

Morty – Effervescent older actor who is very impressed with himself

Jessica – New girl, young theater actress doing her first radio show

## START

*(MORTY and JESSICA shake hands. LAUREN crosses up to the piano and looks over sheet music.)*

MORTY. Nice to know you, kiddo.

JESSICA. Morty Sparks? Thee...Morty Sparks?

MORTY. Such a sweet child.

JESSICA. You were in *Sergeant York* with Gary Cooper!

MORTY. A little known fact, but true.

JESSICA. You were in the *Jupiter Radio Theatre*.

MORTY. You've done your homework.

JESSICA. *Winston Sayles and the Jupiter Radio Theatre*. I'll never forget Winston Sayles in *Battle of the Planets*. He's so dreamy.

MORTY. Well...maybe he was. He's let himself go these past few years...

JESSICA. He was in the first Broadway show I did two years ago. Gosh, I'm still in love with him.

**MORTY.** Yeah, it's too bad what a couple of years of aging can do to a guy...

**JESSICA.** (*Looking around the studio:*) This is my first job in radio but I just love *Radio Suspense Theatre*. So, this is where it all happens. Were you here when Winston Sayles was a guest star for *The Hitch Hiker*?

**MORTY.** *The Hitch Hiker*? Yeah, I was in that, you don't remember me?

**JESSICA.** What part did you play?

**MORTY.** I was the gas station attendant.

**JESSICA.** That was you? You were so...funny.

**MORTY.** Hunh.

**JESSICA.** Miss McNair said that we don't have scripts yet.

**MORTY.** I'm sure the ink is drying as we speak.

**JESSICA.** No rehearsal?

**MORTY.** Rehearsal? Naw, leave that to the actors.

**JESSICA.** Don't you need actors for radio plays?

**MORTY.** Unh, un. Not that we don't get actors here. But radio requires a different kind of talent. Take me for instance. I don't really consider myself an actor. I bring more personality to bear than that. I consider myself an "entertainer."

**JESSICA.** Aren't actors entertainers?

**MORTY.** Oh, no, no, no. You see an actor is more studied; more controlled. You can get away with acting in Hollywood or on the "Big White Way" but in radio you need to be able to shift gears, find the core of a piece and then...entertain.

**JESSICA.** What about art?

**MORTY.** Art who?

**JESSICA.** No, the art of the theatre?

**MORTY.** Oh! Listen, leave art to the pointy headed guys with paint brushes.

**JESSICA.** But you were in Hollywood yourself. You acted with Gary Cooper.

**MORTY.** Well, sure. But an entertainer can perform in film. Although many try, an actor just can't adjust to radio.

**JESSICA.** Do you think I'll be able to adjust?

**MORTY.** I think you'll do just fine.

*(LOIS LANGE and GRACIE WILSON enter.)*

*(MORTY notices their entrance then turns quickly to JESSICA so as to be overheard.)*

**MORTY.** Yes, young lady. It's always nice to run into a fan of mine. Just stick with me and I'll show you the ropes. Gary? Yeah, Gary and I go back a long way. I remember once, "Coop," I said. "Coop..."

*(MORTY turns and pretends to see LOIS and GRACIE for the first time.)*

Oh, Hi, girls.

*(He crosses to them, pointing to JESSICA.)*

New kid. Turns out she happens to be a fan of mine. I guess if you're in radio long enough you start working with your fans.

**END**