

DORIS: Let's hear it. Maybe I can spot where you went wrong.  
 FELIX: You ought to be ashamed of yourself. A big girl like you afraid to be alone— (*He yawns.*)  
 DORIS: Isn't that ridiculous! Ever since I was a kid—I tell you it's not being alone that's scary—I wouldn't mind being alone—but there's somebody there—I can hear him breathing—he just stands there breathing and it just panics me—I had this analysis you know for six months and the doctor told me— (*Stops.*) Hey— (*He's dozed off.*)  
 FELIX: Oh—what were you saying?  
 DORIS: About being alone—my analyst said—  
 FELIX: You were analyzed?  
 DORIS: Of course.  
 FELIX: Really?  
 DORIS: There's a brain in there—honest!  
 FELIX: What kind of a doctor?  
 DORIS: Jewish.  
 FELIX: No. I mean—never mind. What did he say?  
 DORIS: Oh, I hate that!  
 FELIX: What?  
 DORIS: "Never mind" like "forget it, you're too dumb to understand."  
 FELIX: Oh no—it was just a foolish question on my part.  
 DORIS: Really?  
 FELIX: Sure. That's why I said "never mind." What did he tell you?  
 DORIS: He said I was afraid to be alone because of unconscious guilt.  
 FELIX: Guilt is very bad.  
 DORIS: It's enervating.  
 FELIX: If you don't let me go to sleep you're gonna be completely enervated by guilt feelings tomorrow.  
 DORIS: Never mind, wise guy! Read me your story.  
 FELIX, *picks up typewriter script*: You won't like it.  
 DORIS: If it puts me to sleep I'll love it.  
 FELIX, *reading*: Scream—  
 DORIS: "Scream." That's the title, right—"Scream."  
 FELIX: Yes.  
 DORIS: That's a wild title.  
 FELIX: Thank you. *Reads*: The sun spit morning into Werner's

face—one eyelid fluttered—dragging the soul back screaming from its stealthy flight to death—  
 DORIS, *sitting up*: The sun spit morning into this guy's face?  
 FELIX: Yes.  
 DORIS: You were right.  
 FELIX: When?  
 DORIS: I don't like it. I hate it.  
 FELIX: It wasn't written for you to like.  
 DORIS: Why wasn't it written for me to like? I'm the public—  
 FELIX: You're raising your voice.  
 DORIS: The sun spit morning into his face!  
 FELIX: Shh! What are you getting angry about?  
 DORIS: What right do you have to put down a terrible thing like that in a story—"The sun spit morning in a man's face."  
 FELIX: All right—you don't like it—but calm down.  
 DORIS: Yeah—look at me! I always get mad at stuff like that.  
 FELIX: Just because you don't understand it?  
 DORIS: It makes me feel shut out—you know? It makes me mad as hell! You know once I threw a clock at the TV.

## SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR

by Bernard Slade

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### ACT II, SCENE 1

*Same Time, Next Year* is the story of a love affair that spans twenty-five years. Doris and George are happily married—to other people. Beginning with a chance pickup in 1951, they continue to meet once a year at the same California inn. During the course of the play we witness, through the changes in both characters, a quarter-century of changes in American mores and political and social attitudes.

When the play begins, George is a conservative accountant.

Through the years he makes the transition from middle- to upper-class income bracket, goes through analysis, temporarily becomes a hippie, and ends up a loyal member of the establishment. Doris starts out as a naive, uneducated young woman who becomes, in turn, a dissatisfied housewife, a college student, a flower child, and, finally, a successful career woman.

The scene below takes place in 1965. The Vietnam War is in progress and political and social beliefs have polarized the nation. Doris enters wearing the standard costume of the 1960s: jeans, sandals, and a headband. She has returned to school and is now a student at Berkeley. George is supporting Goldwater.

*George is just finishing his unpacking. The last thing he takes out of his bag is a bottle of Chivas Regal, which he takes to the tray on the piano and pours himself a drink. Drink in hand he crosses to the dressing table and takes his comb, keys, and a prescription bottle out of his pocket and places them on the table. Doris enters in jeans, turtleneck, Indian necklace, headband, long hair, and sandals. George is taken aback. They meet in an embrace.*

**DORIS:** Hey, man! What do you say? So, you wanta fuck?

**GEORGE:** What?

**DORIS:** You didn't understand the question?

**GEORGE:** Of course I did. I just think it's a damned odd way to start a conversation.

**DORIS:** Yeah? I thought it would be a great little ice breaker. Aren't you horny after your long flight?

**GEORGE:** I didn't fly, I drove.

**DORIS:** From Connecticut?

**GEORGE:** From Los Angeles. We moved to Beverly Hills about six months ago.

**DORIS:** How come?

**GEORGE:** Oh, a lot of reasons. I got fed up standing kneedeep in snow trying to scrape the ice off my windshield with a credit card. Besides, there are a lot of people out here with a lot of money who don't know what to do with it.

