yellow!

BUTCH. Hear that orchester?

JOE. What're they playin'?

BUTCH. Roses a Picardy!

JOE. That's an old one.

BUTCH. It come up the year I got sent up. Why, I remember dancin' to that piece. At the Princess ballroom. With Goldie. She requested that number ev'ry time I took her on the floor. We danced there the night they pinched me. On the way out - right at the turn-style - them six bulls met me - six of 'em - that's how many it took - they had the wagon waitin' at the curb.

JOE. Last time it was four bulls. You're gettin' less conservative, Butch.

BUTCH. Roses a Picardy. I'd like to dance that number one more time. With Goldie.

JOE. Maybe it was her that put the finger on you.

BUTCH. Naw. Not Goldie. I bet that girl's still holdin' the torch for me.

JOE. Keep your illusions, Butch, if they're a comfort to yuh. But I bet if Goldie was still holdin' all the torches that she's held before an' after you got put in the stir she'd throw more light across the water than a third-alarm fire.

QUEEN. Where's my manicure set?

BUTCH. I wonder if a guy is any good at sixty.

JOE. What do you mean?

BUTCH. You know. With women.

JOE. I guess it depends on the guy.

BUTCH. I'll still be good. But twenty years is a lot of time to wait.

QUEEN. Has anybody seen my manicure set?

BUTCH. You know there's a window in Boss Whalen's office from which a guy could jump right into the Bay.

JOE. Yeah. The Quick Way Out.

BUTCH. I was just thinkin' that it would be a good way to kill two birds with a stone. Rub him out an' jump through that window for a get-away. Providin' you could swim. But me I can't swim a goddam stroke. I wish that I'd learned how before I came in here.

JOE. Wouldn't do you no good. Nobody's ever swum it yet.

BUTCH. I'd like to try - They say some people swim instinctive like a duck.

JOE. You'd take a chance on that?

BUTCH. Naw. I'm scared of water.

QUEEN. I put it here last night. Butch, did you see it?

BUTCH. What?

QUEEN. My manicure set.

BUTCH. It's gone out wit' the slop bucket.

QUEEN. What did you do it for?

BUTCH. It stunk the place up. Smelt like rotten bananas.

QUEEN. All my life I've been persecuted by people because I'm refined. Because I'm sensitive I been persecuted all my life!

BUTCH. Yeah.

QUEEN. Lord, sometimes I wish I was dead. Oh, Lord, Lord, Lord! I wish I was dead.

(Blackout)

Episode Three

Morning of Tuesday, July 26th
"The Prognosis"

(Spot Warden's office. BOSS is looking at a racing form-sheet when EVA CRANE, his secretary, enters.)

BOSS. Anybody outside?
EVA. Yes. That woman.
BOSS. What woman?
EVA. The one from Wisconsin. She's still waiting -
BOSS. I told you I don't want to see her. *(Talking into phone.)* How's the track, Bert? Fast? Okay.

(Sailor Jack's mother, MRS. BRISTOL, has quietly entered. She carries a blanket.)

MRS. B. I beg your pardon, I - You see I'm Jack Bristol's mother, and I've been wanting to have a talk with you so long about - about my boy!
BOSS. I'll call you back. Set down. I'm pretty short on time.
MRS. B. I won't take much. To begin with, Mr. Whalen, I never felt the jury did exactly right in giving Jack three years. But that's done now. I've got to look to the future.
BOSS. Yes, the future - that's right.
MRS. B. I haven't heard from Jack lately. He'd been writing me once a week till just lately.
BOSS. Lots of boys get careless about their correspondence.
MRS. B. For two years not a week passed without a letter. Then suddenly they stopped coming. Naturally I felt rather anxious.
BOSS. Jim!
JIM. *(Entering)* Yes, sir?
BOSS. Check on a boy named Bristol.

MRS. B. Thank you, I - I came all the way from Wisconsin.

BOSS. Long trip, huh? Wisconsin's where they make all that fine cheese.

MRS. B. Yes, we're very proud of our dairy products up there.

BOSS. The manufacture the best cheese this side of Switzerland. Yes, Siree!

MRS. B. Jack's last letter was strange. He wasn't transferred to any other prison, was he? Because he kept complaining all through his letter about how terribly hot it was in a place called Klondike. His penmanship has always been quite irregular but this was so bad I could scarcely read it at all - I thought possibly he wasn't well when he wrote it - feverish, you know. I - I brought this wool comforter with me. For Jack. I know it's not easy, Mr. Whalen, to make exceptions. But in Jack's case where there are so many, *many* considerations - You see, Jack's father - well, he was a Methodist minister and his views naturally differed quite a bit from most young boys' -

BOSS. *(Impatiently to JIM.)* Have you found that card?

