

A Streetcar Named Desire, Tennessee Williams

Blanche May I — speak — *plainly*?

Stella Yes, do. Go ahead. As plainly as you want to.

*(Outside a train approaches. They are silent till the noise subsides. They are both in the bedroom. Under cover of the train's noise **Stanley** enters from outside. He stands unseen by the women, holding some packages in his arms, and overhears their following conversation. He wears an undershirt and grease-stained seersucker pants.)*

Blanche Well — if you'll forgive me — he's *common*!

Stella Why, yes, I suppose he is.

Blanche Suppose! You can't have forgotten that much of our bringing up, Stella, that you just *suppose* that any part of a gentleman's in his nature! *Not one particle, no!* Oh, if was just — *ordinary*! Just *plain* — but good and whole-some, but — *no*. There's something downright — *bestial* — about him! You're hating me saying this, aren't you?

Stella *(Coldly)* Go on and say it all, Blanche.

Blanche He acts like an animal, has an animal's habits! Eats like one, moves like one, talks like one! There's even something — sub-human — something not quite to the stage of humanity yet! Yes, something — ape-like about him, like one of those pictures I've seen in — anthropological studies! Thousands and thousands of years have passed him right by, and there he is — Stanley Kowalski — survivor of the Stone Age! Bearing the raw meat home from the kill in the jungle! And you — you here — *waiting* for him! Maybe he'll strike you or maybe grunt and kiss you! That is, if kisses have been discovered yet! Night falls and the other apes gather! There in the front of the cave, all grunting like him, and swilling and gnawing and hulking! His poker night! — you call it — this party of apes! Somebody growls — some creature snatches at something — the fight is on! *God!* Maybe we are a long way from being made in God's image, but Stella — my sister — there has been some progress since then! Such things as art — as poetry and music — such kinds of new light have come into the world since then! In some kinds of people some tenderer feelings have had some little beginning! That we have got to make grow! And *cling* to, and hold as our flag! In this dark march toward whatever it is we're approaching... Don't — *don't* hang back with the brutes!

*(Another train passes outside. **Stanley** hesitates, licking his lips. Then suddenly he turns stealthily about and withdraws through the front door. The women are still unaware of his presence. When the train has passed he calls through the closed front door.)*

Stanley Hey! Hey! Stella!

Stella *(Who has listened gravely to **Blanche**)* Stanley I

Blanche Stell, I —

*(But **Stella** has gone to the front door. **Stanley** enters casually with his packages.)*

Stanley Hiyuh, Stella, Blanche back?

Stella Yes, she's back.

Stanley Hiyuh, Blanche. *(He grins at her.)*

Stella You must've got under the car.

Stanley Them darn mechanics at Fritz's don't know their can from third base!

*(**Stella** has embraced him with both arms, fiercely, and full in the view of **Blanche**. He laughs and clasps her head to him. Over her head he grins through the curtains at **Blanche**. As the lights fade away, with a lingering brightness on their embrace, the music of the 'blue piano' and trumpet and drums is heard.)*

From Scene IV pp. 46–48