

tion for a journey! It depresses some people—but for me—it is another feeling. Something full of the flow of life, do you understand? Movement, progress—it makes me think of Africa.

BENEATHA. Africa!

ASAGAI. What kind of mood is this? Have I told you how deeply you move me?

BENEATHA. He gave away the money, Asagai—

ASAGAI. Who gave away what money?

BENEATHA. The insurance money. My brother gave it away.

ASAGAI. Gave it away?

BENEATHA. He made an investment! With a man even Travis wouldn't have trusted!

ASAGAI. And it's gone?

BENEATHA. (*sits on sofa*) Gone!

ASAGAI. (*sits next to BENEATHA on sofa. BENEATHA rises, crosses U.R. of sofa, sits R. arm of sofa.*) I'm very sorry—And you now?

start → BENEATHA. Me? —Me? Me, I'm nothing—Me. When I was very small—we used to take our sleds out in the winter time and the only hills we had were some ice covered stone steps down the street. And we used to fill them with snow and make them smooth and slide down them all day—and it was very dangerous, you know—far too steep—and sure enough one day a kid named Rufus came down too fast and hit the sidewalk—and his face just split open right there in front of us—And I remember standing there looking at his bloody open face thinking that was the end of Rufus. But the ambulance came and they took him to the hospital and they fixed the broken bones and they sewed it all up—and the next time I saw Rufus he just had a little line down the middle of his face—I never got over that—

## BENEATHA

~~ASAGAI. What?~~

BENEATHA. That that was what one human being could do for another, fix him up—sew up the problem, make him all right again. That was the most marvelous thing in the world—I wanted to do that. I always thought it was the one concrete thing in the world that a human being could do. Fix up the sick, you know—and make them whole again. This was truly being God—

ASAGAI. You wanted to be God—?

BENEATHA. No—I wanted to cure. It used to be so important to me. I wanted to cure. I used to care. I mean about people and how their bodies hurt—

ASAGAI. And you've stopped caring—?

BENEATHA. Yes—I think so.

ASAGAI. (*rises*) Why?

BENEATHA. (*passionately*) Because it doesn't seem deep enough, close enough to what ails mankind! It was a child's way of seeing things—or an idealist's.

ASAGAI. Children see things very well sometimes—and idealists even better.

BENEATHA. I know that's what you think. Because you are still where I left off. You still care. You with all your talk and dreams about Africa! You still think you can patch up the world. Cure the Great Sore of Colonialism—(*loftily, mocking it*) with the "penicillin of Independence!"

ASAGAI. Yes!

BENEATHA. Independence *and then what?* What about all the crooks and thieves and just plain idiots who will come into power to steal and plunder the same as before, only now they will be black and do it in the name of the new independence—WHAT ABOUT THEM?!

ASAGAI. That will be the problem for another time. First we must get there.

End