



***The Trip to Bountiful***  
**By Horton Foote**

**Act One, Scene Four**

THELMA

I think I ought to tell you this... I... I don't want you to think I'm interfering in your business... but... well...you see your son and your daughter-in-law came in just after you left...

MRS. WATTS

I know. I saw them coming. That's why I left so fast.

THELMA

Your son seems very concerned.

MRS. WATTS

Bless his heart.

THELMA

He found a handkerchief that you had dropped.

MRS. WATTS

Oh, mercy. That's right, I did.

THELMA

He asked me if I had seen you. I felt I had to say yes. I wouldn't have said anything if he hadn't asked me.

MRS. WATTS

Oh, that's all right. I would have done the same thing in your place. Did you talk to Jessie Mae?

THELMA

Yes.

MRS. WATTS

Isn't she a sight? I bet she told you I was crazy...

THELMA

Well...

MRS. WATTS

Oh, don't be afraid of hurting my feelings. Poor Jessie Mae, she thinks everybody's crazy that don't want to sit in the beauty parlor all day and drink Coca-Colas. She tells me a million times a day I'm crazy. That's the only time Ludie will talk back to her. He gets real mad when she calls me crazy. I think Ludie knows how I feel about getting back to Bountiful. Once when I was talking about something we did back there in the old days, he burst out crying. He was so overcome he had to leave the room.

*(A pause. MRS. WATTS starts to hum "There's Not a Friend Like the Lowly Jesus.")*

THELMA

That's a pretty hymn. What is the name of it?

MRS. WATTS

"There's Not a Friend Like the Lowly Jesus." Do you like hymns?

THELMA

Yes, I do.

MRS. WATTS

So do I. Jessie Mae says they've gone out of style... but I don't agree. Keeps my spirits up. What's your favorite hymn?

THELMA

Oh, I don't know.

MRS. WATTS

The one I was singing is mine. I bet I sing it a hundred times a day. When Jessie Mae isn't home. Hymns make Jessie Mae nervous.

*(A pause.)*

Did Ludie mention my heart condition?

THELMA

Yes he did.

MRS. WATTS

Poor Ludie. He worries about it so. I hated to leave him. Well, I hope he'll forgive me in time. So many people are nervous today. Ludie wasn't nervous back in Bountiful. Neither was I. The breeze from the Gulf would always quiet your nerves. You could sit on your front gallery and smell the ocean blowing in around you.

*(A pause.)*

I regret the day I left. But I thought it was the best thing at the time. Farming was so hard to make a living by and I had to see to the farm myself; our house was old and there was no money to fix it with, nor send Ludie to school. So I sold off the land and gave Ludie an education...