

HOODS & HOOFERS

A Musical

By Robert Lindsey-Nassif

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CAST

(Minimum: 11)

BILLIE MOORE (early twenties; a beautiful innocent; fine soprano voice) (Vocal range: Bb to high C)

ROY LANE (twenties; fast, wiry, braggart song and dance man; obnoxious but loveable; decidedly short; tenor or very high baritone) (Bb to high G; optional high B)

STEVE CRANDALL (thirties to forties; a handsome, tough gangster; Brooklyn accent; seductive and dangerous; fine baritone voice) (Ab to F#)

PEARL GILHOOLEY (twenties to early thirties; a tough showgirl with a secret; mezzo or alto belt singer) (G to C)

LIL RICE (an over-the-hill Mae West; plump and pleasing; played by a man, though may be played by a woman; mezzo soprano mixed belt voice) (A to C)

LOU (PORKY) THOMPSON (middle aged; heavy set; comical get-away car driver; tenor, character voice)

DAN McCORN (thirties to forties; a street-wise, hard boiled cop; Humphrey Bogart; he's seen it all; baritone) (B to F)

DOLPH (Steve's muscular, giant sized, big-fisted henchman; dumb and deadly)

NICK VERDIS (middle aged nightclub owner; heavy Greek accent; emotional and nervous)

THE GIRLS (minimum two; ideally three or more young showgirl floozies; each should have a distinctive personality: grumpy, dopey, sarcastic, perky, etc. Mixed soprano, mezzo, and alto) (In the script, they are given names like OLIVE, GRACE, MAZIE, and RUBY. The director may wish to reassign their lines to suit the specific actresses.)

JOE (the waiter; none too smart)

SCARFACE CASINO (thirties to forties; a Brooklyn mobster with a large scar on his face; not to be messed with; may be double cast with Joe)

THE CHICAGO GANG (mobsters from Chi-town; assorted tough guys; the obligatory violin cases; may be

double cast with JOE, NICK, and DOLPH. Two, three, or more men; mixed baritone and tenor voices)

TWO COPS

SPEAKEASY may be performed with 11 players if the roles are double cast as follows:

Roy Lane

Billie Moore

Steve Crandall

Lou (Porky) Thompson / Cop

Lil Rice

Pearl Gilhooley

Dan McCorn

Showgirls (minimum, 2)

Nick / Chicago Gangster / Joe (simply eliminate Joe and give his lines to Nick)

Dolph / Chicago Gangster / Cop

Orchestra: 2 piano, drums, optional upright bass or keyboard bass. Also, the music director may wish to orchestrate the show by doubling various piano parts with sampler keyboards (creating the sounds of strings, brass, woodwinds, etc.), as was done on the SPEAKEASY demo tape. This is quite easy to do and creates a full orchestra sound. In this case, employ 2 pianos, drums, and two (or more) keyboards.

TIME: 1927

: Backstage in a sleazy speakeasy

PROLOGUE: A Dark Alley

(Dramatic music. A police siren wails.

Night. Fog. Shadows. Gangsters enter, led by a rough, handsome man in a light trench coat and fedora (Steve Crandall). On his arm is a floozy. His boys light his cigarette, then all of them hide in the shadows.

Delivery truck headlights cut through the dark. The vehicle screeches to a halt. Two men get out and begin to unload crates.)

STEVE CRANDALL

Get him!

(The gangsters ambush the men. A fight ensues. Punching. Shouting. Improvised dialogue. Grunting. Falling.

One of the men is mown down in a hail of bullets.

The other man tries to escape, but the gangsters corner him. He turns suddenly and comes face to face with the handsome mob leader.)

DELIVERY MAN

You'll pay for this, Crandall!

(Crandall laughs, pulls out a pistol, and coolly delivers four shots into the delivery man's chest. With each hit, the man pitches and swivels. He collapses, crawls over to Crandall and up his body -- hoping to deliver one last blow. But he dies and slides down Crandall, landing in a heap.

Crandall laughs, steps on the man, and delivers one last, humiliating shot. The man dances. Blackout.)

SCENE ONE: Backstage at the Paradise Nightclub

(Costume racks, props, and trunks. A rehearsal area with an ancient honky tonk piano. A large stage door leads out to the alley. Another door leads to the club owner's office. Up a spiral staircase are the dressing rooms. Up a set of stairs (center) is the cabaret stage.)

LIL RICE, a buxom, over-the-hill Mae West, is at the piano. LIL wears a kimono and her hair is in curlers. A cigarette is dangling from her lips. **She also happens to be a man in drag.**

A gaggle of CHORUS GIRLS in assorted rehearsal costumes are about to go through a number led by ROY LANE, an over-eager, wiry song and dance man who is noticeably short.)

ROY

(To the GIRLS) Okay, GIRLS. Let's try the "Broadway" number. We gotta put the new girl in. Let's go!

GIRLS

(Moans and groans)

ROY

And one, two, three, four...

(LIL plays the piano as the GIRLS begin the number half-heartedly.)

GIRLS

BROADWAY!
OOOOOH...AAAAAH...

ROY

(Shouts ad lib instructions over the singing)
With the right arm!...Smile...More pep!...(Etc.)

GIRLS

BROADWAY!
THE ADDRESS OF DREAMS!

ROY

Smile, GIRLS!

(Olive steps on Ruby's foot.)

RUBY

Hey, watch your dogs!

OLIVE

Cow!

RUBY

Moose!

OLIVE

Tramp!

RUBY

Slut!

GIRLS

SWEETIE PIE,
I'M SORRY TO SAY GOODBYE.
I'M HEADIN' FOR OLD N.Y.,
TO BE IN A SHOW.

MAMMA WARNS:
NEW YORK S A GARDEN OF THORNS.
PRODUCERS ARE SATAN IN A TUX
WITH A RENTED TAIL,
EVEN IF THEY'RE MINUS THE HORNS.

(NICK VERDIS, the grouchy old Greek club-owner, enters from his office.)

ROY

(Over the singing) Hi, Mr. Verdis. How ya doin'?

(NICK watches the rehearsal. He isn't happy with what he sees.)

GIRLS

BUT,
BABY CAKES,
IF I CAN JUST GET THE BREAKS,
I BET I GOT WHAT IT TAKES
TO LAND IN THE DOUGH.

ROY

Charleston! Watch your turn, Pearl!

GIRLS

IF I'M X'D,
THERE'S ALWAYS A NEXT AND A NEXT
WHO'D KILL TO BE IN SHOW
ON BROADWAY.

BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!

BROADWAY!

(The GIRLS collide and fall over like dominoes. A fight breaks out.)

GIRLS

(Ad lib commotion -- loud and high pitched) Hey, what d'ya think yer doin'? You klutz! (Etc.)

NICK

(With a heavy Greek accent) Stop! Lousy!

(LIL bangs on the piano keys in disgust.)

MAZIE

Aw, go fry an egg!

ROY

It's the new girl's fault again. She took the wrong turn, used the wrong arm --

PEARL

Okay! I'm sorry, already. I'm new at this game.

RUBY

Hey, short stack, never mind the new girl. You might save your raspberries for "Miss Billie Moore," who figures she don't need to come to rehearsal no more.

GRACE

Yeah, now that she's "you know what" with "you know who."

RUBY

Nice work, for a professional virgin.

ROY

Hey, you shut up about Billie! She's a good kid. She didn't know about rehearsal, that's all.

ALL

(Big argument) She did so! Are you nuts! I hate her! Who does she think she is? Leave the kid alone, will ya! (Etc.)

(The furor builds to a peak. LIL rises from the piano.)

LIL

(Bangs the keys) SHUT UP!!!!!

(All fall silent.)

What a bunch of amateurs!

ROY

Mr. Verdis, look, I'm sure Billie has a good reason for being late. And, besides, THAT KID IS ONE OF THE SWELLEST DANCERS AND NEATEST LOOKERS YOU GOT.

GIRL

(Indignant huffs)

NICK

So, what do you care? You work for me, not for her.

(To the GIRLS)

Okay. We do it again. Gimme some pep this time, if you want to get paid. You don't only dance with the feets, you have to show the teets. Like this.

(He smiles broadly to demonstrate.

Misunderstanding, the GIRLS hoist their chests. He looks.)

Good enough.

(LIL starts playing. ROY and the GIRLS pick up the number where they left off.)

ROY

(More ad libs) Come on, girls, show some pep this time. One, two, three, four.

GIRLS

BUT EVERY NOW AND THEN,
THE LUCKY LIGHTNING STRIKES.

SHE'S WORKING AT THE CORNER FIVE AND TEN,
THEN -- YIKES!

HER STRIKING SIMILARITY TO CLARA BOW
IMPRESSES SOME IMPRESSIVE IMPRESARIO.

AND, HOLY MOLY, POW! BEFORE SHE KNOWS,
THE KID IS DOING TIME IN ABIES'S IRISH ROSE.
AND SO THE BROADWAY STORY GOES AND GOES.

(Energetic tap break.)

GIRLS

SO, WISH ME LUCK.
TELL GRANDPA TO START THE TRUCK.
I'LL EITHER BE ONE MORE SCHMUCK,
OR END UP A PRO.

SAY "AMEN,"
AND PRAY WHEN YOU SEE ME AGAIN
I'LL BE IN A BIG-TIME

SHOW ON
BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!

ROY

Okay, let's see whatcha got!

GIRLS

THE ADDRESS OF DREAMS!
OOOOOH...AAAAAH...
Broadway!

NICK

Okay. Tonight, try to do it like that. Mr. Crandall
has business friends coming in from Chicago.
AND WHEN MISS BILLIE MOORE COMES IN...
SHE GOES OUT!!

GIRLS

Never mind the Greek...What a grouch...etc.

(The GIRLS begin to disperse.)

PEARL

Sorry I screwed up rehearsal. Hey, how 'bout I
buy you all a drink!

(Reaction from the GIRLS.)

GRACE

Feel free to screw up anytime.

(The GIRLS saunter out. NICK starts to
go into his office. ROY stops him.)

ROY

Mr. Verdis, I hope you was just kiddin' about firing
Billie, 'cause -- did I mention? -- me and Billie
is working up --

ROY AND NICK

a great new song and dance act.

NICK

Yeah, yeah. So what?

ROY

So, you wanna take a look at it? Maybe put it in
the show?

NICK

That depends. Are you famous?

ROY

No.

NICK

Then, why would I wanna put your act in my show?

ROY

But, how we gonna get famous if nobody sees us?

NICK

Congratulations. You just figured out show business. You oughta be an agent.

ROY

But, Mr. Verdis, if you'd just give us a chance...

NICK

My english not so good, so watch carefully...No!!!

(NICK goes into his office, slamming the door in ROY'S face.)

ROY

Nick is just kidding about firing Billie, ain't he, Lil?

LIL

I think you're sweet on her.

ROY

Nah, not me. I just take a brotherly interest in the kid.

LIL

Yeah? Well, brother, the big cahoonna has your sister so dizzy she don't know you're alive.

