

What's that matter t' me? That don't give him the right t' insult my manners, does it? No man ever had to tell me what t' do, did he, Virge? Did he?

VIRGIL. No. No. But there allus comes a time, Bo, when . . . (Virgil puts his guitar down, Bo puts his hat on top of it.)

BO. (Ignoring Virgil, speaking out for the benefit of all.) My name's Bo Decker. I'm twenty-one years old and own me m'own ranch up in Timber Hill, Montana, where I got a herd a fine Hereford cattle and a dozen horses, and the finest sheep and hogs and chickens anywhere in the country. And I jest come back from a rodeo where I won 'bout ev'ry prize there was, din I, Virge? (Coshingly, he elbows Virgil in the ribs. Will drifts D. S., looking at Bo.) Yap, I'm the prize bronco-buster, 'n steer-roper, 'n bulldogger, anywhere 'round. I won 'em all. And what's more, had my picture taken by Life magazine. (Confronting Will.) So I'd appreciate your talkin' to me with a little respect in yor voice, Mister, and not go hollerin' orders to me from across the room like I was some no-count servant. (Will is flabbergasted.)

CHERIE. (Privately to Elma.) Did ya ever see anybody like him?

WILL. (Finally finds his voice and uses it, after a struggle with himself to sound just and impartial.) You was the last one in, cowboy, and you left the door open. You shoulda closed it, I don't care who y'are. That's all I'm saying.

BO. Door's closed now. What ya arguin' 'bout? (Leaving a bushed and somewhat awed audience, Bo strides over to the counter and drops to a stool.) Seems like we're gonna be here a while, Virge. How's fer some grub? (Will turns U. C.)

VIRGIL. (Remaining by magazine counter.) Not yet, Bo. I'm chewin' t'backy. (Takes off coat and hat.)

BO. (Slapping a thigh.) Thass ole Virge for ya. Allus happy long's he's got a wad a t'backy in his mouth. Well, I'm gonna have me a li'l snack. (To Elma.) Miss, gimme 'bout three hamburgers.

ELMA. Three? How do you want them? (Virgil crosses to stove, watches Bo.)

BO. I want 'em raw. (Cherie makes a sick face. Dr. Lyman quietly withdraws, taking his drink over to the window.)

ELMA. Honest?

BO. It's the only way t'eat 'em, raw, with a thick slice a onion and some pickalili.

ELMA. (Hesitant.) Well . . . if you're sure you're not joking.

BO. (His voice holding Elma on her way to refrigerator.) Jest a minute, Miss. That ain't all. I'd also like me some ham and eggs . . . and some potaty salad . . . and a piece a pie. I ain't so pertikler what kinda pie it is, so long as it's got that murang on top of it. (Grace gives hamburger and eggs to Elma.)

ELMA. We have lemon and choc'late. They both have meringue. (Virgil crosses U. S., sits near stove. Grace crosses U. R., sits on bench.)

BO. (Thinking it over.) Lemon 'n choc'late. I like 'em both. I dunno which I'd ruther have. (Ponders a moment.) I'll have 'em both, Miss. (Cherie makes another sick face.)

ELMA. Both?

BO. Yep! 'N set a quart a milk beside me. I'm still a growin' boy. (Elma starts preparations as Bo turns to Cherie.) Travelin' allus picks up my appetite. That all you havin', jest a measly doughnut?

CHERIE. I ain't hungry.

BO. Why not?

CHERIE. I jest ain't.

BO. Ya oughta be.

CHERIE. Well—I ain't!

BO. Wait till I get ya up to the Susie-Q. I'll fatten ya up. I bet in two weeks time, ya won't recognize yorself. (Now he puts a bearlike arm around her, drawing her close to him for a snuggle, kissing her on the cheek.) But doggone, I love ya, Chery, jest the way ya are. Yor about the cutest li'l piece I ever did see. And man! when I walked into that night club place and hear you singin' my favorite song, standin' before that orkester lookin' like a angel, I told myself then and there, she's fer me. I ain't gonna leave this place without her. And now I got ya, ain't I, Chery?

CHERIE. (Trying to avoid his embrace.) Bo . . . there's people here . . . they're lookin' . . . (And she's right. They are.)

BO. What if they are? It's no crime to show a li'l affection, is it? 'Specially, when we're gonna git married. It's no crime I ever heard of. (He squeezes her harder now and forces a loud, snacking kiss on the lips. Cherie twists loose of him and turns away.)

CHERIE. Bo! fer cryin' out loud, lemme be! (Breaks away R.)

BO. (Following her, grabs her shoulders.) Chery, thass no way to talk to yor husband.

CHERIE. (Breaks away R. C.) That's all ya done since we left Kanz City, is maul me. (Sits at table.)