

## Olinda Sides

Station Master – SIDE 1, SIDE 10, SIDE 20, SIDE 21

Old Man of the Hills—SIDE 1, SIDE 10

Farmer Brockett, Wife, Daughter—SIDE 2

Walter—SIDE 3, SIDE 5, SIDE 8, SIDE 13

Mary—SIDE 3, SIDE 8, SIDE 13, SIDE 19

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Company Man—SIDE 20

Older Isabell—SIDE 21

## **SIDE 1 – STATION MASTER & OLD MAN OF THE HILLS**

STATION MASTER

Isn't that better? Maybe a little wind blowing through the oaks.  
The sound of a breeze is heard.

STATION MASTER

That's better. Can you smell the wildflowers on the hill? Pick as many as you like.  
(Checks his pocket watch)

Got a train coming in soon. Can't spend too much time dilly-dallying with you folks. Well, anyhow welcome to Olinda, California, 1901. Historical day today, historical day, happy to have you here. It may be pride but I think this here town-  
Old man of the hills enters. He is dusty and grubby wearing workman's overalls.

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

-Is the pit of God's Armpits. Hello Heffner, you lying to these folks, again?  
(To audience)  
You really can't trust him.

STATION MASTER

What are you doing in town?

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

I was just out picking wildflowers for your misses. He tell you about the flowers yet?

STATION MASTER

I've told them. You're going to have to move on, I've a train coming.

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

We only get one train, from the Santa Fe, a milk run. It leaves here full of oil. They burn it in some of their locomotives. This whole place exists around that train, and it ain't due for a while yet. I'd say you had at least two hours to loaf.

STATION MASTER

Don't listen to him. We're very-

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

Miserable-

STATION MASTER

Miserable up here on the hill...Oh, forget it.  
Station master starts to exit.

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

Don't go away mad, Hefner. We've got guests and you haven't really showed them around.

**SIDE 2 – FARMER BROCKETT, WIFE, DAUGHTER**

FARMER

Olinda? Pretty rough up there I think. I've heard stories.

WIFE

They're all big brutes, muscles and brawn. They're all dirty and covered with oil.

FARMER

They swear worse than sailors.

WIFE

Play baseball on Sunday, flexing their muscles. The Lord's Day. Hitting a ball with a stick.

FARMER

I wouldn't trust them. They go into Anaheim for things more than groceries.

DAUGHTER

What kind of things?

WIFE

Seen, not heard.

DAUGHTER

What's going on in Anaheim?

FARMER

Sins of the flesh.

DAUGHTER

Oh, those.

WIFE

(Weary)

Yeah, those.

**SIDE 2 – WALTER & MARY**

WALTER

What are you doing with that gun?

MARY

Bunch of the girls went up the hill to the pond to go skinny dipping.

WALTER

And you're going to shoot them?

MARY

No, every time we sneak off, the boys from the wells sneak out to scare us.

WALTER

So, you going to shoot them, boys?

MARY

No. What would be the point of skinny dipping if you weren't getting peaked at? I just didn't want to be peaked at today, that's all.

WALTER

So, you're going to shoot yourself?

MARY

I'm going to shoot a jack rabbit. Pa says he thought maybe he might have a taste for one. So I'm saving mama the trouble. Want to join me? Unless you want to go spy on the girls.

WALTER

(Hesitates)

Let me get my gun.

Walter starts to leave.

MARY

You got a name?

WALTER

Walter Johnson.

#### **SIDE 4 – SOPHIE & YOUNG AILENE**

AILENE

We have at least two pies a day. Just about anything can be a pie, once we had a grass pie.

SOPHIE

Hush. It wasn't grass, it was greens. Now I'll clean house, I have different chores for everyday, and then after I prepare the noon meal, I'll start on a late supper.

AILENE

Sometimes the stove catches on fire.

SOPHIE

The gas. Backs up and explodes every now and then.

AILENE

We keep a bucket marked "stove water" close by, to put it out. One time my brother, Bobby, filled it with frogs and when the stove blew up, we had frog legs for suppa. 'Course the walls were covered with green slime for a month or so, till we whitewashed-

SOPHIE

Back to the wash Ailene.

