

BEGIN

SCENE ONE

CHICKEN: Just shut up and listen.—She'd no sooner got married to him than she begun to cheat on him with a good-looking young Greek fellow that had a fruit store in town. Why, ev'ry afternoon, Miss Lottie would say to Daddy, "Daddy, I think I will drive in town to buy some fruit to make us a nice fruit salad." And when she got to the store, the store man would let her in and lock the door, and she'd stay in for two hours and come out with four or five peaches like it had took her them two hours to pick out that small bag of peaches.

CHICKEN: If I had told him, he'd've told her I told him, and she would of got me thrown outa here in minutes!—Well, she did bury my daddy and the place was hers, but she didn't have long to hold it. The Greek sold out his fruit store, quit Miss Lottie, and left.—He just left town but Miss Lottie left the world.

CHICKEN: Well, she lived long enough to throw me off the place. Called me in her little parlor one day and fired me like a field hand. "Chicken," she said, "I think it's just time for you to clear off this place and make your own way in the world." I said, "Well, gimme what's comin' to me."—What she give me amounted to just about the pay that a field hand gets for a week's work. It was down the state to Meridian where I worked in a sawmill. This happened—Miss Lottie couldn't go on without a pebble in her eye so she quit eating, quit sleeping—quit breathing. And a month after she died, Lot started dying. One lung gone and one going, but trying to run this place. Didn't take long for him to find out he couldn't so I begun to hear from him. He sent for me to come back and operate this place for him, sent for me twice by letter and a third time by wire. First and only wire I ever got in my life. "Chicken, come back," was the message, "I will make a deal with you."—Well, I'm no fool.

MYRTLE: No, no, you're no fool.

CHICKEN: I said, "All right, but I'm going to name the deal." I