ROY

Who, Crandall? That's just a buggy ride. He don't mean a thing to her. Billie wants to get ahead in this game. Her and me are working up a new song and dance act that's a sure thing.
WE'LL PLAY TOGETHER ON A BROADWAY STAGE,
'CAUSE, LIL,
I'M GETTING BILLIE OUT OF THIS CAGE.
We're headed for the bigtime.

LIL

Yeah, sure.

ROY

All we need it the break.

LIL

Right.

ROY

We ain't long for this dead-end bootleg hell hole
-- no offense.

LIL

None taken. But, aren't you forgetting --

ROY

What? I'm short? So? People love short guys.
Jolson didn't go nowhere 'til he got down on his
knees. 'Sides, if I wanted to look taller, I could
put lifts in my shoes.

LIL

Or work with midgets.

ROY

You'll see. With Billie's looks and my personality--

LIL

Your what?

ROY

Well, not to pin any bouquets on myself. But it
ain't only I got talent...

I GOT SOMETHING SPIFFY,
SO EXPLOSIVE AND SO SOCKERINO,
THAT I CALL IT "PERSONALIT-N-T."

NAME ANOTHER HOOFER
WITH A LESS ROUTINE ROUTINE,
OR NAME A STEPPER WITH MORE PEPPER
IN HIS REPERTOIRE OF REPARTEE
THAN ME.

EVEN AS A BABE,
I WAS A RIOT WITH MY RATTLE
AND MY CATALOGUE OF ZANY MISCELLANEOUS.

AND WHILE THE OTHER BOYS
WAS OUTSIDE BATTING HOMERS,
I WAS INSIDE
PRACTICING TO BE SPONTANEOUS.

I AM SO MAGNETIC,
I GO WALKING PAST AN OFFICE BUILDING,
PAPER CLIPS AND STAPLES
ALL COME FLYING OUT THE DOOR.

EVERY OTHER WORD I SAY IS FUNNY.

I MEAN, I COULD READ THE CONSTITUTION,
AND I'D HAVE 'EM ON THE FLOOR.

I SWEAR IN ALL MY LIFE,
I NEVER MET A MAN WHO DIDN'T LIKE ME,
'CAUSE I GOT PERSONALIT-N-T.

PERSONALIT-N-T.
SONG AND DANCE AND COMEDY.

BOY, I MAKE 'EM BEND IN HALF.
EVEN MAKE THE USHERS LAUGH.

I CAN MILK AN HOUR OF SPIEL,
OUT OF ONE BANANA PEEL.

"LESTER JESTER." "MISTER GLEE."
I WISH I COULD WORK WITH ME!

I kill 'em!
I clobber 'em!
I lay 'em in the aisles!
Then I pulverize 'em!
I knock 'em dead!
And I slaughter 'em!
I oughta be arrested!

ROY

I oughta be arrested!

(Dance break. Roy clowns, showing off
to LIL, who pays no attention.)

ROY

I'LL JUST CULTIVATE MY DIMPLES,
WHILE I WAIT AROUND
FOR FRED ASTAIRE TO CRUMBLE.
I AM GONNA BE SO STINKING FAMOUS,
I'LL BE ABLE TO BE HUMBLE!

No, no applause. I'm just one performer doing the
best darn job he can to make the world happy!!!

ONCE I GET JUST ONE GOOD BREAK,
BROADWAY IS A PIECE OF CAKE.

HEADLINES IN VARIETY:
"T-N-T MEANS C.O.D."

"BOFFO BIZ FOR BUFFO BOY."
"JOLSON FOLDS IN ILLINOIS."

"S.R.O. ON R.K.O."
HI YA, DAVID! HI YA, FLO!

ONE DAY, ON SOME VAST MARQUEE,
YOU'LL LOOK UP IN AWE AND SEE

THIS SHTICK OF DYNAMITE,
READY TO IGNITE.

YES SIR,
PERSONALIT-N-T!!
Pow!

(Big Al Jolson finish. BILLIE MOORE enters
from the hallway. She wears an orchid
corsage.)

LIL
Well, here she is.

ROY
We've been worried about you.

BILLIE
Gee, I hope I'm not late.

(LIL chokes on her drink.)

LIL
Well, if we was in China, you'd be right on time.

ROY
Where the hell have you been?

BILLIE
I'm sorry to be late, Roy. Mr. Crandall said he'd
keep track of the time.

ROY
So, you was with the bootlegger, huh?

BILLIE
I told you, Roy, he's nothing of the kind.

ROY
Then, where's he get his do re mi?

BILLIE AND ROY
Florida Real Estate.

ROY
That's the parrot's crackers.

BILLIE
It's true. He wouldn't lie to me. He's a very
kind person.

ROY

Look, let me give you a piece of advice -- no that I care personally -- but it ain't good for our act if you let your head get turned by these sugar daddies.

BILLIE

It isn't like that. He's just a nice man who's lonely.

ROY

Boo Hoo. Where is he?

BILLIE

Outside, parking his limosine.

ROY

My heart bleeds. (Referring to her corsage) I 'spose he gave ya them dandelions?

BILLIE

At the restaurant. Oh, it was beautiful, Roy. I mean, the automat is nice, but there were table cloths and a band.

IT WAS JUST LIKE A DREAM.

MISTER CRANDALL KEPT ASKING THE BAND

TO PLAY FOR ME.

SPECIAL NUMBERS.

EVERYONE FOR ME.

(The GIRLS flood in.)

MAZIE

Well, her majesty has arrived.

GIRLS

(Big ad lib commotion) You sure got nerve...Keeping us hanging around...You think you don't gotta come to rehearsal?...What makes you so special?..(Etc.)

(NICK enters from his office and joins in the ruckus.)

NICK

I told you when you come to work here, we don't have nobody late!...(Etc.)

(The fracas builds to a climactic din. Suddenly, STEVE CRANDALL enters. He is very dapper, very handsome, and wears a tuxedo. The furor surrounding BILLIE suddenly stops.)

STEVE

Evening, Nick.

NICK

Good evening, Mr. Crandall. Glad to see you.

STEVE

Hello, girls.

GIRLS

(Ad lib commotions) Hello, Mr. Crandall...Good evening, Mr. C...It's nice to see you...(Etc.)

(STEVE gestures. The GIRLS shut up.)

STEVE

(To NICK) Hope I didn't keep Billie late for rehearsal.

NICK

No, no...It didn't make so much difference. She's got talent. She don't need to rehearse.

GIRLS

(An indignant huff.)

STEVE

(To ALL) Don't forget, I'm tossing a little party tonight after the show. I got Chicago friends visiting our little island. I wanna show 'em the natives are friendly.

GIRLS

(Ad lib excitement) Sure!...You bet!...That's us!...I wouldn't miss it, Mr. Crandall...(Etc.)

(STEVE gestures. Silence.)

NICK

Steve, I got an important message for you. It's from --

STEVE

(Shutting him up -- all smiles) I want the cabaret fixed up real nice. Okay, Pal?

(The backstage buzzer sounds and a red light flashes. That is the cue that the cabaret show out in the nightclub is about to begin.)

ROY

There's the buzzer.

NICK
C'mon, get dressed! Get made up!

PEARL
What kind of parties does this Crandall fellow have?

OLIVE
You sure ask a lot of questions.

LIL
Yeah...All week I thought you was a deaf and dumb little girl.

PEARL
(With an edge) It there's one thing I ain't, it's dumb.

GRACE
Aw, never mind Lil, Pearl. The party will be swell.

(The GIRLS chatter as they exit upstairs to their dressing rooms. BILLIE starts up after the GIRLS. STEVE catches her arm.)

STEVE
Hey, dollface...You with the five dollar corsage...
'THANK YOU
FOR A LOVELY AFTERNOON.
Don't forget about the party after the show tonight.
I want to show you off to my business associates from Chicago.

BILLIE
I wouldn't forget about your party, Mr. Crandall.
Grandma sewed me a special dress and mailed it all the way from Keosauqua.

(LIL overhears as she exits up the stairs.)

LIL
From where?

BILLIE
Keosauqua, Iowa. Where I'm from. That's an Indian name. It means, land of fragrant meadows.

LIL
Well, now you're in Manhattan. That's an Indian name, too. I means, how do I get back to Keosauqua?

(LIL exits.)

BILLIE

(Ignoring LIL) It's a beautiful dress, with rhinestone buttons.

(BILLIE hurries up the stairs.)

STEVE

(Shouting after her) It sounds lovely. I look forward to seeing it...especially the buttons.

(ROY, who is fussing with props, has overheard, and blurts out a "raspberry." STEVE, not sure what he heard or where it came from, looks about. ROY feigns innocence as he goes past STEVE and up the stairs to his dressing room. ROY stops on the stairs and leans over the railing.)

ROY

Tell me something, will you, Mr. Crandall?
WHY IS IT GUYS LIKE YOU,
WHO COULD BUY ANY GIRL,
ONE OF A HUNDRED JANES,
WHO'D LET YOU HAVE YOUR WAY,

WHY DO YOU QUIT THEM ALL,
TO CHASE THE ONE THAT'S GOOD?

STEVE

Do you know any that are good?

ROY

(A challenge) I know one that's good.

STEVE

(With a smile) Hey, little dancer, you ever dance with a broken leg?

(ROY is taken aback, but tries to hide it.)

STEVE

Careful you don't get in over your head...Which, in your case, ain't hard.

ROY

Hey, I want you to know I --

(The buzzer sounds.)

NICK

Okay, Lane, get dressed for the show!

(ROY glances back at STEVE, then runs

up the stairs and out.)

NICK

(With a piece of paper)

Steve...This might be important. It's a message from Scarface Casino.

STEVE

Scar Casino! What's he want?

NICK

He wants to meet with you.

STEVE

Forget it. I got nothin' to say to Scarface Casino!

NICK

Steve...This highjacking is bad.

STEVE

Who said anything about a highjacking?

NICK

It's in the paper. Last night, Scarface Casino's liquor truck was hit and Patty the Monk and the rest of 'em got bumped off.

STEVE

How unfortunate. But, what's that got to do with me?

NICK

I don't want to be in the middle of this.

STEVE

You ain't in the middle, Pal...

(Meanacing silence.)

You're on my side!

(DOLPH enters through the stagedoor. He's a big, dumb gangster hitman. All business.)

DOLPH

(Whispers; smirking; to STEVE)

Pst. Hey, Steve. I got the rocks.

STEVE

Let's see.

DOLPH

(Pulls a diamond bracelet from his jacket)

The fence said this was lifted off one of the fanciest mammas in town. Bet your wife wouldn't mind wearing

one of these.

STEVE

(Grabs DOLPH violently)

Shut up, idiot! Nobody in this town knows about my wife in Florida, so don't gum it for me.

(Admires the bracelet)

Nice ice. This oughta get just what I want outa Billie.

DOLPH

What makes you so sure?

STEVE

It's human nature...See...

