

ACT TWO

Scene 1

Same. The next morning. Boo is at her desk doing the accounting. Sunny is studying. Reba is knitting and Lala is pacing nervously.

BOO. Just call him.

LALA. I can't!

BOO. Why not?

LALA. Because.

BOO. We've got to make completely sure that he's taking you.

LALA. Phone his Aunt Ethel again.

REBA. She did. At quarter past six this morning.

BOO. How come you know so much about my business?

REBA. Because you woke me up, hollering so loud.

LALA. Quarter past six? That's quarter past five in Baton Rouge! How could you phone somebody up at quarter past five in the morning?

BOO. I wanted to make sure she wasn't there, which she wasn't. I can't imagine where in the world that silly woman could be keeping herself!

LALA. I can't either. I don't know why she hasn't been sitting right by the phone for the last thirty years waiting for you to call.

BOO. This is not the moment to run your sassy mouth. Time is of the essence. Will you call Sylvan or will I? *(After a moment, Lala picks up the phone and dials.)*

LALA. Operator, I would like to place a long distance call to Lake Charles, Louisiana. Person to person. To Peachy Weil. Not Miss. Mister. Mister Peachy Weil.

REBA. I didn't know you were allowed to use nicknames on long distance.

SUNNY. Oh, Mama! I do love you!

REBA. What did I say?

BOO. Y'all hush!

LALA. It's ringing! It's ringing! *(She listens. Boo hovers.)* No! *(She hangs up quickly.)*

BOO. What?

LALA. I got the cook. She told the operator that Peachy's not there. She said he left this morning for Atlanta with his mother and daddy. We'll just have to wait until he gets here.

BOO. Oh no we won't. Move! *(Boo sits at the phone table, dials.)* Operator. Get me the residence of Sylvan Weil Sr. in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Station to Station. Weil. W-e-i-l.

LALA. I just told you! They're not there! What is the matter with you? *(Boo waves her away.)*

BOO. Hello? Who is this? Well, hey Hattie. Merry Christmas to you. It's Mrs. Beulah Levy. No, I don't believe we do-know each other. I'm an old friend of Mrs. Weil's in Atlanta. No, don't trouble yourself writing it down. I'll see her when she gets here. But do me a favor, would you, please? Run on up to Mr. Peachy's closet and see if he took his tuxedo with him. Would you do that for me? Thank you so much!

START
HERE

SUNNY. You're pretty brainy, Aunt Boo.

BOO. Yes. And, believe you me, if I were running the Dixie Bedding Company we'd all be rich by now.

REBA. We are rich, aren't we?

BOO. *(In the phone.)* Yes. Yes I'm still here. I see. Sure do 'preciate it, Hattie. Unh-hunh. Good-bye. *(She hangs up. Triumphant.)* The tuxedo isn't in his closet! And neither are his patent leather dancing shoes!

LALA. I knew it! I always knew it!

REBA. Good for you, honey.

BOO. You're as good as at that dance, Daughter! With the finest escort in the South!

Last Night of Ballyhoo - Sunny, Boo, Lala & Reba (p.53-55 cont.)

LALA. Yes, Mama! Yes, I am! *(To Sunny.)* I told you!

BOO. But what are you gonna wear?

LALA. I don't know, but it's gonna cost Uncle Adolph an arm and two legs. Come downtown with me.

BOO. I have the accounts to tend to, and a pot roast to do.

LALA. Let Aunt Reba! She won't mind!

BOO. *(Sotto voce.)* Her pot roast tastes like shoe leather.

REBA. I'm not in Timbuktu, Beulah! I can hear every word you're saying.

BOO. Well, it's the truth.

REBA. Adolph loves my pot roast. He took thirds last time.

BOO. Adolph would take thirds of dog food if somebody stuck it on his plate.

LALA. Please come with me, Mama! You have such good taste in clothes.

BOO. Well. All right. *(To Reba.)* Be sure you brown it carefully. On low heat. And for God's sake, stay away from the garlic. *(She and Lala start up the stairs.)*

LALA. *(As they go.)* Regenstein's had a dress in the paper this morning. "A holiday dream of glowing tulle and layered ruffles." What do you think?

BOO. It sounds like a lamp shade. *(Boo and Lala exit.)*

REBA. I will not stay away from the garlic. Garlic makes a pot roast. And your Aunt Boo knows it.

SUNNY. Then why would she say that?

REBA. Oh, she's just tryin' to make sure mine won't be as good as hers. I know her tricks. *(They go into the living room, start folding newspapers, plumping sofa pillows, etc.)* It's a good thing we had babies at home in my day. That's all I have to say.

SUNNY. Why?

REBA. Because if you had been born in the hospital, I'd be 'fraid I brought home the wrong child.

SUNNY. Mama! What do you mean?

REBA. Well I just admire you so much, Sugar! And I don't know where in the world you came from. You have so much sense.

SUNNY. Why, thank you!

REBA. And you certainly didn't inherit it from me.

SUNNY. Who says I didn't?

REBA. Well, all I know is if there'd been Ballyhoo in my day, I would've probably carried on and acted as foolish as Lala. And here you are, perfectly content to stay home and study for your final exams and pay no mind to the whole silly rigamarole. My hat is truly off to you, Sweetheart.

SUNNY. Mama?

REBA. Yes?

SUNNY. I *am* going to Ballyhoo.

REBA. You are! How nice! With who?

SUNNY. With Joe.

REBA. That good looking boy who works for Adolph?

SUNNY. Yes.

REBA. Well, that's fine! And what are you gonna wear?

SUNNY. I was thinking maybe the blue velvet I wore in David and Virginia's wedding.

REBA. Yes. It's put away in the cedar closet.

SUNNY. I'll go get it out. *(She starts out of the room.)*

REBA. You know, I wore blue the first time I went dancin' with your daddy.

SUNNY. Oh, Mama!

REBA. Well, go on up and air out that dress. You wouldn't want to go to Ballyhoo smellin' like a mothball. *(Sunny goes up the stairs, Reba continues with her cleaning. To herself.)* She is a little bit like me! Thank the Lord!

END HERE

End Scene