(Ailene goes back to scrubbing mumbling about frogs exploding.

Sophie addresses the audience again.)

... Now, I know some of you out there wish things would go back to the way they used to be, but let me tell you, if they ever do, I'm going to come right out of the past and haunt the bejeebus out of you.

AILENE

(Washing)

Things were much better when I was younger.

SOPHIE

(Looking at Ailene)

I don't think we could ever build a room big enough for your future, Angel.

Sophie goes to Ailene, hugs her.

SOPHIE

Come on Ailene, this will keep, let's see if there's any rock candy left for you.

Sophie takes the wash tub as Ailene runs off stage. She stops and looks back at the audience.

SOPHIE

I live on this hill. I laugh, cry, sweat, and bleed in a town that will one day completely disappear. I'm 24 and have five kids that have lived so far. Is it worth it?

AILENE (O.S.)

Mama, are you coming?

SOPHIE

You don't really need an answer for that, do you?

## SIDE 5 – WALTER & FRANK

FRANK

Ready to go, Walt? Come on boy.

WALTER

I don't see why I can't stay for the double header.

FRANK

For one thing, you have school tomorrow, and for another I promised your mother that you wouldn't stay in town with these roughnecks. Let's go, we can catch a ride in Deson's auto. Think, what your mother will say when we come tearing up those hills in that contraption. It'll spook every horse from here to heaven. Dumb horses afraid of a toy. Where'd I put that quarter for gas?  
He searches himself for a quarter.

WALTER

Papa?

FRANK

What is it, Walt?

WALTER

They want me to pitch.

FRANK

That's really something. A pitcher. That's where the action is. Good, but not today. Let's go.

WALTER

I don't want to pitch. I think I'd just as soon quit if they make me.

FRANK

You don't have to play ball if you don't want to, Son. I can do without all the people coming up to me and telling me that my son was really something. You don't want to play, don't play, go work on the rigs. Or keep driving my wagons. Or do nothing, it doesn't matter; you work hard and someday someone will take away your farm.

WALTER

I can throw the ball to second base from home faster than anybody. Nobody ever steals a base on me, not ever.

FRANK

God dang it, don't be a fool. If the company has asked you to pitch, well you should at least give it a try, for the family's sake. No need to irritate anybody. Hey, don't look so hurt. I tell you what; you can always go back to catching if it's that bad. I'll walk into the boss's office and tell him you're through and start looking for a new job myself if I have to. Now what do you say to that?

...

WALTER

I just don't want to make a fool of myself.

FRANK

Not going after dreams, that's foolish.

WALTER

Do you have dreams you haven't chased?

FRANK

Never mind my dreams, are you a pitcher or a quitter?

WALTER

I guess I'm a pitcher.

## **SIDE 6 – SPORTS WRITER**

### **SPORTS WRITER**

Kid Johnson threw for thirteen innings of oil soaked ball yesterday against the Farmers, who should have stayed at home and tended their crops in Ventura. In one of the most sensational games that has ever graced a diamond in this state, the kid looked at the old men on the plate and did not blink. The Ventura's were thrown back into the ocean by a final score of 2-1; and have been warned that if they come back into town, to expect more of the same. School Master Crisp umpired a tough game that was so well called, that when it came down to the final out to decide the game, there was no kicking on either side and no dust was disturbed.

## SIDE 7 – ESTELLA & SOPHIE

From opposite ends of the stage Estella and Sophie enter.

ESTELLA

My George played ball. That's how we moved here, in 01. They hired him to be part of the "fire crew". Which means they would go out in the grass and then high tail it to the park on the hill to play ball. When I met him, he was a good church-going man. I suppose it's all an act girls, isn't it? Inside every man is a terrible beast that will escape if you don't beat it down everyday. Routine work quiets the beast.