(Song: EVERYONE'S ADDICTED TO MORE)

PRINCESS,
OR SHOW GIRL,
RICH MAN
OR POOR,

EVERYBODY ALWAYS WANTS
MORE!

(STEVE sings to DOLPH and NICK, who interject approving ad libs and nervous laughter throughout.)

FIRST YA START
WITH A LITTLE SWIG OF BOOTLEG.
THEN, IT'S TEA CUPS
OF BATHTUB HOOCH.

THEN, IT'S WHISKEY
CONCEALED IN YOUR SUIT LEG.
BRAND IN A CRYSTAL GOBLET;
CLARET IN A SILVER FLASK.
THEN, MY FRIENDS,
IT'S VINTAGE CHAMPAGNE.
THEN, IT'S COGNAC.
THEN THEY ASK
FOR

"MORE AND MORE.
GIMME MORE AND MORE."
EVERYBODY ALWAYS WANTS MORE.

OH, SI SEÑOR,
IN THIS TUG OF WAR,
EVERYONE'S ADDICTED TO MORE.

KNOWING THIS SECRET

IS HOW I ACHIEVED MY SUCCESS, BOYS.
AND HOW I WAS ABLE
TO BUILD UP THE BROADWAY TRADE.

YOU SEE, I DISCOVERED
THAT NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE EXCESS, BOYS.
THAT MADE ME
YOU BUTTER AND EGG MAN.

(Admiring the bracelet)

NOT TO MENTION,
QUITE A LEG MAN.

FIRST YA START
WITH A FORTY YEAR OLD FLOOZIE.
HEN, THE WIFE
OF A WORKING STIFF.

THEN, MY FRIENDS,
YOU GET A LITTLE CHOOSEY,
AND YOU WANT 'EM UNDER THIRTY,
NOT TOO FAT AND NOT TOO BRUISED.
THEN YOU WANT 'EM EVEN YOUNGER --
NEVER OPENED, NEVER USED,
LIKE

(STEVE mounts the steps toward the dressing
room door as he sings.)

BILLIE MOORE.
GIMME BILLIE MOORE.
MORE AND MORE OF BILLIE MOORE.

SHE NEVER WORE
DIAMONDS BEFORE.
GUARANTEED SHE'S GONNA WANT MORE.
EVERYONE'S ADDICTED TO --

ONE MORE SMOKE.
ONE MORE DRINK.
ONE MORE PILL.
ONE MORE SHOT.
ONE MORE RING.
ONE MORE SUIT.
ONE MORE HOUSE.

(Grabs Dolph)

ONE MORE THROAT!!
(Manical laughter)
EVERYONE'S ADDICTED TO
MORE!!!

(Suddenly, SCARFACE CASINO appears in the hallway entrance, casting a long, foreboding shadow.)

DOLPH
(Seeing Scarface) For God's sake!

STEVE
Well, Scarface Casino. Hello, Sweetheart.

SCAR
Hello, Angel Face.

STEVE
Next time, knock...Come gumshoeing in strange places, somebody might mistake you for a burglar.

SCAR
I came down here to have a showdown. Alone (He opens his jacket, showing the lining) with no rod. We gotta talk.

STEVE
Okay, Scar...We talked...Goodbye.

SCAR
You plugged some of my boys last night. You highjacked one of my trucks.

STEVE
How d'ya know? You got spies?

SCAR
Maybe. You been cuttin' in on my territory, an' it gonna stop.

STEVE
You own everything above 72nd Street, do you?

SCAR
Yeah, I own it. I bought it with blood. And nobody cuts in now -- not for a nickel's worth.

(The cabaret band strikes up the show overture. It is a patriotic sounding march, with loud rim shots on the drums.)

STEVE
All right, Scar. You spoke your piece. Now, blow.

SCAR
(Shoving Steve) I'm warning you, keep horning in on my trade and I'll sing to the cops! Who croaked Mugsy O'Connell? And Fatty Goldstein? I can clear

up some unsolved urder mysteries in this town.

STEVE

What did you say?

SCAR

I can fry you in the chair!

DOLPH

(Grabbing SCARFACE) A fink, that's what you are!
A stoolie! A fink!

SCAR

Take your hands off me!

(STEVE pulls a gun from his coat and shoots SCAR in the back, four times. With each shot, SCAR dances, then finally pitches forward into DOLPH'S arms. The gunshots are drowned out by the drums of the cabaret band.)

STEVE

Get a hold of him under the arms...Quick! Walk him out of here!

(SCAR'S hat gets knocked off.)

Wait a minute.

(Puts the hat back on SCAR)

Here's your lid, lover.

(As they are walking SCAR'S body out toward the hallway exit, ROY and BILLIE enter chatting at the top of the dressing room stairs, having changed their costumes.)

ROY

We can rehearse our act after the show.

(He stops, seeing the men below. Leans over the rail.)

What's wrong with him?

STEVE

He had too much booze.

JUST ONE OF THE BOYS

WE'RE HELPING HOME.

(STEVE and DOLPH take SCAR out through the hallway. ROY looks perplexed.)

BILLIE

Roy.

ROY

Distracted) Uh -- what?

BILLIE

We can't rehearse after the show on account of the party Mr. Crandall is having.

ROY

What?!

BILLIE

He wants me to meet his business associates from Chicago. It's going to be a beautiful evening.

ROY

Pardon me while I laugh. Yuck. Yuck. Well, let's skate over it now, then.

(ROY grudgingly helps her through some dance steps, singing with impatience and distinterest.)

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
DI DUM DI DA DA --

No, no, the second time with you left foot!

DI DUM DI DA A...

Listen, Billie, you don't know your goulash. I mean, something tells me this Crandall guy ain't on the level. You gotta think of your career and this act with me. 'Cause you've got talent...when I bring it out.

(BILLIE continues practicing her dance steps as ROY looks on fondly.)

(SONG: PARTNERS)

WE'VE SHARED OUR DREAMS, AND PLANNED 'EM.
SO MAKE THIS MEMORANDUM:
WE'VE GOT TO WORK IN TANDEM.

AS OF THIS MOMENT, WE'RE INCORPORATED.
WE'LL STICK TOGETHER LIKE WE'RE HYPHENATED.
FROM NOW ON, PARDNER, WE'LL BE PARTNERS,
"HE" AND "SHE."

IF YOU AND ME ARE GONNA MAKE OUR DREAM WORK,
IT'S GONNA TAKE A LOT OF TIME AND TEAMWORK.
BUT WE CAN TAKE IT, 'CAUSE WE'RE PARTNERS,
YOU AND ME.

THERE WAS A MULTITUDE OF OTHERS,
WHO WOULD HAVE SOLD THEIR MOTHERS,

TO SHARE A LEMONADE STAND WITH ME.

BUT WHEN I SEE A TALENT WHO'S A LOOKER,
BY GEORGE, I GOTTA BOOK HER.
HOW LUCKY CAN ONE GIRL BE?

(The music swells, but BILLIE is more interested in her dance steps than what ROY is saying.)

A LOTA NIGHTS WE'LL HAVE A LATE NIGHT MEETING.
A LOT OF OVERTIME AND OVERHEATING --

I'M SPEAKING STRICTLY AS A FELLOW V.I.P.
REMEMBER, BILLIE, THAT WE'RE PARTNERS
L.T.D.

FROM NOW ON, BILLIE, WE'LL BE PARTNERS
YOU AND ME.

BILLIE

(Finishing a step) Like this, Roy?

ROY

(A deflated sigh) Yeah...That's it.

(The signal buzzer sounds and the light flashes. The GIRLS burst from their dressing room and dash downstairs to pick up their props and line up for their entrance. Chaos. Chatter. Pushing and shoving. As they fight, they don their costume pieces. We don't quite see what their costumes are yet.)

GIRLS

(Ad lib commotion) And don't cut in front of me...Oh, take it outside!...Who's talkin' to you?... (Etc.)

ROY

(Rushing to line up the girls) Break it up! Get in your places. Every night's a first night! They all paid heavy sugar for their seats. We gotta e good!

(From off-stage, we hear the band play the introduction to the GIRL'S act. The GIRLS line up for their entrance, putting the finishing touches on their costumes. We see that they are dressed in sexy "poodle" costumes and ROY is the trainer.

The "audience" applauds as ROY and the GIRLS go up the stairs and dance out onto

the cabaret stage. We can see them from behind through a scrim, as they perform upstage to their "audience.")

GIRLS

WATCH ME WAG MY TAIL FOR YOU.
I'LL SIT UP AND BEG. BOO HOO.
LET ME FOLLOW YOU HOME,
BECAUSE I WHOOF YOU! WHOOF YOU!

MASTER, IF YOU SCRATCH MY HEAD,
I'LL ROLL OVER AND PLAY DEAD.
COME ON, THROW ME A BONE,
BECAUSE I WHOOF YOU! WHOOF YOU!

(Long howl.)
(Assorted dog barks.)
PLEASE!
(Long howl.)
I CAN DO TRICKS,
AND I DON'T HAVE FLEAS.

IF YOU'LL SEE THAT I'M UNPENNED,
I CAN BE A MAN'S BEST FRIEND.
I'LL GET YOUR GAZETTE.
TAKE ME TO YOUR VET.
LET ME BE YOUR PET,
BECAUSE I WHOOF YOU! WHOOF YOU!

(The act continues. During the following scene, the scrim turns more and more opaque and the singing fades out.)

STEVE enters down the hallway and looks around cautiously. DOLPH follows him in. STEVE takes out a cigarette. DOLPH strikes a match and holds it up for STEVE. His hand trembles.)

STEVE

What you gonna do, wet your pants? You gonna let a small deal like that bother you?

DOLPH

Nothin' bothers me if I know what's coming. Didn't I blow Shorty Boyle? But in here...like that...I was not ready.

STEVE

That's why it's good. With Scarface Casino out of the way, I'll hook up the two gangs. More territory. More profits. I care about this city. I wanna see it run right.

(PORKY enters from the nightclub. The entrance to the club is probably up the same staircase that leads to the stage. Porky is happy-go-lucky, hefty, and has a high-pitched voice.)

PORKY

Everything is okey dokey. The Chicago bunch is out there lappin' it up.

STEVE

How ya doin', Porky?

(DOLPH and PORKY box affectionately.)

DOLPH

Hey, Porky, you're all right. Me, I need a drink.

(DOLPH exits into the club.)

PORKY

What's the matter with him?

STEVE

Not a thing in the world.

PORKY

(Looks around) So this is what it looks like backstage. Dark, ain't it.

STEVE

Go out and look at the chicks. They're all out there.

(LIL, dressed in a sexy gown, appears at the top of the dressing room stairs.)

LIL

Not all of 'em.

(LIL sashays down the steps. STEVE shrugs and goes into NICK's office.)

PORKY

Gee, it's Miss Rice, the fabulous singer.

LIL

In the flesh. I go on stage in a minute, so I gotta warm up my fabulous instrument.

(SONG: LA LA LA LA LA)

(PORKY watches in slack-jawed, worshipful

awe as LIL plays the prima donna to the hilt and flirts with PORKY. LIL unscrews her throat atomizer and fills it with gin.)

