

BARNETTE. What?

BABE. Me fixing that lemonade, before I called the hospital.

BARNETTE. Well, not... necessarily.

BABE. I tell you, I think the reason I made up the lemonade, I mean besides the fact that my mouth was bone dry, was that I was afraid to call the authorities. I was afraid. I—I really think I was afraid they would see that I had tried to shoot Zackery, in fact, that I had shot him, and they would accuse me of possible murder and send me away to jail.

BARNETTE. Well, that's understandable.

BABE. I think so. I mean, in fact, that's what did happen. That's what is happening—'cause here I am just about ready to go right off to the Parchment Prison Farm. Yes, here I am just practically on the brink of utter doom. Why, I feel so all alone.

BARNETTE. Now, now, look—Why, there's no reason for you to get yourself so all upset and worried. Please, don't. Please. *(They look at each other for a moment.)* You just keep filling in as much detailed information as you can about those incidents on the medical reports. That's all you need to think about. Don't you worry, Mrs. Botrelle, we're going to have a solid defense.

BABE. Please, don't call me Mrs. Botrelle.

BARNETTE. All right.

BABE. My name's Becky. People in the family call me Babe; but my real name's Becky.

BARNETTE. All right, Becky. *(Barnette and Babe stare at each other for a long moment.)*

BABE. Are you sure you didn't go to Hazlehurst High?

BARNETTE. No, I went away to a boarding school.

BABE. Gosh, you sure do look familiar. You sure do.

BARNETTE. Well, I—I doubt you'll remember, but I did meet you once.

BABE. You did? When?

BARNETTE. At the Christmas bazaar, year before last. You were selling cakes and cookies and... candy.

BABE. Oh, yes! You bought the orange pound cake!

BARNETTE. Right.

BABE. Of course, and then we talked for a while. We talked about the Christmas angel.

BARNETTE. You do remember.

BABE. I remember it very well. You were even thinner then than you are now.

BARNETTE. Well, I'm surprised. I'm certainly...surprised. *(The phone begins to ring.)*

BABE. *(As she goes to answer the phone.)* This is quite a coincidence! Don't you think it is? Why, it's almost a fluke. *(She answers the phone.)* Hello...Oh, hello, Lucille...Oh, he is?...Oh, he does?...Okay. Oh, Lucille, wait! Has Dog come back to the house?...Oh, I see...Okay. Okay. *(After a brief pause.)* Hello, Zackery? How are you doing?...Uh huh...uh huh...oh, I'm sorry...Please, don't scream...uh huh...uh huh...You want what?...No, I can't come up there now...Well, for one thing, I don't even have the car. Lenny and Meg are up at the hospital right now, visiting with Old Granddaddy...What?...Oh, really?...Oh, really?...Well, I've got me a lawyer that's over here right now, and he's building me up a solid defense!...Wait just a minute, I'll see. *(To Barnette.)* He wants to talk to you. He says he's got some blackening evidence that's gonna convict me of attempting to murder him on the first degree!

BARNETTE. *(Disgustedly.)* Oh, bluff! He's bluffing! Here, hand me the phone. *(He takes the phone and becomes suddenly cool and suave.)* Hello, this is Mr. Barnette Lloyd speaking. I'm Mrs. . . . ah, Becky's attorney . . . Why, certainly, Mr. Bortelle, I'd be more than glad to check out any pertinent information that you may have...Fine, then I'll be right on over. Goodbye. *(He hangs up the phone.)*

BABE. What did he say?

BARNETTE. He wants me to come see him at the hospital this evening. Says he's got some sort of evidence. Sounds highly suspect to me.

BABE. Oooh! Didn't you just hate his voice? Doesn't he have the most awful voice! I just hate! I can't bear to hear it!

BARNETTE. Well, now—now, wait. Wait just a minute.

BABE. What?

BARNETTE. I have a solution. From now on I'll handle all communications between you two. You can simply refuse to speak with him.