

BLANCHE Our neighbor across the street is going to be put in jail! We can at least be charitable.

KATE Don't talk to me about charity. Anyone else, but not me.

BLANCHE I never said you weren't charitable.

KATE All I did was try to help you. All I *ever* did was try to help you. Who's out there watching over *me*? I did enough in my life for people. You know what I'm talking about.

BLANCHE No, I don't. Say what's on your mind, Kate. What people?

KATE You! Celia! Poppa, when he was sick. Everybody!...Don't you ask *me* "What people"! How many beatings from Momma did I get for things that you did? How many dresses did I go without so you could look like someone when you went out? I was the workhorse and you were the pretty one. You have no right to talk to me like that. No right.

BLANCHE This is all about Jack, isn't it? You're blaming me for what happened to him.

KATE Why do you think that man is sick today? Why did a policeman have to carry him home at two o'clock in the morning? So your Nora could have dancing lessons? So that Laurie could see a doctor every three weeks? Go on! Worry about your friend across the street, not the ones who have to be dragged home to keep a roof over your head.
(She turns away. JACK walks in from the kitchen.)

JACK What is this? What's going on here?

BLANCHE *(To KATE)* Why didn't you ever tell me you felt that way?

KATE *(Turns her back to her)* I never had the time. I was too busy taking care of everyone.

JACK Kate? Blanche? What's happened?

BLANCHE If I could take Nora and Laurie and pack them out of this house tonight, I would do it. But I can't. I have no place to take them.

JACK Blanche! What are you talking about? Don't say such things.

BLANCHE *(Looks straight at KATE)* If I can leave the girls with you for another few weeks, I would appreciate it. Until I can find a place of my own, and then I'll send for them.

JACK You're not sending for anybody and you're not leaving anywhere. I don't want to hear this kind of talk.

KATE Stay out of this, Jack. Let her do what she wants.

BLANCHE I know a woman in Manhattan Beach. I can stay with her for a few days. And then I'll find a job. I will do *anything* anybody asks me, but I will *never* be a burden to anyone again.
(She starts for the stairs)

JACK Blanche, stop that! Stop it right now. What the hell is going on here, for God's sake? Two sisters having a fight they should have had twenty-five years ago. You want to get it out, Blanche, get it out! Tell her what it's like to live in a house that isn't ours. To have to depend on somebody else to put the food on your plate every night. I know what it's like because I lived that way until I was twenty-one years old....Tell her, Kate, what it is to be an older sister. To suddenly be the one who has to work and shoulder all the responsibilities and not be the one who gets the affection and the hugs when you were the only one there. You think I don't see it with our kids? You think I don't hear the fights that go on up in those rooms night after night? Go on, Kate! Scream at her! Yell at her. Call her names, Blanche. Tell her to go to hell for the first time in your life....And when you both got it out of your systems, give each other a hug and go have dinner. My lousy ice cream is melting, for God's sakes.