

PORTLAND Mr. Allen!

FRED Well, Portland! **SFX: APPLAUSE**

FRED Well, Portland, pull up an old rejoinder and sit down. What's new?

PORTLAND Mama says President Truman has taken over all the coal mines.

FRED Does your mother need coal?

PORTLAND Yes. Mama's calling up the White House tomorrow and ordering two tons.

FRED Oh, that's fine. Do away with the middleman, go right to the top. Well, if she needs any wood the President could sit down at the piano and give her a couple of chords, I imagine. (*AD-LIB TO AUDIENCE*) Not good, huh? Can I help it? A man crept in here and did something to the script tonight. I won't mention any names.

PORTLAND Mama says the world today is a bowling alley.

FRED The world is a bowling alley?

PORTLAND Every time you turn around, there's a strike.

FRED Well, I'm glad--(*AD-LIB TO AUDIENCE*) anything you don't understand, applaud, it's perfectly all right. That's what they do in Hollywood: people come in, just applaud, and get warm and go home. (*ON SCRIPT*) Well, I'm glad the trains are running again, Portland.

PORTLAND Yes, if the railroad strike lasted one more week...

FRED Yeah?

PORTLAND The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe would have been off the Hit Parade.

FRED Oh, that would have been terrible. Well, I think I'll run along, Portland. I have to get my magnifying glass and worm a crabapple.

PORTLAND Mama says Friday is your birthday.

FRED That's right.

PORTLAND How old are you?

FRED Nobody knows, Portland. I was born before the Decca company started, so there weren't any records in those days.

PORTLAND (LAUGHING) Mama says last...

FRED (AD-LIB) Now, don't you laugh, don't you start up. If you're going to establish a precedent in here I want to know about it.

PORTLAND Mama says last year when the candles on your birthday cake melted down...

FRED Yeah?

PORTLAND There was enough grease to wax the floor at Roseland.

FRED Oh, I'm not that old, Portland.

PORTLAND Mama says, if you were a piece of furniture, you'd be an antique.

FRED If I was an antique in radio I'd be Duncan's other fife. Well...Well, that's life I guess, Portland.

PORTLAND Mama says life is like the Australian Fig Bird.

FRED The Australian Fig Bird?

PORTLAND It lives on the seeds in figs.

FRED But there aren't any figs in Australia.

PORTLAND The Australian Fig Bird dies at birth.

FRED And the Australian Fig Bird has nothing on our jokes, let me tell you. With that said, I think we better get along to Allen's Alley, Portland.

PORTLAND What is your question tonight?

FRED Well, recently a Mister Al Slater, a specialist in mental suggestion, made a phonograph record that he guarantees will put any insomniac to sleep. And so our question is, do you have any trouble sleeping and if you do, what are you doing about it?

PORTLAND Shall we go?

FRED As the dollar dinner said when the glutton sat down, I'll be gone in a minute.

MUSIC BRIDGE for 5 seconds.

FRED Ah, it's so good to get back to Allen's Alley, Portland. It's as quiet as an eel coiling in a bucket of whipped cream. Say, I wonder if the Senator is in. Let's knock.

SFX ***KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS***

CLAGHORN Somebody--I say--somebody knocked.

FRED Yes, I...

CLAGHORN Claghorn's the name, Senator Claghorn, that is.

FRED Well now, look, I know...

CLAGHORN Something tells me you don't remember me, son.

FRED Look, I remember you...

CLAGHORN I'm from the South! The pone and possum paradise!

FRED Now look, Senator...

CLAGHORN The only plant life I have around my house is a Virginia Creeper!

FRED Now wait a minute...

CLAGHORN Every time I get chicken pox, they're southern fried!

FRED Senator...

CLAGHORN Remember me now, son?

FRED No!

CLAGHORN Don't say "no" in my presence!

FRED Why not?

CLAGHORN N-O! That's "north" abbreviated!

FRED Wait a minute, Senator. What about this sleeping problem?

CLAGHORN When I--I say--when I first went to the Senate I had plenty of trouble sleeping.

FRED You...

CLAGHORN After the roll was called, I'd put on my seersucker nightshirt and my lindsey-woolsey (*STRESSING FIRST SYLLABLE*) BAY-ray...

FRED Yeah?

CLAGHORN Yeah, I'd face the south, lean back, close my eyes...

FRED And go to sleep, eh?

CLAGHORN Until some Yankee pigeon-plucker would get up, start flappin' his lips and break up my morpheus filibuster. Filibuster, that is!

FRED I heard you the first time, Senator. Are you still losing sleep, Senator?

CLAGHORN No, I've solved my problem, son.

FRED How?

CLAGHORN When I'm ready to sleep in the Senate I sit back and croon myself my southern lullaby.

FRED What is your southern lullaby?

MUSIC "ROCK-A-BYE BABY" PLAYS

CLAGHORN (*OVER MUSIC*) Rock-a-bye small fry, On the cotton tree top, When the southern wind blows, Your cradle will rock, When the wind's from the north, I say, baby you'll bawl, For down will come cradle, Tree and you all!