LIL

LA LA LA LA LA

LA LA LA LA.

Oh, I can see you're a music lover. And ya brought your baton. (Alternate: Got any requests?)

(She spritzes PORKY in the ear with her atomizer. He reacts.)

LA LA LA LA LA

LA LA LA LA.

PORKY

Gee, Miss Rice, this is the first time I been backstage and met an honest to God -- what do you call it?

LIL

Thespian?

PORKY

That's it.

(LIL grows more seductive, tickling the comatose PORKY with her boa.)

LIL

LA LA LA LA LA

LA LA LA LA.

PORKY

Some of the guys was tryin' to tell me things, but I didn't believe 'em. They said you was a -- what do you call it?

LIL

Coloratura?

PORKY

That's it.

LIL

LA LA LA LA LA

(She gooses him)

LA LA LA LA.

So, what's your name, big boy?

(PORKY blushes.)

Don't be shy.

LOU

(Stuttering)
L, L, L, L, LOU.
How 'bout you?

LIL

Me? You can just call me...
(Imitating him)
L, L, L, L, LIL.

PORKY

Thanks, I will.

LIL

Lil is the same backwards and forwards... Pardon
my arpeggios.

(She sprays her throat; demurely)

ME ME ME ME
MAY MAY MAY MAY
L, L, L, LOU
ME MAY LOU LAY!!!!

((PORKY swoons.)

Stick around after the party, L, L, L, Lou. I'll
teach ya to sing in just one easy lesson.

PORKY

OKAY!

(LIL exits, making her entrance onto the
cabaret stage to the sound of applause.
Bug-eyed, PORKY exits hastily -- to go
watch the show from out front. Meanwhile,
ROY, BILLIE, and the GIRLS come offstage,
hastily put away their props, and go upstairs
to change. We hear LIL start her act.)

LIL

I'M A RED HOT MAMMA
FROM POUGHKEEPSIE....(etc.)

(DOLPH enters from the nightclub. He
pounds on the office door. STEVE opens
the door. DOLPH jerks his head, indicating
for STEVE to come out. He does, shutting
the door behind him. Throughout the
following, we see and faintly hear LIL'S
act. Gradually, it fades out.)

DOLPH

There's a bull out there.

STEVE

So what?

Homicide. DOLPH

Yeah? STEVE

Dan McCorn! DOLPH

(STEVE registers, then takes out his gun and passes it to DOLPH.)

Get rid of this gun. STEVE

(DOLPH hides the gun quickly as JOE, the waiter, enters with two drinks on a tray and starts up the dressing room stairs.)

Joe. Ask Miss Moore to step down here, will you?

Will do. JOE

(JOE exits up the steps.)

(To DOLPH) Get moving. STEVE

(DOLPH hurries out the hallway. STEVE paces restlessly. BILLIE appears at the top of the stairs, wearing a kimono.)

Come down here a minute, will you, Billie? STEVE

(BILLIE hurries down the stairs. STEVE takes out something wrapped in tissue paper.)

Hold out your hand.

What is it? BILLIE

A little birthday present. STEVE

(Amused) I've had my birthday. BILLIE

Be smart...have two of them. STEVE

(He unwraps the dazzling diamond bracelet.
BILLIE is overwhelmed.)

BILLIE

MR. CRANDALL,
ARE THESE WHAT I THINK THEY ARE?

STEVE

The genuine article, baby.

BILLIE

MR. CRANDALL,
I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS KIND OF THING.
I MEAN,
MAMMA HAS A WEDDING RING.
BUT THIS
IS LIKE A KING WOULD BRING
A ZIEGFELD FOLLIES STAR.

STEVE

WHEN I SAW THIS IN TIFFANY'S SHOWPLACE,
THEN I SAID TO MYSELF, NOW, STEVE,
THAT BELONGS ON YOUR BUDDY OR NO PLACE --
AT THE END OF HER LOVELY SLEEVE.
SHE COULD WEAR IT TO SOME "APROPOS" PLACE,
WHERE I SWEAR I'D BE GOOD ALL EVENING,

(He edges toward her, offering the bracelet.)

'CAUSE ALL I REALLY WANNA BE
IS FRIENDS.

BILLIE

(Backing away politely)
GEE, MISTER C, TONIGHT WAS SWELL:
THE FRENCHY FOOD, THE BAND, THE ORCHID.

THE WAITER SAYING "MADEMOISELLE."
YOUR FAMOUS FRIENDS --

STEVE

(Coming closer)
THERE'S MORE IN STORE, KID.

BILLIE

(Backing away again)
WELL, THAT'S THE THING THE GIRLS KEEP SAYING.
THEY SAY A MAN EXPECTS REPAYING.
THEY SAY A MAN WHO CHARMS AND PLIES YOU,
ONLY WANTS TO COMPROMISE YOU
LATER.

TELL ME IF IT'S TRUE.
WHO

IS THERE I CAN TRUST BUT YOU?

STEVE

(Suddenly angry)
HASN'T DADDY BEEN SORT OF A NICE MAN?

BILLIE

YES, MR. CRANDALL.

STEVE

HE'S A HELL OF A PATIENT JOHN!

BILLIE

YOU'RE SUCH A KIND MAN.

STEVE

DADDY'S KEPT UP HIS COOL LIKE THE ICEMAN,

BILLIE

YOU'VE BEEN SO PATIENT.

STEVE

EVEN TIMES WHEN THE HEAT WAS ON!

BILLIE

I'M BEING FOOLISH.

STEVE

SO, IS GIVING A TRINKET A VICE, MAN?

BILLIE

OH, MR. CRANDALL.

STEVE

YOU WOULD THINK I WAS TRYING TO CON YOU!

BILLIE

OF COURSE I TRUST YOU ALWAYS, SIR.

STEVE

WHEN ALL I REALLY WANNA BE,
ALL I WANT FOR YOU AND ME --
COME ON, BABY WHAT SAY WE BE FRIENDS?

(He takes her hand.)

BILLIE

AND ALL I REALLY WANT
IS ALL THAT YOU WANT TOO.
IT'S SO SIMPLE.
NOW I SEE THAT
ALL YOU REALLY WANT TO BE IS --

STEVE
COME ON, GORGEOUS, WHAT SAY WE BE --

(STEVE suddenly, and somewhat too aggressively, forces the bracelet on BILLIE'S wrist. She is taken aback.)

STEVE
See, that didn't hurt a bit, did it?

BILLIE
MR. CRANDALL,
IT'S NOT A JOKE OR JUST PRETEND?

STEVE
Of course not.

BILLIE
MR. CRANDALL,
I KNOW I'M REALLY QUITE NAIVE,
BUT,
MR. CRANDALL --

STEVE
(Sliding up behind her)
CALL ME STEVE...

STEVE
WELL,
SOMEHOW, I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE
YOU'D REALLY FOOL
YOUR FRIEND.

(The song ends on a slightly sinister note. BILLIE gives STEVE a kiss on the cheek, then starts up the stairs.)

STEVE
Oh, Billie...
(SHE stops.)
One thing I forgot.
I WANT YOU TO FORGET YOU SAW DOLPH AND ME
HELPING THAT DRUNKEN FELLOW OUT OF HERE.

BILLIE
You mean that man we just saw you helping home?
Why?

STEVE
HE'S A BIG POLITICIAN.
IF YOU TOLD ANYONE HE WAS DRUNK,
IT MIGHT GET YOU IN TROUBLE.

BILLIE

Oh, I see, I'm glad you told me. I won't tell anybody.

(DOLPH enters excitedly from the hallway, while STEVE moves to kiss BILLIE.)

DOLPH

Steve!

(STEVE gives him a quick look, then turns back to BILLIE.)

STEVE

(Whispers) That's a promise, huh?

BILLIE

I promise.

(STEVE kisses her. She runs up the stairs. STEVE turns to DOLPH.)

DOLPH

The cop is comin' back here!

STEVE

Take it easy, will ya? There's nothin' to sweat over. He's a jackass. I never met a cop I couldn't con.

(We hear DAN McCORN whistling nonchalantly as he approaches down the hallway. STEVE assumes a relaxed pose. DOLPH paces, trying to look calm. NICK comes out of his office. DAN enters. e is a street-wise homicide detective, who wears a trench coat and fedora.)

STEVE

Well, if it isn't good old Dan McCorn, the finest police officer on the Broadway beat.

(DAN whistles and looks about with suave disinterest.)

NICK

What're you doin' back here?

DAN

HOW'S YOUR BUSINESS, NICK?

NICK

Must be god. Everybody wants a piece of it.

DAN

NOT ME.

STEVE
 We oughta put you in a museum: "The last honest
 cop in New York."

DAN
 AND HOW'S YOUR BUSINESS, STEVE?
 EXTENDING TRADE A LITTLE, AIN'T YOU?

STEVE
 What gives you that idea?

DAN
 I HEAR EVERYBODY'S TROUBLES.
 By the way, have you seen Scarface Casino lately?

STEVE
 (Shaken, hiding his fear) Uh, yeah...At the races,
 two weeks ago.

DAN
 (Insinuatingly)
 THEN YOU DIDN'T SEE HIM,
 WHEN HE WAS HERE TONIGHT?

(STEVE and DOLPH exchange glances.)

STEVE
 He wouldn't come here.

NICK
 Not to my place.

DAN
 Well, he was in the neighborhood anyway, 'cause
 I saw him.

(DAN has "dropped a bomb." There is a
 tense silence. DAN whistles a moment,
 then turns tough.)

DAN
 He was lying under a blanket in a Wescott truck
 a block and a half from here,
 LYING ON HIS FACE
 WITH FOUR SLUGS IN HIS BACK.

NICK
 My God!

STEVE
 So, they got him, eh?
 THAT'S TOO BAD.

(Suddenly the GIRLS burst out of their dressing room arguing at the top of their lungs. ROY follows excitedly.)

GIRLS

(Ad lib fight) Well, don't touch my make-up! I wouldn't touch it! You think I wann look like you? Shut up, you tarts! (Etc.)

(As they argue, they grab their props and costume pieces. They are wearing beauty pageant banners, each representing a different city. ROY is in drag. Each strikes a pose.)

MAZIE

Paris!

RUBY

London!

OLIVE

Rome!

GRACE

Athens!

ROY

Hoboken!

DAN

(Bearing down on STEVE)
CUT OUT THE CLOWNING
AND TELL ME, JUST WHO KILLED CASINO?

STEVE

HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?

DAN

THAT'S WHAT I'M TRYING TO FIGURE OUT.

SEE I GOT MY OWN SPECIAL REASON
FOR SOLVING THIS CASE:

I HATE TO SEE A GUY
GET SHOT IN THE BACK!
AND I AM GONNA FIND THE COWARD THAT DID IT!

STEVE

Well, I been here all evening.

DAN

I didn't ask for an alibi.
(STEVE halts.)

BUT NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT.
Who was with you?