SOPHIE

If that ain't a load of horse -

ESTELLA

(Going to Sophie)

Manure? Manure, Sophie? Is it manure that my George was seduced by that Jezebel? That he drank, and went to dances? That he left me here on these damn hills to be bleached dry? That he never came back and travels the road like a bum with those Cleveland Blues or Naps or whatever they call their team? That when he can no longer play and has lost all his money and that... whore- has left him to die all alone in a broken down bowery flat that... that I'll still be waiting for him to come home to me?

(Going to Minnie, taking her hand)

Is that what you want for your son?!! Is that what God wants? Do you want to end up like me, waiting and reading box scores just to feel I still know him?

SOPHIE

Estella, you weren't nothing but a dried up grape when you got here.

That damn George had half the single women around this place and some of the married ones too.

(To audience)

Don't act so shocked, you think your generation invented sex?

She crosses over to Minnie and Estella.

SOPHIE

Estella, your man left you because he was a bum.

ESTELLA

Were you one of the married ones?

Long pause.

SOPHIE

(With controlled anger.)

Estella, if you ever say anything like that again, I'll drag you naked to the highest derrick and set it on fire. You are a cold woman. In life, and from what I heard, bed as well. Sit your bony behind down and shut your life-hating mouth.

Estella sits, trying to keep her dignity.

SOPHIE

(To audience)

Her garden doesn't grow, neither.

**SIDE 8 – MARY & WALTER**

MARY

I thought he'd never leave.

WALTER

You're really not supposed to come back behind the counter.

MARY

Yeah, I know. I know. I can't stay long; Auntie wants to take me to start looking at graduation dress patterns. I imagine she'll try and get me to wear a bustle. Want to share my pain and hire out a buggy with us?

WALTER

I'm trapped here.

MARY

Yeah, you said that.

WALTER

Have you given any thought to what you are going to do after graduation?

MARY

Like you and me getting married and me making your meals and stuff while you go off to captivity in the dry goods market?

WALTER

No-

MARY

Don't be so precious. Walter, I know we fool around and stuff, but-

WALTER

Not that much.

MARY

No, not that much, but I can't marry no dry goods clerk.

WALTER

We don't have to live here. We can escape the crowd, homestead in Brea.

MARY

Brea? That cow patch? They have to go outside to... Walt, I don't know what I want, but it's big things and big people, and you just ain't big people. I'm going to do great things and you're going to read about me in the paper and go, "That Mary's doing great things." It's not as if you loved me or anything. Is it? (Pause while Walter thinks) Cause I don't love you. I don't know if I could ever feel love for a man.

Do you know what I mean? Of course you don't, I just don't know how to put it. But I think I need to go somewhere more exciting than this to understand myself. That's all. Besides, you need a pretty wife in a pretty dress. Wouldn't do for you. Don't pout- Give me a kiss, before I can go.  
They kiss

MARY

You think it would be more exciting kissing a big strong man like you, but it ain't. I guess what I plan to do after graduation is follow my dreams. You wouldn't know about that.

WALTER

The hell I wouldn't.

## SIDE 9 – ROUGHNECKS

2ND ROUGHNECK

We're going to tell you the real history of Olinda, whether you like it or not.

3RD ROUGHNECK

And that history is oil.

ROUGHNECK

And twelve hour shifts.

2ND ROUGHNECK

And dirt.

Roughnecks stack the boxes so that they are blocking the lower part of their bodies from the audience.

ROUGHNECK

So much black dirt that it grind in under your finger nails and in your hair and in your ears and up your nostrils.

The roughnecks take off their dirty clothes and throw them over the boxes.

3RD ROUGHNECK

Not even the most loving wife wants a filthy, oily, grimy, stinking, dirty husband.

ROUGHNECK

Here's what we do. We come in here, the steam power plant.

The stage fills with smoke, in dim dusty lighting.

2ND ROUGHNECK

And we strip down naked.

3RD ROUGHNECK

Buck naked.

ROUGHNECK

And we blast the clothes with scalding steam And White King soap flakes.

2ND ROUGHNECK

And if you happened to be walking by while we were doing this, Well ain't that your tough luck.

They all look around.

3RD ROUGHNECK

No one ever walks by.

