

# ELIZABETH

(WITH QUILLY)

going to do when his nature gets up two and three times a night ... and day? You haven't used it in so long ... if you've ever used it at all, that you don't even know if it works. And if you can't cut the mustard, you're going to have to lick the jar.

ELIZABETH. Why you got to be talking all up under people's clothes like that?

QUILLY. Because it's life. You too old to have any babies.

ELIZABETH. Don't you think he knows that?

QUILLY. So, what's going to happen when he starts wanting a son? You think you're going to be like Abraham's wife Sarah in the Bible? You think God's going to touch your belly and out going to pop a little Husband?

ELIZABETH. We've already talked about that I told you.

QUILLY. It's one thing to talk about it, but it's another thing to be faced with it. When he gets the yearning and you keep saying you're too tired.... When he wants to continue his name and you can't provide him with a way to do that ... not even a daughter, that's where a Lou Bessie comes in.

ELIZABETH. Oh, will you shut up! Shut up! Why are you so mean? I came up here and worked and sent Mama money so she could buy you shoes and clothes for school. When Mama died, I went down there and got you and brought you back up here to live with me. I fed you and put clothes on your back until you started working at a job I got for you. And after you tore my heart out and shamed me before the whole world, then didn't talk to me for eight years, I still loved you and swallowed my pride and came looking for you to make peace. Because you was my sister. We came out of the same body ... shared the same mother. Because there was nobody else in this whole world with the same blood as mine running through their veins, and it wasn't right for us not to be talking to each other ... loving each other. Because if I couldn't give you anything else, love was the one thing I could give you every day of my life ... and I tried. What terrible thing have I done to you ... other than love you, to make you treat me so mean? You hurt me.

QUILLY. You're finally getting to it, ain't you, Bess?...

ELIZABETH. ... Stole from me!

QUILLY. I couldn't have stolen what wasn't really yours.

ELIZABETH. You knew I loved Herman and....

QUILLY. But Herman didn't love you, Bess!

ELIZABETH. He did until you came up here with your fast self!

QUILLY. He didn't love you and he told you so. You just wouldn't listen like you won't listen now. He even told you that before I came up here ... before he ever saw or knew me. Didn't he?

ELIZABETH. That's why you know so much about Lou Bessie, because you was just like her.

QUILLY. Didn't he?

ELIZABETH. And then you want to flaunt that picture of you and him together in the house I took you into ... again.

QUILLY. Didn't he tell you he didn't love you? Tell the truth, Bess. You know he didn't love you.

ELIZABETH. *(Screaming.) You was my sister!* *(Pause.)* It didn't matter if he loved me or not! You was my sister and you knew I loved him! That meant you should have kept your hands off.

*(Pause.)* If you hadn't come along, I would have made him love me. Maybe that's why you're so against me and Husband. Maybe you're jealous and want him too. Well, this is one you're not going to get. We're going to leave here in a couple of weeks after we get all of our business taken care of. We're going to take the train to Elkton, Maryland and get married and then get back on the train and stop in Halifax, so I can take care of some more business then head on down to his place in Frogmore. So you'll only have to put up with Husband and me for two more weeks, then the place is yours ... and you can put that picture of you and Herman anyplace you want.

*(She begins to cross out of the room.)*

QUILLY. You're going to leave me. You're going to leave me up here alone. *(Pause.)* You've known since we were little girls that I was always afraid of being alone. First it was you, me and Mama; then it was Mama and me; then Mama died and I came to live with you, then I married Herman and after Herman, I