STEVE

Billie Moore, one of the girls...Dolph...Nick there...You got nothing on me, Pal!

(STEVE and DOLPH exit angrily down the hall. We hear applause and see the end of the GREAT CITIES number. The girls come off-stage smoking cigarettes.)

ROY rushes off-stage and grabs his clown costume. He quickly dons a red nose and fright wig and goes back on stage to the sound of applause. He begins a silly slapstick pantomime clown act.

The GIRLS shuffle over to the costume rack to make their change.

PEARL appears at the top of the dressing room stairs.)

PEARL

(To OLIVE) Hey! Gimme a drag on that weed before you kill it.

(DAN spots PEARL. He eyes her intensely. Pearl comes downstairs and takes a puff on OLIVE'S cigarette.)

PEARL

I gotta make a telephone call.

OLIVE

(Following) Okay.

PEARL

It's private.

(OLIVE shrugs and exits upstairs. The other girls hang out in the background.)

DAN

(Watching PEARL he gives a subtle wolf whistles)...Nice girls, Nick.

NICK

Which one you want?

DAN

(Indicating PEARL) The redhead.

PEARL

(Whispering anxiously into the phone) There's something funny going on here. I can't figure it out. Well, where is he? He shoulda been here by now! I -- (Sees NICK approaching) I gotta go. (Hangs up quickly)

(NICK brings PEARL to DAN.)

NICK

Pearl, I want you to be nice to an old friend of mine...Dan McCorn.

(NICK exits into his office.)

DAN

Hey, girlee, you're new around here, ain't you?

PEARL

Yeah, what of it?

(SONG: SHOWGIRL)

DAN

SHOWGIRL, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

PEARL

What, ya got a short memory? It's Pearl (thinks)...Gilhouley.

DAN

SEEMS TO ME YOU RING A BELL.

PEARL

(Haughty laugh) That's an old one.

DAN

WHAT SAY WE PLAY SHOW AND TELL?

PEARL

Are you gettin' fresh?

DAN

TELL ME WHAT'S YOUR GAME?

PEARL

Okay, I'm gettin' Nick! Nick!!

DAN

I'm a police officer, girlee. I saw you uptown at the Golden Bull Club.

PEARL

That ain't no crime.

DAN
Very cozy with Scarface Casino.

PEARL
What do you want?

DAN
I JUST WANT THE SCORE.

PEARL
I dunno what you're talking about.

DAN
OKAY, SHOWGIRL, I'LL BE BLUNT.

PEARL
I'm on the level, I swear it!

DAN
SAVE YOUR ACT FOR OUT IN FRONT.
I'VE SEEN IT ALL BEFORE.

PEARL
GOD, MISTER, PLEASE DON'T SQUEAL ON ME!
THIS GANG IS ALL A BUNCH OF BUTCHERS!

DAN
ALL RIGHT, SHOWGIRL,
THEN LET'S CUT THE HIDE AND SEEK!
Do you work for Scarface Casino?

PEARL
SURE I WORK FOR SCAR.
BUT, IT'S A WHOLE LOT MORE THAN THAT.

SEE...
ME AND JIM --
JIM'S HIS NAME --
He's my fella.
WE'RE GONNA BE MARRIED NEXT WEEK.

(DAN tries to hide his reaction.)

PEARL
Hey -- you laughing at me?

DAN
NO I'M NOT,
I PROMISE YOU.

SAY,
GOT ANOTHER SHOW TO DO?

PEARL

Sure, why?

DAN

No reason.
I JUST WANTED TO KNOW.

GUESS I'VE HEARD ENOUGH.
SORRY, IF I SOUNDED ROUGH.

GO ON, SHOWGIRL,
DO YOUR SHOW.

(DAN whistles coolly as he exits. He pauses and turns back. His eyes meet PEARL's. She is confused and frightened but strangely attracted to him. He exits.)

ROY bursts in from the cabaret to the sound of applause.)

ROY

I think I say Al Jolson out there!

(The GIRLS pay no attention to him as they clamor around BILLIE.)

GIRLS

(Ad lib din) It's beautiful...Don't cover it up, you dumbbell...A diamond bracelet, yet!...(Etc.)

RUBY

(To ROY)
HEY THERE, PERSONALITY.

MAZIE

YOU JUST LOST YOUR PARTNER!

OLIVE

(Referring to the bracelet)
GET A LOAD OF THAT!

GRACE

THE KNICKERBOCKER ICE COMPANY!

RUBY

Crandall gave it to her!

ROY

A diamond bracelet? Billie, what do you think you're doin'? Do you know what this means?

(He grabs BILLIE by the arm and pulls her away from the group.)

BILLIE

Oh, Roy.

ROY

It's a slave bracelet, that's what it is!

BILLIE

No it's not. It's just a token of friendship.

ROY

BILLIE, YOU CAN'T KEEP IT!
GIVE IT BACK!

BILLIE

STOP ORDERING ME AROUND
AND TELLING ME WHAT TO DO!

ROY

CONGRATULATIONS, BILLIE,
YOU SOLD YOURSELF!(Hearing the commotion, NICK comes out
of his office.)

BILLIE

I hate you!

ROY

LISTEN, BILLIE,
I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING
STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART...(Suddenly, the cue buzzer sounds and the
light flashes.)

NICK

Never mind your heart! You got a cue coming! We
gonna have a "heart talk" or we gonna have a show?!

ROY

(Bravely suppressing his feelings) We're gonna
have a show, Mr. Verdis. Nobody can say I don't
give the customers one hundred percent.ON THE NIGHT MY OLD MAN DIED,
I WENT OUT ON STAGE
AT THE REGENT THEATRE IN DANBURY CONNECTICUT.AND I GAVE THE BEST PERFORMANCE
I EVER GAVE IN MY LIFE.And if some Jane I put my hope and trust in goes
to hell, I can still give them my best!

(The buzzer sounds. From off-stage, the cabaret band strikes up the music for the next act -- it is the same music we heard at the top of the show.)

ROY

(To the GIRLS) There's the cue! Line up, kids!
Let's go!

(BILLIE and the GIRLS line up, ready for their entrance.)

ROY

Okay! Cut 'em deep and let 'em bleed!

(They dance out. We see them on stage through the scrim, facing upstage as they perform.)

(SONG: BROADWAY reprise)

GIRLS

BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!
THE ADDRESS OF DREAMS.
OOH!
AAH!
Broadway!

(Black out.)

SCENE TWO: Backstage

(The show has just finished. The GIRLS are coming back in from the stage, throwing their costumes and props on the floor and exiting up to the dressing room.)

GIRLS

(General complaints) I'm sore all over...What crummy show...(Etc.)

(BILLIE stops to hang up the costumes and put away the props.)

RUBY

That audience. What a bunch of stiffs.

PEARL

Hey, Billie, you gonna get dressed for the party?

BILLIE

I'll be right up. I'll just put our props away first.

PEARL

Let 'em put their own props away.

BILLIE

I don't mind.

PEARL

Don't be so nice, kid. It never gets you where you want to go. And, by the way, where do you want to go?

BILLIE

What do you mean?

PEARL

You got stars in your eyes. You don't belong in this bucket of blood saloon.

BILLIE

Well, someday I'd like to be...Well, all my life everybody I've ever known has been poor, and my mother always said, "Marry poor and you'll end up in the poorhouse." So, I always hoped --

PEARL

Hope? What's that mean? Listen, kid, take my advice. Settle for what you got. You got a dumb little toe tapper who's head over heels for you.

BILLIE

Roy? Roy's just a friend. We're dance partners.

PEARL

(A little laugh) Okay, if you say so. I just figured - I mean, what else would a nice petunia from Iowa be doing here in this dump?

(PEARL exits upstairs. BILLIE muses over the costumes and props.)

(SONG: CASTLES IN THE AIR)

BILLIE

EVERYDAY

I PASS BY GIMBEL'S WINDOW.

AND EVERYDAY

WHEN I SEE THAT WASHING MACHINE
WITH THE FIVE YEAR GUARANTEE,

I THINK, ONE DAY, MAMMA,
JUST YOU WAIT AND SEE.
ONE DAY, MAMMA,
THAT'S FOR YOU FROM ME.

I GET BY ON DREAMS --
CASTLES IN THE AIR.
SCHEMING BRILLIANT SCHEMES
IN MY FADED CHAIR.

GREETING BROADWAY STARS
PULLING IN IN PULLMAN CARS.

I LIVE ON BORROWED LIVES,
AS I MEND MY CLOTHES.
CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN DIVES.
BALLROOM ROMEOS.

BUILDING BUILDINGS
DREAMS CAN LIVE IN --
SOMEDAY, SOMEWHERE
CASTLES IN THE AIR.

I WON'T ALWAYS SAVE MY PENNIES,
DINING AT MY DINETTE SET.
I WON'T ALWAYS RIDE THE SUBWAY.
SEE, MY DREAMS
JUST HAVEN'T HAPPENED YET.

YES, I EXIST ON DREAMS --
CASTLES IN THE AIR.
SOIREES AT MAXIMS.
SILVER SILVERWARE.

BUILDING BUILDINGS
 DREAMS CAN LIVE IN --
 SOMEDAY, SOMEWHERE
 CASTLES IN THE AIR.

(Raucous laughter as STEVE enters through the hallway, leading the rowdy CHICAGO GANGSTERS. Hearing their approach, BILLIE hurries upstairs. STEVE and THE GANG ad lib commotion.)

STEVE

Here we are, boys.

CRABS

Backstage, that's the life!

BUGSY

When do we meet them beautiful dolls?

(MAZIE appears at the top of the stairs in a sexy evening dress.)

MAZIE

What about right now? (She strikes a pose)
 TA DA DA DA DA DA DA!
 Hi ya, fellas!

GANG

(Bawdy cheers and ad libs)

(MAZIE and the GIRLS come downstairs in sexy dresses. BILLIE follows, wearing a prim white dress and gloves.)

CRABS

Here they come!

JOHNNY

I like the view from here all right!

STEVE

These dames put the "broad" in Broadway. Here's Mazie.

MAZIE

Hi.

STEVE

And Grace. And Ruby, there. And, what's your name, doll?

GRACE

Olive.

RUBY

As in "stuffed."

(Laughter.)

STEVE

Now, boys, I want you to meet Billie Moore, the sweetest girl I ever knew, and soon to be a future star on Broadway. And as far as you guys are concerned, her name is "Miss Don't Touch."

LIL

(Entering at the top of the stairs) And this is her friend, "Miss Touch."

CRABS

Say, Fruitcake, didn't I catch your act in Chicago seventeen years ago?

LIL

What are you talking about? That was my mother.

(More laughter. PORKY runs in through the stage door carrying a bundle of newspapers.)

PORKY

Hey, Steve! Steve! Look! In the papers! Somebody killed Scarface Casino!

(All react. PEARL enters at the top of the dressing room stairs.)

STEVE

Let's see.

(Reading a newspaper)

"GANG LEADER MURDERED."