2ND ROUGHNECK

We build everything out here ourselves.

ROUGHNECK

A company man says this looks like a good spot, and we start building a derrick. Pounding nails all day and then we go dancing all night.

3RD ROUGHNECK

Well, dance and fight. Mostly.

ROUGHNECK

We single men live over there at Mrs. Cambel's boarding house. It's like a row of jail cells. Every one of us has a room about 10 square feet. Nut man, can she cook. In the evening she plays some piano.

3RD ROUGHNECK

She don't take no fooling around either. I've seen her throw a man out into the yard and hit him with a horse.

(Pause)

Small horse. More of a rake actually. But she hit him with it.

2ND ROUGHNECK

Sometimes we'll all sing.

3RD ROUGHNECK

Play cards, poker, gin, old maid.

ROUGHNECK

But there ain't no liquor, except what we've got hidden. We all need a snoot. This is a boom town, not a temperance meeting hall. Too rough for you? Go live in Yorba Linda with the Quakers. We get paid good wages, and why not? We work hard.

3RD ROUGHNECK

Yet we never have any money.

ROUGHNECK

True.

## SIDE 10 – STATION MASTER & OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

STATION MASTER

Sure is peaceful, never know there was a war going on halfway around the world.

(Silence)

Sure is peaceful. Peace...ful

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.  
Silence

STATION MASTER

There's more to the poem.

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

That's enough for me.

STATION MASTER

Then write your own poem. You can grieve for the dead, I'll celebrate our heroes that from here we sent out just a short while ago.

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

Do, as you will.

STATION MASTER

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from frailing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep  
though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

(Pause)

"We shall not sleep."

THE OLD MAN OF THE HILLS

Well, either way, we're entangled overseas again in a war involving a bunch of stubborn folk that can't seem to get along. And we will pray for our boys and women who serve.

STATION MASTER

And bury our dead.

## **SIDE 11 – AILENE**

AILENE

April 15, 1917

Dear Momma,

I'm writing from the Algonquin Hotel in New York. There are three girls in my room and we are all four terribly excited. We ship out tomorrow on the Mauritania. But don't tell anybody, we have to keep it a secret. I don't think I'll ever sleep tonight. Yesterday I saw Cohen's new show; he is so corny but so capturing the spirit of the city. Everywhere women and men stop to talk to us in our uniform and some offer to kiss us. There are so many things to see and do it makes me wonder why anyone would want to live anywhere else. We had a lecture today about sex from another women in the Red Cross and it was all I could do to keep from laughing. She held some of the pictures upside down. But warnings aside, all the boys here seem just as nice as gentle as they are back home. I can't wait to be overseas and be an angel of gentle mercy, helping our boys. Any word yet from James, Robert or Joseph? I don't think I'll ever sleep tonight, but I will be thinking of the moon coming up over the hills of the canyons.

All my kisses for only you Momma,

Ailene.

## **SIDE 12 – AILENE**

AILENE

July 11, 1918

Mama,

The news just got to me that our Robert is dead a month. We had no real news of him the whole war, and now this. I'm so saddened, and so wish I could cry, but of course I can't anymore. I just pictured him, now, sneaking a ride on the back of the red car out of La Harbra station. That's how I keep remembering him, as a child. Now it's just me and James over here. My Robert died two months ago from a blood clot. That's why I haven't written. Well I did write, but I never sent it and I hope you never get that letter. I carry it with me, holding my pain so I don't have to feel it anymore. It's just easier that way. I have been numb this last month. Two weeks ago I had to do amputations because we are so short of surgeons. After the tenth it was just another job that I had to do. Please, please, give Joseph hugs and kisses every chance you can. No one is saying it should have been him instead of Robert. That's just the guilt that those who survive have to carry with them. All you can do is love him. And tell him to use his cane; he ain't a cripple for God's sake.

I love you and Papa so very much.

Your only daughter,  
Ailene.

