

DARYL, LUCY (+ BILLY)

SCENE 4

(1945. ASHEVILLE. LOBBY OF THE ASHEVILLE SOUTHERN JOURNAL.)

(A busy office. The front desk is manned by DARYL AMES. LUCY GRANT, an editor, mans her station. The desk bears a sign: "Asheville Southern Journal". BILLY enters, holding his manuscript.)

BILLY CANE

(to DARYL)

Hello, is this the Asheville Southern Journal?

(DARYL leans over and cranes to read the lettering on the front of his desk.)

DARYL

Good question, because this sign is often wrong.

LUCY

Don't mind Daryl.

BILLY CANE

If someone wanted to submit some stories to your magazine....

LUCY

Let me hand them to the nice man.

(LUCY takes BILLY's manuscript, gives it to DARYL who starts to put it in the "round file.")

DARYL

Then wave them goodbye.

BILLY CANE

Why wave them goodbye?

(BILLY retrieves the manuscript from the trash can.)

DARYL

Because our editor, Miss Alice Murphy, is one of the keenest editors in America. The New Yorker magazine sent people down here to try and hire her away.

LUCY

But she wants to stay right here in North Carolina.

BILLY CANE

That's good!

DARYL

Not for young tadpoles like you.

LUCY

She once made Ernest Hemmingway cry. He lay right there, banged his fists on the floor and sobbed.

BILLY CANE

Why?

LUCY

He used the word "their" as a singular pronoun.

BILLY CANE

Look, I came all the way from Hayes Creek and I gotta get back, so...

DARYL

Well, aren't we busy.

BILLY CANE

Can I pick up my stories tomorrow?

(DARYL and LUCY both laugh.)

DARYL

Look, you think we're going to read them by tomorrow, if at all?

LUCY

I'm sorry but we don't even read young writers anymore without a whopping letter of recommendation.

DARYL

Hmm. Now where did that door go? Oh! There it is...

(HE WALKS BILLY TO THE DOOR.)