HE LOOKS SO PEACEFUL, DON'T HE?

(Reads another)

"SCARFACE CASINO FOUND DEAD."

PEARL

(A blood-curdling scream) NOOO!!!!

(She faints and collapses, tumbling to the bottom of the stairs where she lands in a heap. The OTHERS rush to pick her up.)

ALL

(Ad libs of concern) What happened? Pearl are you all right? Is she hurt? Pearl, are you okay? (Etc.)

PEARL
I'M ALL RIGHT.

BILLIE
Pearl, what happened?

PEARL
I TRIPPED ON THE STAIRS,
THAT'S ALL.

GO ON WITH THE PARTY,
FOR GOD'S SAKE.

(BILLIE comforts PEARL.)

STEVE
What'd I tell ya, boys? The greatest bunch of Janes
in the world!

(Cheers from all as STEVE hurls stack
of money in the air. All scramble for
the bills. BILLIE continues to comfort
PEARL as the madness begins. STEVE tries
to draw BILLIE into the merriment, but
she resists out of concern for PEARL and
because she feels out of place.)

(SONG: BOYS AND GIRLS)

BOYS
BOY OH BOY,
IT'S GIRLS AND GIRLS!
LET'S CHECK THE CHICKS,
AND TRY THE
"PECK-RIGHT-ON-THE-NECK" TRICK.
OH GOD, I FEEL ELECTRIC.

GIRLS
HEY, BIG BOYS,
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU BUNCH OF SHRINERS
WANT TO GET SOME MINORS
INTO MAJOR TROUBLE.

ALL (BUT BILLIE AND STEVE)
RUFF! MEOW!
NOW HERE'S THE PLOT, SEE:
WE GO OFF WHERE THEY CANNOT SEE.
THEN, WE TWO
GET HOTSY TOTSTY!

(RUBY and MAZIE begin to fight over a
man. It escalates into a rolling-on-the-
floor, hair-pulling brawl. Meanwhile,

BILLIE comforts PEARL.)

BOYS

AFTER ALL,
I'M HERE FROM CHI-TOWN.
I'D BE NICE TO YOU
IN MY TOWN.

GIRLS

YOU'RE MY SHEIK
AND I'M YOUR SHEBA.
LET'S GO OFF AND HEEBA JEEBE.

YOU'RE SO FULL OF
SARSAPARILLA.

TAME YOUR HANDS,
YOU BIG GORILLA.

BOYS

COME ON, GAL,
THIS AIN'T TOLEDO.

GIRLS

GET A HOLD OF
YOUR LIBIDO.

BOYS

TWENTY MINUTES,
THAT'S MY CREDO.

(All gather around the cat fight. The following lyrics are sung together in counterpoint:)

BOYS

BOY OF BOY!
IT'S GIRLS ON GIRLS.
I LOVE THIS TOWN!
IT'S WALL TO WALL WITH CRAZY WOMEN.
NEW YORK IS CRAZY WOMEN.
THAT'S WY IT'S BROADWAY
NOT BROADWAY.

GIRLS

BOY OH BOY!
IT'S WORLD WAR TWO!
I LOVE A FIGHT.
COME ON, YOU CRAZY WOMEN,
HERE'S YOUR CUE
TO SCRATCH AND BITE.
COME ON, BROADS,
LET'S SEE A LITTLE DRAMA
LIKE A WHALLOP

FROM A DOLL UP-
ON A TROLLOP
ON THE FLOOR.

(While the GIRLS fight, BILLIE tries to
leave the party, but STEVE keeps pulling
her back.)

BILLIE

MR. CRANDALL,
DON'T BE MAD,
BUT --

STEVE

COME ON NOW, KID,
YOU WOULDN'T DISAPPOINT
YOUR DEAR OLD DAD.

BILLIE

NO, OF COURSE,
BUT, ROY SAID
NOT TO STAY.

STEVE

WHAT DOES HE KNOW?

BILLIE

AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE,
HOW COULD I JUST RUN?
ALL RIGHT, THEN
I'LL STAY.

STEVE

AFTER ALL I'VE DONE,
CAN'T WE HAVE SOME FUN?
COME ON, BILLIE, STAY.

BOYS

SAY, YOU DIZZY DAMES,
TIME FOR FUN AND GAMES.
COME ON, BOYS AND GIRLS,
LET'S PLAY.
HEY!
HEY!
HEY!
HEY!
HEY!

GIRLS

HEY, YOU DIZZY DAMES,
LET'S GO DOWN IN FLAMES.
COME ON, SISTERS,

HEY!
 HEY!
 HEY!
 HEY!
 HEY!
 HEY!

STEVE

(Turning his attention to the fight)
 ALL RIGHT, GIRLS,
 NOW, BREAK IT UP.

LET'S GO INSIDE
 BEFORE THE NEIGHBORS
 CALL THE COPPERS.

(Ad libs of protest as they exit out into
 the cabaret. We see the couples flirting
 out on the cabaret stage and hear their
 laughter in the background.)

STEVE

Come on into the party, sweetheart.

BILLIE

Really, Mr. --

STEVE

(Correcting her) Uh?

BILLIE

Steve...I've got to stay with Pearl. She seems
 upset.

PEARL

It's my pride that's hurt. The rest of me don't
 feel nothin'. Go on and have a ball, before the
 music stops playing.

(PEARL exits into the dressing rooms.)

STEVE

See? She's okay. Now, come on. It's no party
 without you.

(BILLIE hesitates, then accepts. ROY
 comes out of the dressing room in time
 to see them about to go into the party.
 He is still half-dressed in a T shirt
 and a silly skid row bum outfit with baggy
 pants.)

ROY

Billie! You can't go in there with them drunken

gorillas. What would your mother say?

BILLIE

Roy, I promised Steve.

ROY

Steve?!!

STEVE

Don't worry, little clown. Billie's in good hands.

(Raucous laughter from the party. STEVE tugs BILLIE away. ROY grabs her.)

ROY

Hey, get your hands off my property.

STEVE

She ain't your property. She's my property.

BILLIE

I'm nobody's property, thank you very much.

STEVE

(To ROY) Yeah, and don't you forget it, joker.
(To BILLIE) Sorry, Angel. This oil can makes me forget I'm a gentleman.

ROY

Gentleman?! He's no gentleman, Billie. He's a gangster!

BILLIE

Roy! You apologize.

STEVE

Forget it. Don't let this ant spoil our picnic.

ROY

Wait, Billie, listen. I been bidin' my time, 'cause I figured you was a simple kind of girl from Ohio

-

BILLIE

Iowa.

ROY

-- whatever -- and I didn't wanna rush in on you with my sophisticated New York smooth talk. But, the truth is, I got a soft spot for ya and I think I always figured you and me would get hitched. So, what d'ya say...huh? About us, I mean?

BILLIE

Roy, I never realized.

ROY

Well, now you do, so what d'ya say?

BILLIE

But, Roy, I never thought -- I mean, we're both so poor, and mamma always says --

ROY

Oh, so you want a guy with a bank account? Any particular size?

BILLIE

I didn't say that.

ROY

They have a name for dames like you. Gold digger! That's what you are, a gold digger!

STEVE

Listen, Billie, it offends my sensibilities deeply to hear this bum refer to you in such a crappy manner. I think we'd better go into the party before I say something impolite.

BILLIE

Yes, let's go...(For ROY's benefit)...Steve.

(They exit into the party.)

ROY

But, Billie! No, Billie, wait! Please, I --

(They are gone. ROY sits on the cabaret steps.)

(SONG: SHE NEEDS ME)

SHE NEEDS ME.
SHE NEEDS ME.

FUNNY THING IS,
SHE DON'T EVEN KNOW.
SHE CAN'T SEE
BEYOND THAT ROMEO.

HE'S FULL OF DREAM-TALK
AND SMOOTH ROUTINES.
BUT THE MORE HE SAYS,
"I LOVE YOU,"
THE LESS IT REALLY MEANS.

SO YOU SEE,
SHE NEEDS ME.

SHE WANTS HIM,,
BUT SHE NEEDS ME.

'CAUSE I CAN SAVE HER
FROM THAT HIGH FLIER.
SHE'S MUCH TOO SPECIAL.
HE'S MUCH TOO COMMON.
BUT SHE DON'T SEE IT.
THAT'S WHY SHE'S SPECIAL.
BILLIE.
BILLIE.

SHE NEEDS ME.
THAT'S FOR SURE.

AND WHAT'S FUNNY,
COME TO FIND OUT,
I NEED HER!

(JOE enters from the hallway, carrying
drinks into the party.)

ROY

Joe! (JOE turns) Go tell Mr. Crandall I gotta
see him, right now.

JOE

Are you crazy?

ROY

Tell him it's about the shooting last night.

JOE

Okay.

(He exits out to the cabaret.)

ROY

WHATEVER HAPPENS,
YOU'RE ALL THAT MATTERS,
BILLIE.
BILLIE...

(JOE ushers STEVE in, followed by DOLPH.)

STEVE

Okay, this better be good.

ROY

I wanna take Billie home -- outa here.

STEVE

I asked you to stay and do some clowning.

ROY

I wouldn't entertain your gang if you kissed my rear end in Macy's window at high noon!

STEVE

Why, you dancing tramp! (To DOLPH) Throw this bastard in the alley!

(DOLPH starts to grab for ROY.)

ROY

You let me take Billie home, or I tell the cops about Scarface Casino.

STEVE

(Turning suddenly) What did you say?!

ROY

You heard me. I finally got it figured out. I saw you walking a man out of here with a scar on his face. You were holding him up and he was bleeding!

(DOLPH pulls out a gun.)

STEVE

No, Dolph, no!

(STEVE knocks the gun out of DOLPH'S hand. There's a scuffle. ROY grabs it from the floor and points it at STEVE. Just then, DAN McCORN charges in the stage door, with a gun trained on ROY.)

DAN

Hold it! Just hold it right there! (He approaches ROY) I'm a police officer. I'll take that rod.

(DAN takes the gun.)

STEVE

THAT GODDAMN FOOL WAS GONNA KILL ME!

ROY

I WAS NOT

DAN

HAVE YOU GOT A PERMIT TO CARRY THIS?

ROY

Me?
I'M NO GANGSTER,
I'M A PERFORMER.

DAN

Ever hear of the Sullivan Act?

ROY

What time is it playing?

DAN

The Sullivan Act is a law...And it gives you plenty of time in the slammer for carrying one of these.

STEVE

I mean, a guy can't have a good time with his friends, without getting shot by a maniac? Dan, get him out of here.

ROY

(Pointing at STEVE)
HE KILLED SCAR CASINO
(Now at DOLPH)
OR HE DID.

I DON'T KNOW WHICH ONE.
BUT, I SAW THEM WALKING SCAR CASINO OUT OF HERE.
HE WAS BLEEDING.
ME AND BILLIE MOORE BOTH SAW HIM.

STEVE

(To DOLPH) Go get Billie.
(DOLPH hurries out.)
BILLIE MOORE WILL TELL YOU:
THIS BUM IS TRYING TO FRAME ME.