JIM. *(Stalling)* Not yet.

MRS. B. He was so - so uncompromising, even with poor Jack. So Jack left home. Of course it was against my wishes but - *(Opens her bag and produces sheaf of letters.)* Oh, those long marvelous letters that he wrote, when he was at sea. If you would only read them you'd see for yourself what an exceptional boy Jack was. Look! These envelopes! Port Said, Marseilles, Cairo, Shanghai, Bombay. You see they're packed so full that he could hardly close them! Pictures of places, too! The bay at Rangoon. Here's where the sun comes up like thunder, he wrote on the back of this one! Kipling, you know - I wrote him constantly - 'Jack, there's no advancement in it. A sailor's always a sailor.'

BOSS. Jim, that card?

JIM. You'd better look at it yourself.

BOSS. Read it, read it! We running a social service bureau?

(JIM looks uncertainly at MRS. BRISTOL.)

MRS. B. If anything's gone wrong I'd like to know.

JIM. Jack Bristol. Larceny. Convicted May, 1936. Sentenced

three years. *(Looks up.)* He slacked his work. Spent three days in Klondike.

BOSS. Is that on the card?

JIM. No, but I want to explain to this lady what happened.

MRS. B. What happened?

JIM. You see, ma'am -

BOSS. Read what's on the card, that's all!

JIM. 'Came May 1938. Came up before the lunacy commission. July 15th, transferred to the psychopathic ward. Violent Delusions. Prognosis - Dementia Praecox'

MRS. B. That isn't - Jack - my boy!

BOSS. Now see here - I - I know how you feel about this. I got all the sympathy in the world for you women that come in here but this is a penal instate - union and we simply can't be taking time out from our routine business for things like this.

MRS. B. My boy, Not what you said! Anything but not that! Say he's dead, say you killed him, killed him! But don't tell me that. I know, I know. I know how it was in here. He wrote me letters. That place you sent him three days. Klondike. I know - You tortured him there, that's what you did, you tortured him until you drove him - *(Turns slowly to JIM.)* - Crazy? Is that what you said? -

BOSS. Get that woman out of here.

MRS. B. Oh, my precious Jesus, oh, my God!

(She breaks down, sobbing wildly.)
(JIM assists her to the door.)

BOSS. *(Lifting phone and dialing.)* I want twenty bucks on Windy Blue to show.

(Blackout)

Episode Four

Tuesday, July 26th
"Conversations at Midnight"

(Spot the two cells. OLLIE kneels praying by bunk. BUTCH lounges covertly smoking on bench along wall. Others on bunks.)

OLLIE. Oh, Lawd, de proteckter an preserbation ob all, remembuh dis nigguh, Remembuh his wife Susie an his six chillun, Rachel, Rebekkah, Solomon, Moses, Ecclesiastics an' Deuteronomy Armsted. You look out fo' dem while Ise in jail. An ah'd git out fo de cole weathuh sets in cause Susie's gonna have another baby, Lawd, n' she can't git aroun't' gather kindlin' wood. God bless my ole woman an' daddy an Presiden' Roosevelt an' de W.P.A. in Jesus Chris' name - Amen.

BUTCH. Hey, Ollie, yuh better have 'em reverse the charges on that one!

OLLIE. It don' cos' nothin.

BUTCH. It ain't worth nothin.

OLLIE. De Lawd remembuhs who remembuhs Him.

BUTCH. Hawshit!

(OLLIE sits dejectedly on edge of bunk. Derisive whistles and bird-calls in hall as JIM enters.)

JIM. Whatsamatter, Ollie?

OLLIE. He says there ain't no God.

JIM. How's he know?

OLLIE. That's what I say. You think they is, don't you, Jim?

JIM. Somebody upstairs? - I dunno. I guess I'm what they call an Agnostic.

OLLIE. You mean a Piscopalian?

JIM. Yeah. Rub my back for me, Ollie. I'm tired.

OLLIE. Awright. Liniment aw bacon grease?

JIM. Gimme the liniment.

BUTCH. Haven't you started seein' 'em yet, Canary?

JIM. *(As OLLIE starts to rub.)* Gawd, it burns good.

BUTCH. Them little blue devils, they're the first symptom.

JIM. It makes the air feel cool.

BUTCH. They crawl in through the bars an' sit at the end of yuh bunk an' make faces at yuh.

JIM. Rub harder on the left shoulder.

BUTCH. Yuh'd better start sleepin' with one eye open, Canary. Can yuh do that?

JIM. Never tried it, Butch. - Ah, that's good.

