

(She exits and WALTER sits looking at the money. He crosses to her room, starts to knock but doesn't, stands thinking, goes to phone, starts to dial, hangs up, crosses to son's made-up bed and smiles contemplating it, then reaches out for the money but stands, hand poised, unable to touch it. At last, with a cry of joy, he snatches it up as TRAVIS enters, for bed.)

TRAVIS. What's the matter, Daddy? You drunk?

WALTER. *(sweetly, more sweetly than we have ever known him)* No, Daddy ain't drunk. Daddy ain't going to never be drunk again.

TRAVIS. *(unconvinced)* Well, good night, Daddy. *(draws the covers up and buries head in pillow)*

WALTER. Son, I feel like talking to you tonight

TRAVIS. About what?

WALTER. Oh, about a lot of things. *(kneels R. of sofa, facing TRAVIS)* About you and what kind of man you going to be when you grow up. . . . Son—son, what do you want to be when you grow up?

TRAVIS. A bus driver.

WALTER. *(flops over dead on floor, arms out)* A what? Man, that ain't nothing to want to be!

TRAVIS. Why not?

WALTER. 'Cause, man—it ain't big enough—you know what I mean.

TRAVIS. I don't know then. Sometimes Mama asks me that too. And when I tell her I just want to be like you, she says she don't want me to be like that. And sometimes she says she does.

WALTER. *(gathering him up in his arms)* You know what, Travis? In seven years you going to be seventeen years old. And things is going to be very different with us. And one day when you are seventeen I'll come home—home from my office—

WALTER

TRAVIS. You don't work in no office, Daddy.

WALTER. No—but after tonight. After what your daddy gonna do tonight, there's going to be offices—a whole lot of offices. *(gets up)*

TRAVIS. What you gonna do tonight, Daddy?

start → WALTER. You wouldn't understand yet, son, but your daddy's gonna make a transaction. A business transaction that's going to change our lives. That's how come one day when you 'bout seventeen I'll come home and I'll be pretty tired, you know what I mean, after a day of conferences and secretaries getting things wrong the way they do. . . 'cause an executive's life is hell, man! And I'll pull the car up the driveway. . . just a plain black Chrysler, I think, with white walls—no—black tires. More elegant. Rich people don't have to be flashy. . . though I'll have to get something a little sportier for Ruth—maybe a Cadillac convertible to do her shopping in. And I'll come up the steps to the house and the gardener will be clipping away at the hedges and he'll say, "Good evening, Mr. Younger." And I'll say, "Hello, Jefferson, how are you this evening?" And I'll go inside and Ruth will meet me at the door and we'll kiss and she'll take my arm and we'll go upstairs to your room to see you sitting on the floor with the catalogues *(lays out magazines on coffee table like catalogues)* of all the great schools in America around you. All the great schools in the world! And—and I'll say, all right son—it's your seventeenth birthday, what is it you've decided? Just tell me where you want to go to school and you'll go. Just tell me, what it is you want to be—and you'll be it. . . Whatever you want to be—Yessir! *(He hold his arms open.)* You just name it, son—*(TRAVIS crosses into them and WALTER lifts him high.)* And I'll hand you the world!

end

(BLACKOUT)