

MY SISTER IN THIS HOUSE

LEA: And Maman—what did she say?

CHRISTINE: Oh Maman. Maman was terrified. You know how her face gets. She screamed at us.

LEA: And then—then what happened?

CHRISTINE: Then there was the gypsy—Mad Flower they used to call her.

LEA: And what did she say?

CHRISTINE: She said—oh you—you know it so well.

LEA: But tell me again, Christine. Tell me again.

CHRISTINE; They're bound for life. Mad Flower said. Bound in blood. (*A bell rings.*)

THE RIMERS OF ELDRITCH

by Lanford Wilson

Patsy (mid-teens) - Lena (mid-teens)

The Play: The Middle Western Town of Eldritch is the scene of a murder. But who is the murdered man, and what are the circumstances surrounding his death? To solve this mystery, we learn much about the relationships of the inhabitants of the little town, among them: Cora Groves and her lover, Walter, a young man who works at her café; Nelly Winrod, a strong-willed woman who mistreats her aged, retarded mother; Eva Jackson, a dreamy crippled girl, and Robert Conklin, the boy who cares for her. Poetic in spirit, *The Rimers of Eldritch* ultimately depicts the bigotry and hypocrisy of small-town life.

The Scene: Patsy tells her friend Lena about her soon-to-be wedding.

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(Cast enters, with Patsy and Lena going to C. When all are in place lights up on Patsy and Lena.)

PATSY: *(To Lena.)* It wasn't really sudden. I knew he wanted to, he'd let on, you know, in little ways. He said would I mind not being in school; he'll graduate, of course, 'cause this is his last year—and I said would I *mind*?

LENA: That's just incredible; when's it going to be?

PATSY: We aren't messing around; he said two weeks from this Saturday. He didn't want to have a church wedding at first—you know how he is, and I said, Chuck Melton, if you think I'm going to just run off to a preacher and practically elope you got another think coming. So it'll be the First Presberterian of Centerville, but I want it to be just simple. I said I wanted a street length dress—I know but that's what I want and I'll have a veil, a little pill-box hat, I love those, and a veil and probably roses, if it's not too early for roses.

[MARY: *(On top platform. Over.)* Bonnie? Here girl. Bonnie? Here kitty, kitty.]

LENA: I'm just so surprised.

PATSY: Well, it wasn't really sudden, I knew he wanted to, he'd let on. I love the First Presberterian.

[PREACHER: *(Light on Preacher. Over.)* Now you know I'm aware we all want to get this settled and go home and forget about it. *(Light out on Preacher.)*]

PATSY: I only hope the trial and all is quieted down. That could just ruin it all.

LENA: Oh, it will be.

PATSY: It's a beautiful church.

LENA: I really love it; it's just beautiful.

PATSY: And my aunt's gonna give the bride's breakfast.

LENA: Aren't you excited?

PATSY: I imagine we'll live in Centerville. You know, till we have enough money to get a place or maybe move somewhere. Probably right in town; there's a wonderful place over the barbershop, the Reganson one on the corner with windows on both sides that's been empty for weeks. I only hope someone doesn't beat us to it. I want to

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tell Chuck to put some money down on it. I don't want to live with his folks. I just can't stand them and I don't think they think too much of me either. They're so square and old-fashioned. They really are. They don't even smoke or believe in make-up or anything.

LENA: Chuck is wonderful, he really is. I'm just so surprised.

PATSY: *(Beginning to cry gently.)* He was so cute; he said would I mind not being in school next year, junior year and I said of course I'll miss my friends, but would I *mind*?

LENA: It's so beautiful. It's a beautiful church for a wedding.

PATSY: Isn't it?

LENA: Aren't you excited? What's wrong?

PATSY: Well, of course I am, silly.

LENA: I don't think Josh and me want to get married though until after I'm out of school.

PATSY: Oh, my god, you don't want to marry Josh. My Lord, I can't imagine it. You're not serious about him. Lord, he's so childish.

LENA: He isn't. He's six years older than you are. He's worked for two years.

PATSY: Well, I know, but you don't want to marry him. Age doesn't have anything to do with it. He's all right and he's sweet and all, but I mean to go to the show with and hold hands. I don't know how you can bear to ride into town in that garage tow-truck, though.

LENA: I drive it sometimes; it's not bad.

PATSY: Well, I know, but Josh! Lord, Lena, I've got so many things to do yet. You know the thing I think I like most about Chuck is that he's so clean and neat and all. The way he takes care of his Mercury. It's always like spanking new.