BUTCH. Well, yuh better, cause if they catch you off guard, Canary, they'll climb down yuh throat an' tie knots in yuh gizzards!

(Laughs)

JIM. That's good, ah that's - swell!

OLLIE. How'd you get them purple scars, Jim?

JIM. From Dr. Jones?

OLLIE. Who's Dr. Jones?

BUTCH. Dr. Jones is the guy that gave Canary Jim his singin' lessons! Remembuh when I found out that you'd grown feathers?

JIM. *(To OLLIE.)* That's enough. Thanks. *(Produces cigarettes.)* Have one?

OLLIE. Thanks, Jim.

BUTCH. It's lucky for you that I was interrupted - or you'd be readin' books witcha fingers instead of yuh're eyes! It's listed on th' record as unfinished business, to be took care of at some future date - I figure that ev'ry dog has his day an' mine's comin' pretty soon now.

OLLIE. Don't pay him no mind.

JIM. Naw. There's a wall between him an' me.

BUTCH. You bet there is. Or you'd be a dead Canary. There'd be yellow feathers floating all over Hall C!

JIM. There's a wall like that around ev'ry man in here an' outside of here, Ollie.

OLLIE. Outside? Naw.

JIM. Sure there is. Ev'ry man living is walking around in a cage. He carries it with him wherever he goes and don't let it go till he's dead. But, sometimes, I think, Ollie, a guy don't have to wait till he's dead to get outside of his cage.

OLLIE. Yuh mean he should bump himself off?

JIM. No. A guy can use his brain two ways. He can make it a wall to shut him in from the world or a great big door to let him out. Intellectual Emancipation!

OLLIE. Huh! *(BUTCH, a long whistle.)* What's that?

JIM. Couple of words I came across in a book.

OLLIE. Sound like big words.

JIM. They *are* big words. So big that the *world* hangs on 'em. They can tell us what to read, what to say, what to do - But they can't tell us what to *think!* And as long as man can think as he pleases he's never exactly locked up anywhere. He can thinks himself outside of all their walls and boundaries and make the world his place to live in - It's a swell feeling, Ollie, when you've done that. It's like being alone on the top of a mountain at night with nothing around you but stars. Only you're not alone, though, cause you know that you're part of everything living and everything living is part of you. Then you get an idea of what God is. Not Mr. Santie Claus, Ollie, dropping answers to prayers down chimneys -

OLLIE. Naw?

JIM. No, not that. But something big and terrible as night is, and yet -

OLLIE. Huh?

JIM. And yet - as soft as a - woman. Y'see what I mean?

BUTCH. I see whatcha mean - it's kind of a - sticky feeling!

(BUTCH and JOE laugh.)

JIM. You guys don't get what I'm talking about.

SCHULTZ. After lights in there!

OLLIE. Naw, but I do. Thinkin's like prayin', excep' that prayin' yuh feel like yuh've got some one on the other end a th' line ...

JIM. Yeah.

QUEEN. Be quiet, you ALL. I'm sick. I need my sleep.

JOE. Ooooooooo!

BUTCH. Bellyache!

JOE. Yeah, from them stinkin' meat-balls. By God I'm gonna quit eatin if they don't start puttin in more digestible food.

BUTCH. Quit eating, huh? - I think yuh got something there.

JOE. Oooooo - *Christ!*

BUTCH. You ever heard of a hunger-strike, Joe?

JOE. Uh.

BUTCH. Sometimes it works. Gits in the papers. Starts investigations. They git better food.

JOE. *Oooooooo!* - We'd git - *uh! - Klondike!*

BUTCH. Okay. We'll beat Klondike.

JOE. You talk too big sometimes. You ever been in Klondike?

BUTCH. Yeah. Once.

JOE. What's it like?

BUTCH. It's like a little suburb of hell.

JOE. That's what I thought. OOOOh! Ahhhhhh! Jesus!

(Blackout)

Episode Five

Morning of Wednesday, July 27th
"Band Music"

(Spot the office. JIM settled in chair reading. EVA enters.)

EVA. Good morning.

JIM. Hi.

EVA. I believe you spend more time in here than the boss does.

JIM. I like it in here. Especially when I'm alone.

EVA. Oh - well, excuse my intrusion.

JIM. I don't mean you. You don't bother me.

EVA. Thanks.

JIM. As a matter-of-fact it's a rare and enviable privilege for a connie to get this close to a member of the opposite sex. I have to blink my eyes a couple of times to be sure you're not just one of them - visual and auditory hallucinations.

EVA. Wasn't there a girl working here before?

JIM. There was. But she wasn't nearly such a strain upon one's - credulity.

EVA. How do you mean?

JIM. She was sort of a cow.

EVA. Oh.