MUSIC STOPS

FRED Well very good, Senator. So long, Senator.

CLAGHORN So long!

SFX *DOOR CLOSSES. APPLAUSE*

FRED Well, the Senator stopped just in time: I was dozing off myself. Now, I wonder how Titus Moody is doing.

SFX *KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS*

TITUS Howdy, bub.

FRED You're starting to sound like Dennis Day, Titus. Tell me, Mr. Moody, do you have any trouble sleeping?

TITUS I only half sleep.

FRED Half sleep?

TITUS I got short eyelids.

FRED With short eyelids, you can't close your eyes, huh?

TITUS Only when I frown.

FRED I see. Well, are you the only one awake on the farm?

TITUS No, daylight saving time has got everything in a swivet.

FRED The animals are bewildered?

TITUS Yeah. My cow had insomnia.

FRED Your cow didn't sleep at all?

TITUS The bags under her eyes were so big, I didn't know which end to milk.

FRED You were confused, eh?

TITUS Yeah. First time I milked the wrong end, and got two buckets full of homogenized tears.

FRED Well, have you cured the cow's insomnia?

TITUS I got a book on hypnotizin'.

FRED Good.

TITUS I stood in front of the cow...

FRED Yeah?

TITUS I stared right into her eyes...

FRED Uh-huh...

TITUS I started waving with my hands...

FRED Uh-huh...

TITUS I said, "alacazam, alacazen, you ain't a cow, you're a hen."

FRED "You're a hen." Well, was your hypnotism a success?

TITUS Yeah. Today, that cow thinks she's a hen.

FRED Well, how do you know?

TITUS Well, she's sitting on a nest.

FRED You mean...

TITUS She's laying egg nogs. So long, bub!

SFX ***DOOR CLOSES. APPLAUSE***

FRED Let's try this next door, here.

SFX ***KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS.***

Mrs. NUSS Nu?

FRED Oh, Mrs. Nussbaum!

Mrs. NUSS You were expecting maybe Hoagie Carbuncle?

FRED Tell me, Mrs. N, do you have trouble sleeping?

Mrs. NUSS Who could sleep? Every night with his dreaming, mine husband Pierre is waking me up.

FRED He dreams, huh?

Mrs. NUSS Always he's different things.

FRED Dreams he's different things? How do you mean?

Mrs. NUSS One night, Pierre is dreaming he is the Lone Stranger.

FRED Yeah?

Mrs. NUSS All night long, he is yelling "Hi-ho Silver!"

FRED "Hi-ho Silver," huh?

Mrs. NUSS Upstairs is living a Mrs. Silver.

FRED Yeah?

Mrs. NUSS All night, she is yelling back "Hi-ho Nussbaum!"

FRED I see.

Mrs. NUSS One night, Pierre is dreaming he is an automobile, a roadster.

FRED A roadster?

Mrs. NUSS In his pajamas, Pierre is sleeping with the top down.

FRED Oh, my.

Mrs. NUSS Once, he is dreaming he is an Alka-Seltzer.

FRED An Alka-Seltzer?

Mrs. NUSS All night, Pierre is fizzing.

FRED No wonder you can't sleep.

Mrs. NUSS Last night, he should drop dead.

FRED What happened?

Mrs. NUSS He is dreaming he is a tea kettle.

FRED A tea kettle, eh?

Mrs. NUSS All night long, Pierre is whistling.

FRED Whistling?

Mrs. NUSS In the morning, when he is waking ...

FRED Yeah?

Mrs. NUSS In bed with Pierre is twenty dogs.

SFX ***DOOR CLOSES. APPLAUSE***

FRED Well, that brings us to the lavender shanty at the end of the Alley. Let's try here.

SFX ***KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS***

FALSTAFF You knocked three times, do you think that's nice? In my last picture, the

postman rang twice.

FRED Ah, Falstaff. You have new poems tonight?

FALSTAFF Indubitably. Have you heard: Said the little bear to the big giraffe, Let's eat a hyena, just for a laugh?

FRED No.

FALSTAFF Or: When I called her "baby," her face lit up, Cause she had a lantern jaw?

FRED No.

FALSTAFF How about this: Mother's home putting spikes in her shoes, She's playing first base for Vera Cruz.

FRED Now, wait a minute, Falstaff! You exponent of the hackney! Tonight, we are discussing the problem of sleep.

FALSTAFF My poem awaits your bidding.

FRED And what is your shut-eye sonata called?

FALSTAFF "My Recipe for Slumber."

FRED How does it Go?

FALSTAFF If you cannot sleep at night And you don't know what to do,
My Recipe for Slumber Is just the thing for you.
Don't waste time taking powders, Don't bother counting sheep,
Don't dawdle in a hot bath, Hoping you will sleep.
Don't give up drinking coffee, Don't send for any gland man,
You can eat and drink all night, And still you'll meet the sandman.
My Recipe for Slumber is older than the sphinx.
Just cut twenty tiddlies into halves, And you'll get forty winks.

SFX *APPLAUSE. DOOR CLOSES*