**DORIS:** And you tell them?

**GEORGE:** I'm what they call a Business Manager.

**DORIS:** How's it going?

**GEORGE:** I can't complain. Why?

**DORIS:** You look kinda shitty. Are you all right?

**GEORGE:** I'm fine.

**DORIS:** You sure?

**GEORGE:** When did you start dressing like an Indian? You look like a refugee from the Sunset Strip.

**DORIS:** I've gone back to school. Berkeley.

**GEORGE:** Why?

**DORIS:** You mean what do I want to be when I grow up?

**GEORGE:** Well, you have to admit it's a bit odd becoming a schoolgirl at your age.

**DORIS:** Listen, you think it's easy being the only one in the class with clear skin.

**GEORGE:** What made you do it?

**DORIS:** It was a dinner party that made me decide. Harry's boss invited us over for dinner and I just freaked.

**GEORGE:** Why?

**DORIS:** I'd spent so much time with kids I didn't know if I was capable of carrying on an intelligent conversation with anyone over the age of five. Anyway, I went and was seated next to the boss. Well, I surprised myself. He talked—then I talked—you know, just like a real conversation. Everything was cool until I noticed him looking at me in a weird way. I looked down at his plate and realized that all the time we'd been talking I'd been cutting up his meat for him. That's when I decided I'd better get out of the house.

**GEORGE:** But why school?

**DORIS:** I felt restless and undirected and I thought school might give me some answers.

**GEORGE:** What sort of answers?

**DORIS:** Like where it's really at.

**GEORGE:** Jesus.

**DORIS:** What's the matter?

**GEORGE:** That expression.

**DORIS:** Okay. To find out who the hell I am.

**GEORGE:** You don't get those sort of answers from a classroom.

**DORIS:** I'm not in the classroom all the time. The protests and demonstrations are a learning experience in themselves.

**GEORGE:** Protests against what?

DORIS: The war of course. Didn't you hear about it? It was in all the papers.

GEORGE: Demonstrations aren't going to stop the war.

DORIS: You have a better idea?

GEORGE: Look, I didn't come up here to discuss politics.

DORIS: Well, so far you've turned down sex and politics. You want to try religion?

GEORGE: I think I'll try a Librium.

DORIS: How come you're so uptight?

GEORGE: That's another expression I hate.

DORIS: Uptight?

GEORGE: There's no such word.

DORIS: You remind me of my mother when I was nine years old. I asked her what "fuck" meant and do you know what she said? "There's no such word."

GEORGE: And now you've found out there is you feel compelled to use it in every other sentence?

DORIS: George, what's bugging you?

GEORGE: Bugging me? I'll tell you what's "bugging" me. The blacks are burning down the cities, there's a Harvard professor telling my kids the only way to happiness is to become doped up zombies, and I have a teenage son with hair so long that from the back he looks exactly like Yvonne deCarlo.

DORIS: That's right, honey. Let it all hang out.

GEORGE: I wish people would stop letting it "all hang out." Especially my daughter. It's amazing she hasn't been arrested for indecent exposure.

DORIS: That's a sign of age, George.

GEORGE: What is?

DORIS: Being worried about the declining morality of the young. Besides, there's nothing you can do about it.

GEORGE: We could start by setting some examples.

DORIS: What do you want to do, George? Bring back public flogging?

GEORGE: It might not be a bad idea. We could start with the movie producers. My God, have you seen the movies lately? Half the time the audience achieves a climax before the movie does!

DORIS: It's natural for people to be interested in sex. You can't kid the body, George.

GEORGE: Maybe not but you can damn well be firm with it.

DORIS: As I recall when you were younger you weren't exactly a monk about that sort of thing.

GEORGE: That was different! Our relationship was not based upon a casual one night stand!

DORIS: No, it's been *fifteen* one night stands.

GEORGE: No it has not. We've shared things. My God, I helped deliver your child, remember?

DORIS: Remember? I consider it our finest hour.

GEORGE: How is she?

DORIS: Very healthy, very noisy, and very spoiled.

GEORGE: You don't feel guilty about leaving her alone while you're at school?