JIM. Whalen's wife's second cousin. But he's a remarkable man.

EVA. He is or she is?

JIM. They both were. *(EVA laughs.)* Now you know why I'm called the Canary. I talk too much.

EVA. No. In what way, remarkable?

JIM. *(Thumbs toward inner room.)* He had her down there the first week.

EVA. What's down there?

JIM. He goes in there to relax after ground-inspection. She would go in there with him - She died of an operation and Whalen bought his wife a mink coat. How do you like your new job?

EVA. Well! - Not so good now.

JIM. There's some features of life on the grounds that aren't mentioned in the Sunday Supplement.

EVA. Yes. I didn't sleep last night.

JIM. No?

EVA. From thinking about that boy's mother.

JIM. You'll get used to things like that.

EVA. I don't want to get used to them.

JIM. Why don't you quit then?

EVA. Say! You don't know much about the unemployment situation.

JIM. No. I got here before the depression.

EVA. You're lucky.

JIM. Think so?

EVA. There was a case in the paper where a man busted a plate-glass window so he could go to jail and get something to eat.

JIM. I bet he regretted it afterwards. Especially if he came here.

EVA. I don't know. The sample menu's okay.

JIM. Huh! We spill that stuff to everybody comes in the office to cover up what's actually going on.

EVA. What's that?

JIM. Starvation.

EVA. You're crazy!

JIM. Sure I am, crazy as a bed-bug! I've still got sense enough to recognize beans and meatball an' spaghetti - when I see them six of seven times a week in slightly variegated combinations! Y'know they take normal sex-life away from convicts, they take profitable work

away from them - they take everything away from them but food - and when they make *that* so darned monotonous that you feel like puking at the sight of it - Ask me what is a pyrotechnical display!

EVA. I think I know.

JIM. You'll know better if you stick around. We're going to have the loveliest Fourth O' July you ever laid eyes upon. Only it's going to come, maybe, in the middle of August. This place, lady, is the practical equivalent of Mt. Vesuvius. Maybe a hundred years from now little woolly white lambs will be grazing peacefully on the slopes of an extinct volcano. But down at the bottom tourist-guides will be pointing out the bones of people who didn't get out of Pompeii!

EVA. Too bad you won't be one of the guides. You make such good speeches.

JIM. Okay. Be funny about it.

(A brass band playing a martial air in assembly hall.)

EVA. Band-music!

JIM. Yes. They're practicing for the Commissioner's Banquet.

EVA. Sounds very gay!

JIM. Uh-huh. If you believed in brass bands you'd think the Millennium was going to arrive at exactly 6 A.M. tomorrow.

EVA. Why not? Maybe it will! - A brass band can sell me *anything,* Jim!

JIM. Can it sell you this?

(He catches her against him in a hard impulsive embrace.)

EVA. *(Breaking away.)* Yes, it could even sell me that! *(Then laughs.)* - But not in the Warden's office!

(She goes quickly back to her typing - JIM stand motionless looking at her back - his arms raised slowly - the hands clench onto fists - they vibrate, outstretched - with a terrific intensity - then slowly fall to his sides.)

(EVA whistles gaily to the band music.)

(Blackout)

Episode Six

Evening of Wednesday, July 27th
"Mister Olympics!"

(Men returning from supper.)

SCHULTZ. *(Whistle)* Hep, hep, hep, etc. *(Whistle)* Cell inspection! Fall out.

(Whistle)

JOE. Did you eat yours?

BUTCH. Eat that stuff? Naw. It made me sick to look at it.

JOE. Spaghetti four times in a week!

BUTCH. That's nutten. I useta work in a spaghetti factory.

QUEEN. Really?

BUTCH. Yeah. I remember one time the spaghetti machines got out of control. We couldn't stop 'em. It was spaghetti ev'rywhere. The whole place was full of spaghetti. Oozin' out of the floor an' the walls, an' the ceilin'.

QUEEN. For the love of nasturtiums!

BUTCH. So I says to the foreman, "For Chrissakes, how we gonna git outta this place wit' all this spaghetti sloppin' arou' ev'rywhere? - An' the boss says, "Boys - there's only one way to git out of here now!" - "How's that?" I ask him. - "Here!" he says - an' he han's me a big knife an' fork - "Yuh got to *EAT* yuh way out!"

QUEEN. Please!

SCHULTZ. *(Whistle)* Fall out on the double. *(Whistle)* Hep, hep, hep. Halt. *(Whistle- whistle.)* Fall out!

(CONVICTS enter cells. McBURNEY enters with SWIFTY.)

KRAUSE. Hello, new boy!

(Other greetings.)

BUTCH. They're bringin' a new boy in.

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