**SIDE 13 – MARY & WALTER**

Stoch? WALTER

Steve, my husband. MARY

Married and, uh, WALTER

Yeah, and uh- MARY

Things seem about the same here. Besides the Tennis courts. WALTER

We have our own electrical plant. And an S.Q.R. store for groceries. MARY

Stern? WALTER

Sold out, changed hands. MARY

People still go down to Long Beach for the day? WALTER

And other places. Lots of people go lots of places. MARY

I guess, I was one of those people. WALTER

Yes, you were. MARY

I didn't know you still- WALTER

I never did. MARY

Never did what? WALTER

MARY

Went anywhere, became somebody, loved you, take your pick. Now girls are graduating and going to the junior college in Fullerton. They have autos and get a chance to leave, or be happy-

WALTER

The baby'll change that; you'll be happy now-

MARY

Saints, Walter, I have eight already, and I ain't ever been happy. And who cares if I am? Someday people will read about you because you did something. No one ever reads about ordinary people like me.

WALTER

To be fair, you were never ordinary.

MARY

No, I just turned out that way. Married?

WALTER

Ten years now. Hazel. Three boys and two girls.

MARY

Yeah, I bet you're a faithful loyal husband on top of everything else.

WALTER

I am.  
Long pause

MARY

(Taking his arm)

Then I'll be safe with you. Let's go for a walk, "Kid Johnson". Mind you, watch out for the sump holes.

## SIDE 14 – HENNIE

HENNIE

(Addressing audience.)

Family only. I'm just Miss Babcock. My students call me lots of names behind my back, Henny Penny, Miss Bad Cock-le doodle-do. Mr. Babcock. But you reach a few. Our school used to have the largest student body in Orange County. The Oil Companies have spent a lot on us, attracts good workers. We have the best supplied woodshop, and our Home EC classes are pretty superior. Big push towards those disciplines up here.

When I graduated eighth grade we had a big celebration. I never heard of anything like that when I was growing up in Cleveland. But they had a big party up at the hall. Then off we were shipped to Fullerton for High-school. The first "bus" I rode in was a model-T truck with chairs set up in the back. Every time that crazy Ernie took a turn we'd all go skidding across the truck bed. Now there's a bus. Takes so long to make it back up here that none of our kids get to participate in any of the after school activities. I would have liked to been in Theatre. Gone off to New York. I guess we all have our little dreams. I don't worry about that, I've a life here, dear friends, people who need me. And the kids are very well behaved- they know if I say a word to their parents they are in for one heck of a whaling. I don't use the paddle myself, some of our kids get beat too much as it is. I like to think of them all as my family. But at the end of the day I'm just Miss Babcock.

**SIDE 15 – ROBERT & ISABELL**

ISABELL

I must say, this is the strangest first date I've ever been on.

ROBERT

The boys on the rig must be laughing their asses off at me.

ISABELL

Such language.

ROBERT

I feel like a fool, Isabell.

ISABELL

No wonder my mother had a fit when I said I was coming up to Lavidia Hot Springs, with you. I actually had to say to her, "I'm going and you can't stop me." Really, at my age.

ROBERT

They told me it was something fancy, ah Hell.

ISABELL

It feels wonderful.

ROBERT

Stop being so nice, it's nothing but old barrels in the ground.

ISABELL

The water bubbles.

ROBERT

And it smells like rotten eggs around here.

ISABELL

Sulfur.

ROBERT

I'm going to kill every single one of them.

ISABELL

Such a roughneck. Try and relax, don't you want to go over and try a barrel?

ROBERT

I better stay here, with you, never know who could stumble upon you in the... in the...

ISABELL

Oh Robert, you're priceless. Sit on the edge, here.

(Pause)

I'm under the bubbles.

Robert sits, but still won't look at her.

ROBERT

I'm not looking.

ISABELL

Of course not, do you have a flask on you?

ROBERT

No!

ISABELL

Mine's in my purse, get it and we'll share.

ROBERT

Isabell!

ISABELL

Don't be such a prude; you're the one who brought me out here to be naked.

ROBERT

(Standing and almost yelling)

They lied to me!!!

ISABELL

Then let's make the best of it. Should I get out and get it?

