

# ❖ Blind Date

.....HORTON FOOTE

CHARACTERS: DOLORES (30's), SARAH NANCY (16)

SETTING: *Living room in a house in a small Texas town, 1920's.*

DOLORES is concerned that boys are not dating her niece, SARAH NANCY, who is visiting for the summer. DOLORES has prepared a little fundamental romantic advice based on her own experience. A blind date is about to arrive as the art of conversation is being explained.

DOLORES: Now where were we. Oh, yes. I was going over my list of things to talk about. (DOLORES picks up her list and begins reading) One: Who is going to win the football game next Friday? Two: Do you think we have had enough rain for the cotton yet? Three: I hear you were a football player in high school. What position did you play? Do you miss football? Four: I hear you are an insurance salesman. What kind of insurance do you sell? Five: What is the best car on the market today to you think? Six: What church do you belong to? Seven: Do you enjoy dancing? Eight: Do you enjoy bridge? (She puts the list down) All right, that will do for a start. Now, let's practice. I'll be Felix. Now. Hello, Sarah Nancy.

(A pause, SARAH NANCY looks at her like she thinks she's crazy)

Now, what do you say, Sarah Nancy.

SARAH NANCY: About what?

DOLORES: About what? About what you say when someone says hello to you, Sarah Nancy. Now, let's start again. Hello, Sarah Nancy.

SARAH NANCY: Hello.

DOLORES: Honey, don't just say hello and above all don't scowl and say hello. Smile. Hello, how very nice to see you. Let me feel your warmth. Now, will you remember that? Of course you will. All right, let's start on our questions. Begin with your first question. (A pause) I'm waiting, honey.

SARAH NANCY: I forget.

DOLORES: Well, don't be discouraged. I'll go over the list carefully and slowly again. One: Who is going to win the football game next Friday? Two: Do you think we have enough rain for the cot-

ton yet? Three: I hear you were a football player in high school. What position did you play? Do you miss football? Four: I hear you are an insurance salesman. What kind of insurance do you sell? Five: What is the best car on the market today, do you think? Six: What church do you belong to? Seven: Do you enjoy dancing? Eight: Do you enjoy bridge? Now, we won't be rigid about the questions, of course. You can ask the last question first if you want to.

SARAH NANCY: What's the last question again?

DOLORES: Do you enjoy bridge?

SARAH NANCY: I hate bridge.

DOLORES: Well, then, sweetness, just substitute another question. Say, do you enjoy dancing?

SARAH NANCY: I hate dancing.

DOLORES: Now, you don't hate dancing. You couldn't hate dancing. It is in your blood. Your mother and daddy are both beautiful dancers. You just need to practice is all. Now . . .

SARAH NANCY: Why didn't you get me a date with Arch Leon? I think he's the cute one.

DOLORES: He's going steady, honey, I explained that.

SARAH NANCY: Who is he going steady with?

DOLORES: Alberta Jackson.

SARAH NANCY: Is she cute?

DOLORES: I think she's right cute, a little common looking and acting for my taste.

SARAH NANCY: He sure is cute.

DOLORES: Well, Felix Robertson is a lovely boy.

SARAH NANCY: I think he's about as cute as a warthog.

DOLORES: Sarah Nancy.

SARAH NANCY: I think he looks just like a warthog.

DOLORES: Sarah Nancy, precious . . .

SARAH NANCY: That's the question I'd like to ask him. How is the hog pen, warthog?

DOLORES: Precious, precious.

SARAH NANCY: Anyway, they are all stupid.

DOLORES: Who, honey?

SARAH NANCY: Boys.

DOLORES: Precious, darling.

SARAH NANCY: Dumb and stupid. (*She starts away*)

DOLORES: Sarah Nancy, where in the world are you going?

SARAH NANCY: I'm going to bed.

DOLORES: Sarah Nancy, what is possessing you to say a thing like that. You're just trying to tease me.

SARAH NANCY: Oh, no, I'm not. (*She starts away*)

DOLORES: Sarah Nancy, you can't go to bed. You have a young man coming to call on you at any moment. You have to be gracious . . .

SARAH NANCY: I don't feel like being gracious. I'm sleepy. I'm going to bed.

DOLORES: Sarah Nancy, you can't. Do you want to put me in my grave? The son of one of your mother's dearest friends will be here at any moment to call on you, and you cannot be so rude as to go to bed and refuse to receive him. Sarah Nancy, I beg you. I implore you.

SARAH NANCY: Oh, all right. (*She sits down*) Ask me some questions.

DOLORES: No, dear. You ask me some questions.

SARAH NANCY: What church do you attend?

DOLORES: That's lovely. That's a lovely question to begin with. Now I'll answer as Felix will. Methodist.

SARAH NANCY: That's a dumb church.

DOLORES: Sarah Nancy.

SARAH NANCY: I think it's a dumb church. It's got no style. We used to be Methodist but we left for the Episcopal. They don't rant and rave in the Episcopal Church.

DOLORES: And they don't rant and rave in the Methodist Church either, honey. Not here. Not in Harrison.

SARAH NANCY: Last time I was here they did.

DOLORES: Well, things have changed. Anyway, you're not supposed to comment when he answers the questions, you're just supposed to sit back and listen to the answers as if you're fascinated and find it all very interesting.

SARAH NANCY: Why?

DOLORES: Because that's how you entertain young men, graciously. You make them feel you are interested in whatever they have to say.

SARAH NANCY: Suppose I'm not.

DOLORES: Well, it is not important if you are or not, you are supposed to make them think you are.