

TEXT SIX

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, an extract from Act Two

Film time code : 1:02:20 – 1:09:00

(Brick has been giving his own version of Skipper's death to his father.)

5 I lay in a hospital bed, watched our games on TV, saw Maggie on the
bench next to Skipper when he was hauled out of a game for stumbles!—Burned me
up the way she hung on his arm!--Y'know, I think that Maggie had always felt sort of
left out because she and me never got any closer together than two people just get in
10 bed, which is not much closer than two cats on a--fence humping.... So! She took this
time to work on poor dumb Skipper. He was a less than average student at Ole Miss,
you know that, don't you?!— (She) poured in his mind the dirty, false idea that what
we were a pair of frustrated sissies, like Jack Straw and Peter Ochello!--He, poor
Skipper, went to bed with Maggie to prove it wasn't true, and when it didn't work out,
15 he thought it was true!--Skipper broke in two like a rotten stick-- nobody ever turned
so fast to a lush--or died of it so quick.... [...]

A stumble is when
you almost fall
after hitting your
foot against
something

To hump is to f**k

A lush (American
slang) is an
alcoholic

BIG DADDY: Something's left out of that story. What did you leave out?
[The phone has started ringing in the hall. As if it reminded him of something, Brick
glances suddenly toward the sound and says:]

20 BRICK: Yes!--I left out a long-distance call which I had from Skipper, in which he
made a drunken confession to me and on which I hung up!--last time we spoke to
each other in our lives....

to leave out : to
omit

[Muted ring stops as someone answers phone in a soft, indistinct voice in hall.]

25 BIG DADDY: You hung up?

BRICK: Hung up. Jesus! Well--

to hang up : to
stop a phone
conversation

30 BIG DADDY: Anyhow now!--we have tracked down the lie with which you're
disgusted and which you are drinking to kill your disgust with, Brick. You been
passing the buck. This disgust with mendacity is disgust with yourself. You!--dug the
grave of your friend and kicked him in it!--before you'd face truth with him!

BRICK: His truth, not mine!

35 BIG DADDY: His truth, okay! But you wouldn't face it with him!

BRICK: Who can face truth? Can you?

to pass the buck :
to evade
responsibility by
passing it on to
someone else

40 BIG DADDY: Now don't start passin' the rotten buck again, boy!

BRICK: How about these birthday congratulations, these many, many happy returns
of the day, when ev'rybody but you knows there won't be any!
[Whoever has answered the hall phone lets out a high, shrill laugh; the voice becomes
45 audible saying: 'no, no, you got it all wrong! Upside down! Are you crazy?' | Brick
suddenly catches his breath as he realises that he has made a shocking disclosure. He
hobbles a few paces, then freezes, and without looking at his father's shocked face,
says:]

disclosure :
revelation

Let's, let's--go out, now, and--

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