

Act 4

Scene 2

(Gussie enters stage left. She is very upset. Sobbing)

Wha's wrong, chile?

Gussie

Mista Charles, it jus' awful. They done hang Floyd!

Charles

Whatchu sayin' chile?

Gussie

Floyd dead Mr. Charles. They done hang my brother Floyd!

Charles

Ah' be dam'!

(Wil enters stage right)

Wil

Gussie, thought you was still at work. What's wrong?

Charles

It's not good Wil. Gussie say Floyd dead.

Wil

Floyd? What happen', chile?

Gussie

Well, Uncle Wil, I get done early today. I was comin' through the kitchen, 'n I hear somebody say 'You hear 'bout that nigger they strung up fo' messin' wit' a white gal'?

So I keep listenin' to see who they talkin' 'bout. Tha's when Banker Grace 'n Lawyer James walk in. Lawyer James say 'You know Probst's darkie Wil; it was his nephew, Floyd. I wanna run out the door right there, but I don't. I stay an' hear

what happen, then I get outta that place fas' as I can, an' come down here. Figure you an' Hap likely be here.

Wil

(Is very distraught)

What they say he done?

Gussie

Banker Grace say Floyd workin' at the fair ground feedin' stock for the fair. Mister Shane' daughter Lainey want him to fetch water for her mule.

When Floyd tell her okay, Lainey go 'long to help. Banker Grace say tha's when ol' man Grainger catch Floyd havin' his way with her.

Wil

That girl Lainey, ain't she the one they catch with Ra'ph Do'man' boy in the park, back yonder by the waterfall? An' when her daddy get wind of it, he straight up whup her butt.

Gussie

Yessir, tha's her. Las' week I see Floyd on his way to the dock. He say him and Lainey been meetin' at the fair ground after dark, havin' them some fun. Say she git lonely, 'cause her pa gone so much. I tell him he better quit messin' 'round wit' that girl, but he say he know what he doin'.

(Charles gives Gussie a cup with water)

I say, Floyd, listen, I know what I'm sayin'. Lainey tol' Clare what ya'll been doin', an' Clare tell her pa. Clare pa say he gon' tell Mister Shane.

When Mister Shane git back from up north, he fin' out an' ask Lainey 'bout it. She scared her pa gon' thrash her again, so she say Floyd make her do it. When Wade Smalls and his boys get wind of it, they the ones git the mob riled up an' go lookin' fo' Floyd. Wade always ready to do some dirt.

Sherriff Troup tell Wade ain't nobody doin' nothin' til he fin' out what happen, an' he take Floyd to the jail. When Wade 'n 'em hear Floyd at the jail, they go there to git him. Sheriff Troup hear the ruckus, an' he try 'n hide Floyd out. But the mob

break down the door an' drag Floyd outside. Lawyer James say they beat my brother, stab him, cut his..... (She breaks down)

He already dead when they hang him in the tree and set him on fire.

(Wil holds her as she sobs)

(Lights down)