

## K – Kate & Keller

CHRIS. Sure, and let's break out of this, heh, Mom? I thought the four of us might go out to dinner a couple of nights, maybe go dancing out at the shore.

KATE. Fine. *(To Keller.)* We can do it tonight.

KELLER. Swell with me!

CHRIS. Sure, let's have some fun. *(To Mother.)* You'll start with this aspirin. *(He goes up and into house with new spirit. Her smile vanishes.)*

KATE. *(With an accusing undertone.)* Why did he invite her here?

KELLER. Why does that bother you?

KATE. She's been in New York three and a half years, why all of a sudden...?

KELLER. Well, maybe...maybe he just wanted to see her...

KATE. Nobody comes seven hundred miles "just to see."

KELLER. What do you mean? He lived next door to the girl all his life, why shouldn't he want to see her again? *(Kate looks at him critically.)* Don't look at me like that, he didn't tell me any more than he told you.

KATE. *(A warning and a question.)* He's not going to marry her.

KELLER. How do you know he's even thinking of it?

KATE. It's got that about it.

KELLER. *(Sharply watching her reaction.)* Well? So what?

KATE. *(Alarmed.)* What's going on here, Joe?

KELLER. Now listen, kid...

KATE. *(Avoiding contact with him.)* She's not his girl, Joe; she knows she's not.

KELLER. You can't read her mind.

KATE. Then why is she still single? New York is full of men, why isn't she married? *(Pause.)* Probably a hundred people told her she's foolish, but she's waited.

KELLER. How do you know why she waited?

KATE. She knows what I know, that's why. She's faithful as a rock. In my worst moments, I think of her waiting, and I know again that I'm right.

KELLER. Look, it's a nice day. What are we arguing for?

KATE. (*Warningly.*) Nobody in this house dast take her faith away, Joe. Strangers might. But not his father, not his brother.

KELLER. (*Exasperated.*) What do you want me to do? What do you want?

KATE. I want you to act like he's coming back. Both of you. Don't think I haven't noticed you since Chris invited her. I won't stand for any nonsense.

KELLER. But, Kate...

KATE. Because if he's not coming back, then I'll kill myself! Laugh. Laugh at me. (*She points to tree.*) But why did that happen the very night she came back? Laugh, but there are meanings in such things. She goes to sleep in his room and his memorial breaks in pieces. Look at it; look. (*She sits on bench at his L.*) Joe...

KELLER. Calm yourself.

KATE. Believe with me, Joe. I can't stand all alone.

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KELLER. Calm yourself.

KATE. Only last week a man turned up in Detroit, missing longer than Larry. You read it yourself.

KELLER. All right, all right, calm yourself.

KATE. You above all have got to believe, you...

KELLER. (*Rises.*) Why me above all?

KATE. ...Just don't stop believing...

KELLER. What does that mean, me above all?

(*Bert comes rushing on from L.*)

BERT. Mr. Keller! Say, Mr. Keller... (*Pointing up driveway.*) Tommy just said it again!

KELLER. (*Not remembering any of it.*) Said what?... Who?...

BERT. The dirty word.

KELLER. Oh. Well...

BERT. Gee, aren't you going to arrest him? I warned him.

KATE. (*With suddenness.*) Stop that, Bert. Go home. (*Bert backs up, as she advances.*) There's no jail here.

KELLER. (*As though to say, "Oh-what-the-hell-let-him-believe there*