DORIS: Harry's home a lot. The insurance business hasn't been too good lately.

GEORGE: How does he feel about all this?

DORIS: When I told him I wanted to go back to school because I wanted some identity he said, "You want identity? Go build a bridge! Invent penicillin but get off my back!"

GEORGE: Harry always had a good head on his shoulders.

DORIS: George, that was supposed to be the *bad* story about him. How's Helen?

GEORGE: Helen's fine. Just fine.

DORIS: Tell me a story that shows how really rotten she can be.

GEORGE: That's not like you.

DORIS: It seems like we need something to bring us together. Maybe a bad story about Helen will make you appreciate me more.

GEORGE: Okay. Helen . . . As you know, she has this funny sense of humor.

DORIS: By funny I take it you mean peculiar?

GEORGE: Right. And it comes out at the most inappropriate times. I had signed this client—very proper, very old money. Helen and I were invited out to his house for cocktails to get acquainted with him and his wife. Well, it was all pretty awkward but we managed to get through the drinks all right. Then as we went to leave, instead of walking out the front door I walked into the hall closet. Now that's no big deal, right? I mean anybody can do that. The mistake I made was that I *stayed* in there.

DORIS: You stayed in the closet?

**GEORGE:** I wasn't sure they'd seen me go in. I thought I'd stay there until they'd gone away—okay? I was in there for about a minute before I realized I'd—well—misjudged the situation. When I came out the three of them were just staring at me. All right, it was an embarrassing situation but I probably could have carried it off. Except for what Helen did. You know what she did?

**DORIS:** What?

**GEORGE:** She peed on the carpet.

**DORIS:** She did *what*?

**GEORGE:** Oh, not right away. First, she started to laugh. Tears started to roll down her face. She held her sides. Then she peed all over their Persian carpet.

## KINGDOM OF EARTH

by Tennessee Williams

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### SCENE 6

The setting is a Mississippi Delta farmhouse. It "has the mood of a blues-song whose subject is loneliness." The levees are overflowing and a major flood is imminent. The residents of this house are two half-brothers filled with hate for each other. They are Chicken, in his thirties, strong and gruff; and Lot, "a frail, delicately—you might say exotically—pretty youth of about twenty." The house belongs to Lot, left to him by his mother.

Lot is dying of tuberculosis. He has been away, and at the beginning of the play he brings home his new wife, Myrtle. She "is a rather fleshy young woman, amiably loud-voiced," a former show girl with dyed blonde hair that "suggests an imitation of a Hollywood glamor-girl which doesn't succeed. . . ." She is robust, good natured, and, since her baptism, "scared to death of deep water."

Lot and Myrtle met and married on a TV show just days before. For her it was romance, somehow being affected by this strange, delicate young man, wanting to care for him and cure him of his illness. Lot's reason for marrying was not so benign. He regrets having signed a paper (a contract) that, upon his death, leaves the house and farm to Chicken. The house is filled with objects and furnishings that belonged to Lot's deceased mother. During the play we learn of Lot's strange relationship to her, and he explains that "it will haunt me to my grave and my mother in hers if this place went to Chicken."

His plan is to disinherit Chicken, and Myrtle is his ruse. Anticipating that his sex-starved brother will try to seduce Myrtle, Lot asks her to get Chicken drunk and try to steal the paper from his wallet—ostensibly to protect her own future in the house when she is left a widow.

As the following scene opens Chicken is alone in the kitchen. Myrtle enters with her marriage license, trying desperately (lying, in fact) to convince Chicken that her marriage to Lot was a fake. In the previous scene Chicken told her of his fear that, regardless of his contract, as Lot's wife, Myrtle, rather than he, will inherit the farm. He threatened to let her drown when the floodwaters fill the house. (He will perch on the roof with the chickens, as he has done before—earning him his nickname.)

**MYRTLE:** Here it is, this is it. *Hands him license:* You can see it's no good.

**CHICKEN:** —It's got signatures on it.

**MYRTLE:** Sure, they put signatures on 'em to make 'em look real, but—

**CHICKEN:** This looks like a genuine license to me.

**MYRTLE:** I give you my right hand to God!—That thing is fake!

**CHICKEN:** Don't give me your right hand to God. I don't want it and he don't want it neither. Nobody wants your right or left hand to nothing. However, I'll keep this thing. I'll put it with my legal agreement with Lot. *He folds the license into his wallet. Studies her somberly.* Are you able to write?

**MYRTLE:** Why, uh—yais!