

BILLY. Please!

(She pulls away from him, holding out her right hand to keep him away from her.)

Please – dear –

START *(Impulsively, involuntarily, he slaps her hand. She is startled.)*

LOUISE. Mother!

(She runs into the house.)

Mother!

~~(BILLY puts the star on the chair nearest center. Then he looks at the 1ST HEAVENLY FRIEND guiltily.)~~

~~1ST HEAVENLY FRIEND. Failure! You struck out blindly again. All you ever do to get out of difficulty – hit someone you love! Failure!~~

JULIE. *(Coming out of house, agitated.)* Where is he?

~~[MUSIC NO. 30 “PORCH SCENE (IF I LOVED YOU – REPRISE)”]~~

~~*(She stops suddenly. BILLY turns to her. She stares at him.)*~~

~~BILLY. *(To HEAVENLY FRIEND, but looking at JULIE.)* I don't want her to see me.~~

~~1ST HEAVENLY FRIEND. Then she doesn't.~~

~~BILLY. She looks like she saw me before I said that.~~

LOUISE. ~~*(Coming out of the house and crossing downstage of BILLY, almost touching him.)*~~ Oh, he's gone! ~~*(Turning to JULIE.)*~~ I didn't make it up, Mother. Honest – there was a strange man here and he hit me – hard – I heard the sound of it – but it didn't hurt, Mother! It didn't hurt at all – it was jest as if he – kissed my hand!

JULIE. Go into the house, child!

LOUISE. What's happened, Mother?

(JULIE just stares at the same place.)

Don't you believe me?

JULIE. Yes, I believe you.

LOUISE. *(Coming closer to JULIE.)* Then why don't you tell me why you're actin' so funny?

JULIE. It's nothin', darlin'.

LOUISE. But is it possible, Mother, fer someone to hit you hard like that – real loud and hard – and not hurt you at all? *Julie hugs Louise and sends her inside*

ENDS **JULIE.** It's possible, dear – fer someone to hit you – hit you hard – and not hurt at all.

(~~JULIE and LOUISE embrace and start for the house. LOUISE exits into house, but JULIE sees the star that BILLY had placed on the chair and goes toward it. As she does so, the lights dim slowly. She picks up the star and holds it to her breast.~~)

BILLY. Julie – Julie!

(She stands transfixed.)

LONGING TO TELL YOU,
BUT AFRAID AND SHY,
I LET MY GOLDEN CHANCES PASS ME BY.
NOW I'VE LOST YOU;
SOON I WILL GO IN THE MIST OF DAY,
AND YOU NEVER WILL KNOW
HOW I LOVED YOU,
HOW I LOVED YOU.

(The lights fade out as JULIE goes into the house. As BILLY crosses to the 1ST HEAVENLY FRIEND, the cloud curtain falls behind him.)