Robert stands up and goes to Isabell's clothes and purse and gets the flask. He hands it to her with a hand over his eyes.

ISABELL

(Taking a big drink)

Am I that ugly?

ROBERT

No.

Silence.

ISABELL

If you can't look at me can you at least talk to me?  
She hands him the flask and he drains it completely.

ROBERT

(He takes out brochure.)

It says here that they were drilling for oil when they hit the water.

ISABELL

(Taking brochure out of his hands)

Talk about the kind of things a girl likes to hear.

## **SIDE 16 – ISABELL**

### ISABELL

There is a baker in Pasadena who saves for me the last creampuff of the day. Even if I do not come in for a week, he always produces it when I do. A woman in my building, after hearing about the conditions on the reservation in Oklahoma, took up a collection to buy new school texts for people she never met. A newsboy, named Bobby, who has one leg, says, "Morning Ma'am think it will rain today?" Every single day. A woman on my streetcar, who I've named Mavis, smiles when I get on, as if we share some tragically funny secret. There are hundreds more, who I see everyday, whose lives affect me, and envelop me in a web of mankind, a tapestry of souls who strive to protect and love each other. Good people, Robert.

## **SIDE 17 – ROBERT**

ROBERT

It's not only the people; it's the bond between a man and the earth. The vibration of the ground, caused by the drilling for stored energy. This whole place is stored energy waiting to explode. That burst to life with a cascade of color with the winter rains. As if God is saying, "This is for you, this is all for you." God's strength flows through the ground into me. I have strength Isabell. Strength that I can share with you. A strength that will never fade, I will always look into your eyes with wonder and love because of it, a strength that locks our bodies into an eternal embrace. A strengths that makes me strong and humble all at the same time. Anything a man can be with a woman I can be with you here. I can be complete, with you, but I need this strength that comes from the ground. The only thing I feel on concrete is the soles of my boots. I guess it's this strength that makes me share thoughts I never have words for. You ever have a thought you never had words for?

**SIDE 18 – ROBERT & ISABELL**

ISABELL

Robert? What is it?

ROBERT

It's not good Isabell. There's an ugly mood.

ISABELL

What happened?

ROBERT

They are cutting back almost half.

ISABELL

Are you-

ROBERT

No. I've got a job.

ISABELL

Thank God.

ROBERT

I don't know how I'll be able to look at our neighbors.

ISABELL

What about us? It's not as if we even have equity in a home. We should have moved, Robert. We can lose everything.

ROBERT

Like Millers next door? Expecting their first baby. What am I to say to them? This is wrong. Some people won't get jobs. What will they do, move to Hooverilles? Our kids, our children scattered? Robert puts his head in hand and quietly begins to sob. (Take time in silence)

ISABELL

(After a moment of uncertainty.)

Robert. It's not your fault, honey.

ROBERT

I... I feel powerless.

ISABELL

You are not powerless, you are my strong man. We can do without. We don't need a tree or gifts this year, give the money to Miller. I'm sure there's other ways we can save.

They won't take charity  
...

ROBERT

I need to go for a walk-

ROBERT

Robert.

ISABELL

To think.

ROBERT

Be careful.  
Robert exits.

ISABELL

**SIDE 19 – ROBERT & ISABELL**

MARY

We're leaving.

STOCH

So go.

MARY

You, me, and the kids. Before frogs start falling out of the sky.

STOCH

I'm not leaving-

MARY

Why? Why not leave this damn town?

STOCH

They keep me on here. I have a salary. I can't work out there, Mary. I won't be a man.

MARY

You were never much of a-

STOCH

You were never no woman!

MARY

We haven't loved each other in a long time.

STOCH

I love you.

MARY

Stoch, you need to be taken care of. I married you; we've had wonderful kids, but don't pretend we love each other.

STOCH

You don't make it easy; you don't think everyone in town knows about you-

MARY

Everyone in this town knows everything. What they don't know they make up. Hear them tell it half our kids are Walter Johnson's.

STOCH

As if he were man enough for you. She going with us?