(DOLPH enters with BILLIE. The GANG follows.
All crowd around, watching.)

DAN

(To BILLIE)
LISTEN, SHOWGIRL,
LAST NIGHT, DID YOU SEE STEVE AND DOLPH
WALKING OUT OF HERE
HOLDING A MAN WHO WAS BLEEDING
WITH A SCAR ON HIS FACE?

BILLIE

A man with a scar on his face?

ROY

Tell the truth, Billie.

(A long silence as BILLIE looks from STEVE
to ROY. She thinks...)

BILLIE

No, I didn't see anybody.

ROY

(Rushing at BILLIE) How could you lie?! How could you do that?!!

BILLIE

(Desperately) But, Roy, he's a politician.

ROY

Politician?!!!

(DAN handcuffs ROY. STEVE laughs and sidles up to BILLIE, who is confused and shocked by what is happening.)

BILLIE

Steve, what's going on? What are they doing to Roy?

ROY

(Screaming at STEVE) You touch her and I'll kill you, you murdering bastard! I'm gonna marry her!!

(DAN is dragging him off. PEARL enters from the dressing room and leans against the door weakly, watching the drama below. The GIRLS and CHICAGO GANG jeer as ROY appeals for help.)

ROY

Lil -- somebody -- why don't you say something?! Oh, God, Billie!!!

(As DAN pulls ROY out through the stagedoor, the GANG laughs raucously and the party resumes. STEVE comforts BILLIE.

Lights fade. Curtain.)

(INTERMISSION)

(The intermission is optional.)

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE: The Alley

(PEARL is alone. She uncrumples one of the newspapers announcing Scarface's death.)

PEARL

ME AND JIM ---
JIM'S HIS NAME --
WE WAS GONNA BE MARRIED NEXT WEEK.

YOU SAID, SOON BABE,
NO MORE GAMES.
WE'LL BUILD A DREAM HOUSE,
WHERE ALL OUR NEIGHBORS
KNOW OUR REAL NAMES.

THREE ROOMS, ICE BOX, BASSINET.
IT WAS A DREAM HOUSE,
ABOUT AS PERFECT AS A DREAM CAN GET.

TEN YEARS HOLED UP IN A TWO ROOM FLAT,
WHILE YOU PROMISED ME WE'D HAVE A YARD.
WHAT A FOOL I WAS TO FALL FOR THAT.
BUT YOU HAD THAT LITTLE SCAR,
AND IT PUT ME OFF MY GUARD.

NOW THAT DREAM HOUSE
WON'T COME TRUE.
CAN'T HAVE A DREAM HOUSE
IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU.

I DON'T WANT NOTHIN'.
I DON'T WANT NO ONE.
THERE AIN'T A SINGLE THING WORTH HOPING FOR.
I SWEAR I'M NEVER
GONNA DREAM
NO MORE.

(Black out.)

SCENE FOUR: Backstage of the Paradise Nightclub

(The next evening.)

Lights come up on the backstage "war zone."
It is the day after the wild party.
Everything is in disarray. NICK and JOE
are taking inventory of the damage.

The GIRLS stagger down the hall -- they
are hung over and propping each other
up. They look a wreck.)

(SONG: OH, MY GOD)

THE GIRLS

OH, MY GOD.

MAZIE

See? I told ya this was the right place. (Referring
to NICK) There couldn't be two like him.

JOE

I'll make some java.

THE GIRLS

OH, MY GOD!

NICK

How am I gonna put on a show tonight?

GRACE

Booze don't affect my talent. I can dance. See?

(She tries a dance step and falls does
a prat fall over a chair.)

THE GIRLS AND NICK

OH, MY GOD.

RUBY

(Finally focusing)
WE MUST HAVE HAD A WONDERFUL TIME.
(Hiccups)

(The GIRLS stagger up the steps to the
dressing room. The stage door opens.
PORKY and LIL stumble in.)

LIL AND PORKY

OH, MY GOD!

PORKY

Why do I keep thinkin' we spend the night in jail?

Who was that big fat judge?

LIL

That was me in a bathrobe.

BOTH

OH, MY GOD!

NICK

Lil, Lil, the customers gotta have a show tonight.
Can you do it?

LIL

Well, if they wanna see a lady upchuck on stage,
they're in luck.

NICK, LIL, AND PORKY

OH, MY GOD!

NICK

What am I gonna do?

LIL

(To PORKY) Hey, Pumpkin. What's your pinky ring
doing on my finger?

(They think hard...Finally a terrible
realization washes over them.)

LIL AND PORKY

OH, MY GOD!!

LIL

We're married!

PORKY

To each other!

BOTH

OH, MY GOD!!

PORKY

(Finds a certificate in his pocket) Look. We're
legal.

BOTH

OH, MY GOD!!

LIL

(Bawling her eyes out; shouts and slugs PORKY)
My own wedding and I missed it.

BOTH

OH, MY GOD!!!

LIL
Married! What I can't figure out is, which way?

PORKY
What d'ya mean?

LIL
What d'ya mean, what do I mean? I mean...you know.

PORKY
No, what?

LIL
What d'ya mean?

PORKY
What d' you mean?! What are we talkin' about?!!!

(NICK, who has been paying no attention,
comes to PORKY with a piece of paper.)

NICK
There's a message for you from Steve.

(PORKY reacts and dashes out the stagedoor.)

LIL
L, L, L, Lou! Don't leave me! (To herself) We
really must be married.

NICK
I don't wanna know.

(The stage door opens. DAN McCORN enters
and stands aside for ROY to enter.)

DAN
Okay, hoofer, you're a free man. Keep your nose
clean.

(McCORN exits.)

LIL
Handcuffs? Policemen? Roy, what happened and how
do I make it happen to me?

ROY
What happened?

WHILE YOU SHMOES WAS HAVING FUN,
MAKING WHOOPEE, GETTING LOADED,
I WAS FIGHTING FOR MY LIFE!
I WAS BEING RAILROADED!

CRANDALL PULLS HIS GUN ON ME --
 TRIES TO kill me. That's a fact!
 I'M ARRESTED BY MISTAKE.
 LUCKY FOR ME, they seen my act.

They knew I was a hooper, not a hood. So, they
 figure printed me, held me overnight for questioning
 and lemme go.

LIL

Oh yeah? Big deal. I got married!

(BILLIE appears at the top of the dressing
 room stairs dressed for her first entrance.)

BILLIE

Oh, Roy, you're back!

ROY

Miss Moore.

BILLIE

(Runs to him) Oh, Roy, I was so worried about you.

ROY

Hope it didn't spoil your fun last night.

BILLIE

I didn't stay for the party.

ROY

Neither did I. (Hysterical laugh) Ha ha ha.

BILLIE

I told Mr. Crandall I wanted to go home and he took
 me in his limosine.

ROY

Shoulda come with me, you coulda had a police escort
 instead!

BOTH

(Loud ad lib argument)

NICK

Shut up the fighting! I've got wonderful, terrific
 news...Lil is sick!

LIL

Hooray.

NICK

So, I'm gonna skip some of her numbers and put in

that new act you been talkin' about.

(LIL starts her long, slow, Mt. Everest climb up the stairs to the dressing rooms.)

ROY

The act is busted up. Kajpooey!
I'M SAD TO SAY WE'VE TAKEN DOWN OUR SHINGLE.
WE AIN'T A DOUBLE ANYMORE, WE'RE SINGLE.

NICK

Hmmm. Then, what am I gonna say to them agents...

ROY AND BILLIE

Wait!

(Silence. NICK turns)

What agents?

NICK

Booking agents, what do you think? I called some of them to come over tonight.

ROY

I lost my partner.

NICK

What do you mean you lost her? She's standing right over there.

ROY

As for me, I never let personal things stand in the way of my career.

BILLIE

Neither do I!

NICK

It's a big chance for the both of you -- if you don't stink. You go on in the number two spot.

ROY

You won't be sorry, Mr. Verdis!

NICK

Yeah, yeah. (To himself; exiting into his office)
Now I gotta find an agent.

ROY

(Coldly) This ain't a personal thing, you understand.

BILLIE

(Equally cold) I agree.

ROY

It's strictly business.

BILLIE

Strictly.

ROY

(Bursting with excitement) I'll go get the music
straightened out!

(They embrace enthusiastically, then regain
their composure. ROY hurries out through
the cabaret entrance. BILLIE runs upstairs.)

There is a pause. The stage door opens.
It's STEVE. He stands in front of the
open doorway. Suddenly, there's a gunshot
from outside. STEVE's hat flies off
his head. STEVE ducks for cover. NICK
enters from his office.)

(SONG: THE BULLET HOLE)

NICK

Evening, Steve.

STEVE

Why, you -- (Surprised; turns suddenly) Don't sneak
up on me!!

NICK

Hey, what's the matter, Steve?

STEVE

WHO THE HELL SAID SOMETHING WAS THE MATTER?
...NO, YOU'RE RIGHT, NICK.
I don't feel so good.

(He shows NICK his fedora)

SEE THIS HAT --
WILL YA LOOK AT THAT HOLE?

NICK

Cigarette?

STEVE

Bullet.

JUST A MOMENT AGO
I WAS STANDING OUT BACK IN THE ALLEY WAY,
ALL ALONE,

WHEN, ALL AT ONCE,
BANG!

MY HAT FLIES RIGHT OFF MY HEAD.
 BUT, THERE WASN'T A SOUL AROUND --
 NOT ANYONE --
 NOT A SOUND.

AND THEN I HEAR SOMEBODY RUNNING AWAY
 LIKE A BAT OUT OF HELL,
 WHICH MEANS

SOMEONE WANTS ME.
 THANK GO THEY ONLY GOT TO REHEARSE, NICK.

NICK

Ooh, that's bad, Steve.

STEVE

ONE IN LOWER,
 AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WORSE, NICK.

(STEVE paces, searching for something.)

NICK

LISTEN, STEVE,
 HAVE YOU GOT TROUBLES I DON'T KNOW ABOUT?

STEVE

I EAT TROUBLE FOR BREAKFAST, NICK.
 IT COMES WITH THE JOB.

(He picks up a bullet on the floor and
 shows it to NICK.)

SURE, THERE'S TROUBLE.
 BUT NOTHING I CAN'T HANDLE.
 EVERYTHING IS PERFECT.
 YOU RUN RUM, PAL,
 I'LL RUN THE MOB.

(The stage door opens. PEARL enters.
 She's very tense. There's a large purse
 under her arm.)

NICK

You're late.

PEARL

The subway.

NICK

Why you outa breath?

PEARL

(Thinks quickly; smugly) The stairs.

NICK

Hurry up and get dressed.

(PEARL exits up the stairs to the dressing room.)

NICK

The hooper's back. I think he's been talking to the cops.

STEVE

I don't like that hooper. He knows too much.

NICK

What about?

STEVE

Nothin'.

NICK

He said you tried to kill him. That true?