MARY

She's staying here. She belongs here, at the school.

STOCH

Mary, please-

MARY

If we don't leave now, we'll never have a thing. Nothing to show that we were ever here. I promised to be your wife. But I'm not staying here any longer.

STOCH

Where will we go-

MARY

I've saved, we have grown children that are making a life for themselves, and the young ones are adaptable. We'll survive. The choice is yours Stoch. I'm not afraid to be alone. I never was. She holds out her hand. Stoch looks at it, and grasps her hand as she pulls him up.

## SIDE 20 – STATION MASTER & COMPANY MAN

STATION MASTER

How bad is it?

COMPANY MAN

The tracks a complete wreck. Mostly unsalvageable.

STATION MASTER

It'll take a lot to repair it.

COMPANY MAN

Yes, it would.

STATION MASTER

How long do you figure? I always wanted a vacation.

COMPANY MAN

I checked the records; you've never been ill, never a vacation, never a complaint against you.

STATION MASTER

I take pride in my work. So, how long do you reckon? It can't take that long to lay new track.

COMPANY MAN

I'm afraid we won't be doing that.

STATION MASTER

I don't understand.

COMPANY MAN

The train is through.

STATION MASTER

I don't understand.

COMPANY MAN

We'll be running a pipeline, to the new refinery. Truth be told, we'd been thinking about it for years, just never had the impetuosity.

(Patronizing)

Understand Heffner?

STATION MASTER

I understand what you're doing; I just don't understand why.

COMPANY MAN

Bottom line, stock holders.

STATION MASTER

We make a profit now.

COMPANY MAN

Cost cutting effectiveness.

STATION MASTER

I worked my youth away for this company.

COMPANY MAN

And you deserve your retirement. You have a very good pension. Is there anything else?

STATION MASTER

No, sir. No, not anymore.

Company Man gets up to leave. Stops.

COMPANY MAN

You'll have to find other housing of course. But there's no hurry, a few weeks?

(Pause.)

Well, like I said, no hurry. Good day.

Company man exits.

STATION MASTER

Can't stand in the way of progress.

**SIDE 21 – STATION MASTER & OLDER ISABELL**

OLDER ISABELL

Come in, come in.

STATION MASTER

Hello Isabell.

OLDER ISABELL

Land sakes, Mr. Heffner, I thought you-

STATION MASTER

Died?

OLDER ISABELL

Moved. You must be-

STATION MASTER

Old enough. Old enough to be forgotten. I asked the cab driver to take me to Olinda from the train station in Fullerton, and he had no idea what I was talking about.

OLDER ISABELL

I'll get my car, we still walk up there to pick wildflowers, not as many anymore, ever since the oil companies stopped setting the fields on fire with gasoline to burn back the brush.

STATION MASTER

(To Audience)

We found it, after a spell. I got out a stranger. I could recognize the hills, but nothing else. It was as if it never existed. Then I smelled the oil, and found a few buildings. But it was so quiet. I walked around, where were the people? Where did they all go? Where are the people?

OLDER ISABELL

I don't know. A few of us keep in touch.

STATION MASTER

I was homesick in my home town.

OLDER ISABELL

Now, now, a town's people, not buildings.

STATION MASTER

I'm just a stranger.

OLDER ISABELL

Let me get my car, we'll go out and see some people. Christmas visiting. Do you remember when we used to do that? Visit everyone after Christmas, of course we took a wagon when I was a kid, with a

buffalo blanket, all that way to drop in on friends, visit for hours and catch up. It'll be fun to see the old gang. Olinda doesn't have to die with the buildings.

(Addresses the audience.)

Now some others will claim it's their idea, but it was on this visit I came up with the idea for the Olinda family picnic. Well, someone came up with it. We used to meet every year, in Pearson Park. That's where we went on picnics when I was a girl. The second generation got involved and moved it to Carbon Canyon. That caused some feathers to be ruffled, not as many came. Some of us passed away and gradually it all died out like the town, like our memories. No climax, just an ending. I feel cheated somehow. That we lost something we will never get back.