STEVE

If he ain't dead, I didn't try.

NICK

(Leaving) Don't tell me. I don't wanna know nothing.

STEVE

Nick -- a little tip. You're gonna need a new song and dance man...tomorrow.

NICK

Oh, God!

(NICK exits into his office as DOLPH enters from the alley.)

DOLPH

Steve. I got your message. What's wrong?

STEVE

Something's going on around here I don't like. That hooper's been shootin' off his mouth, and now somebody wants me dead.

DOLPH

What'll we do?

(SONG: EVERYONE'S ADDICTED TO MORE reprise)

STEVE

GET THE CAR,
AND PARK IT IN THE ALLEY.

GET THE MUTE FOR MY THIRTY-EIGHT.
 AS FOR "ROY,"
 IT'S TIME FOR HIS FINALE.
 WHEN HE GOES OUT TO TAKE A BOW,
 I TAKE AIM AT HIM AND pow!!
 ...in front of an audience full of possible suspects.

(PEARL enters from the dressing rooms
 and overhears the following:)

DOLPH

What about Billie?

STEVE

SHE'LL BE TIED IN A GUNNY SACK,
 'TIL WE'RE SHACKED UP IN A SHACK,
 ROLLIN' DAY AND NIGHT ON THE FLOOR.

AND IF SHE DON'T PLAY MY GAME,
 MY, MY, WHAT A SHAME.
 THERE WON'T BE NO BILLIE NO MORE.
 THERE WON'T BE NO BILLIE NO MORE!!

(They exit into NICK's office, laughing.
 BILLIE enters from the dressing rooms.
 PEARL grabs her.)

(SONG: SHOWGIRL reprise)

PEARL

Billie, I like you, kid. So listen to me...
 GET OUT WHILE YOU CAN.

BILLIE

What do you mean, Pearl?

PEARL

DON'T ASK ME TO EXPLAIN.
 JUST GET OUT OF THIS STINKIN' HOLE.

BILLIE

I don't understand. Is something wrong?

PEARL

QUICK, BEFORE YOU LOSE YOUR SOUL
 TO THAT NO GOOD MAN.

BILLIE

You mean, Steve?

PEARL

He's rotten. Rotten to the core!
 SHOWGIRL, SAVE YOURSELF!
 Pack up your morals and blow!

YOU DON'T BELONG HERE, CAN'T YOU SEE?

BILLIE

But Steve is really very nice once you --

PEARL

(interrupting)

BILLIE, DON'T END UP LIKE ME
AND WISH TO GOD YOU RAN.

GET OUT

WHILE THE HELL YOU CAN!!!

(STEVE and DOLPH re-enter from the office.
STEVE calls up to BILLIE.)

STEVE

(Loud) Hey, Billie!

(BILLIE looks startled and a little afraid.
PEARL slinks away back into the dressing
rooms. BILLIE goes to STEVE hesitantly.)

BILLIE

(Startled) Oh, Mr....Steve. You frightened me.

STEVE

Listen, about our date tonight -- something's come
up and we gotta get away now.

BILLIE

I can't leave now. Roy's counting on me to perform
our new act.

STEVE

So, you choose Roy over me, huh?

BILLIE

It's not a question of choosing. It's just that
Roy needs me.

STEVE

What about me? What about what I need?

BILLIE

You made me get Roy in trouble last night. That
wasn't very nice.

STEVE

He's garbage.

BILLIE

Don't say that. Roy may act stupid sometimes, but
he means well.

STEVE

I can't believe we're arguing over that nobody!

(SONG: FRIENDS reprise)

STEVE

(suddenly violently angry)

THAT'S MY THANKS FOR THE SWELL WAY I TREAT YOU?!

BILLIE

GEE, MR. CRANDALL.

STEVE

THAT YOU STAND HERE AND TELL ME NO?!

BILLIE

PLEASE DON'T BE ANGRY.

STEVE

I MEAN, WHAT DID I DO? DID I BEAT YOU?!

BILLIE

I'VE HURT YOUR FEELING.

STEVE

YOU DON'T LIKE ME, YOU LIKE MY DOUGH!

BILLIE

I DIDN'T MEAN TO.

STEVE.

BUT YOU'RE SO SWEET, I SWEAR I COULD EAT YOU.

BILLIE

I'M REALLY SORRY.

STEVE

OH, GOD, BILLIE I WANT YOU SO BAD.

BILLIE

I HAVE TO TELL YOU,
DON'T BE ANGRY, MR. C.
IT'S LIKE YOU ALWAYS SAID TO ME:
ALL WE'RE REALLY MEANT TO BE IS FRIENDS.
ALL I REALLY WANT TO BE IS FRIENDS.

STEVE

I BEG YOU, BILLIE,
TREAT ME LIKE WE'RE FRIENDS.

(STEVE grabs BILLIE roughly and holds
her -- too tight -- in a passionate clinch.)

BILLIE

You're hurting me.

STEVE

I'm sorry. I'll be gentle, I promise.

BILLIE

Maybe it's better if I don't go out with you anymore.

STEVE

Don't say that.

BILLIE

(Giving back the bracelet) Thank you for the bracelet.
It was beautiful.

STEVE

Don't make a fool of me, baby.

BILLIE

I'm sorry.

(BILLIE runs upstairs.)

STEVE

(Under his breath, maniacal) No you're not, whore.
But you're gonna be.

(STEVE exits into the office, slamming
the door as ROY runs out of the dressing
rooms and nearly collides with BILLIE.)

ROY

Get ready, Billie...I mean, Miss Moore. We're on
in five minutes!

BILLIE

Roy, I want to talk to you --

ROY

I'm sorry, Miss Moore, I must get out music to the
band, perhaps we can schedule some time later.

BILLIE

I'll check my appointment book!

(ROY rushes downstairs and out into the
cabaret and BILLIE runs upstairs. LIL
is staggering down the steps when PORKY
rushes in through the stagedoor.)

PORKY

Oh, cupcake, there you are. Listen, I got this
message from Steve. I'm gonna have to be away for

a little while. I'm real sorry. I mean, you know,
we ain't even had a honeymoon yet.

LIL

Well that answers that question.

PORKY

I know it woulda been special.

LIL

Very.

PORKY

A night to remember.

LIL

Definitely.

PORKY

You know what this marriage certificate means?

LIL

Jail?

PORKY

It means I'm one lucky fella.

LIL

Me too.

PORKY

I'm sorry I have to go away. But I'll be back,
and then --

LIL

Listen, L, L, L, Lou. I feel I've l, l, l, lead
you on.

PORKY

What d'ya mean?

(SONG: WHAT IF I TOLD YOU I'M A...)

LIL

BETTER CALL OFF THE RICE.
PUT A HOLD ON THE VOW.
THERE'S ONE TINY DETAIL
I'VE SUCCEEDED IN FAIL-
ING TO MENTION 'TIL NOW.

A SMALL LITTLE DIFFERENCE
THAT MIGHT CHANGE OUR PLAN.
IT MIGHT MAKE A DIFFERENCE
IF I

TOLD YOU
I'M A...

TINY BIT ODD.
IT'S A LITTLE COMPLEX,
'CAUSE I GUESS YOU COULD SAY
IN AN OPPOSITE WAY,
I'M THE OPPOSITE SEX.

IT'S ALL SO CONFUSING.
I'LL EXPLAIN, IF I CAN.
WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS
I'M A
MAN...

..NEQUIN. LOU, I'M A MANNEQUIN.

PORKY

What?

LIL

I DRESS UP IN LINGERIE.

PORKY

LIL, WHERE ARE YOU HEADING?

LIL

WELL, AT OUR WEDDING,
I COULD HAVE GIVEN MYSELF AWAY.

You see, Lou,
I GOT A COUPLE OF FALSE --
I mean, FAULTS,
THAT I HAVEN'T CONFESSED.
TIME TO MAKE A CLEAN BREAST --
I MEAN, GET OFF MY CHEST
WHAT I GOT ON MY CHEST.

DO YOU LIKE BIG SURPRISES?

PORKY

Yeah.

LIL

DO YOU LIKE HALLOWEEN?

PORKY

I guess.

LIL

WELL, WHAT IF I TOLD YOU
I'M A
QUEEN?

(PORKY thinks...hard.)

PORKY

(Finally, smiling, waving the marriage license)
WELL, YOU MAKE ME A KING,
SO YOU MUST BE A QUEEN.

LIL

ONLY NOT IN THE WAY
NORMAL PEOPLE WHO SAY
THAT WOULD NORMALLY MEAN.

(She grabs the marriage license.)

I'M A GAL WITH A DIFFERENCE.
I'M A TWO FOR ONE SALE.
I'M TRYING TO TELL YOU --
WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS --
DID I EVEN MENTION
I'M A --
(Reading the marriage license)
MAIL.
U.S. Mail.

PORKY

Lil, what are you saying?

LIL

This ain't a marriage license. It's a registered
mail form from the Post Office. God was we drunk.
We didn't get married, we got notarized!

PORKY

Well, don't worry, Sugarlump, as soon as I get back,
we'll find a justice of the peace and --

LIL

Sorry, Lou. I never marry the same man twice.

PORKY

I understand. So what were you trying to tell me?

LIL

Oh. Well...what the hell.

THEY MAY FIND MY BODY
IN THE BACK OF A VAN,
BUT, WHAT IF I TOLD YOU
WE GOT SO MUCH IN COMMON?
WELL, WHAT IF I TOLD YOU
I'M A...
coward.

(PORKY kisses LIL on the hand, then exits)

out the stage door. LIL makes her entrance onto the cabaret stage to the sound of applause and cheers. We see her talking to the audience throughout the following scene, and hear occasional bursts of laughter.

The GIRLS enter from the dressing rooms and come downstairs. PEARL follows.)

MAZIE

(Calling up to PEARL) I can't wait to see Billie and Roy's new act.

(The GIRLS pick up their handbags, ready to go out through the hall.)

RUBY

Yeah...They die standin' up!

PEARL

I'll be right down.

(The GIRLS exit. When the others are gone, PEARL sneaks back into her dressing room. BILLIE is checking herself in a hand mirror. ROY is trying to pull on a pair of pants. He's so nervous, he can hardly get them on.)

ROY

(Desperately trying to zip his pants)
Whatever ya do, just stay calm, okay?!!

BILLIE

(Practicing) I hope I get that step right.

ROY

Let's peddle through it real quick.

(ROY rushes BILLIE through their routine. He's still angry and acts aloof.)

(Flatly, disinterested)
DA DA DA DA DA DA DA DA.
(Correcting her)
With the other foot, Miss Moore.

DA DA DA DA ET CETERA.
Just because we hate each others' guts...

DA DA DA TEARS.
DA DA DA EARS.

...don't mean we can't work together.

DA DA DA ONE TWO THREE FOUR.

BILLIE

(Dancing with ROY) Well, when I get a turn down like I got tonight...

ROY

LEFT RIGHT, RIGHT LEFT

BILLIE

I get wise to myself.

ROY

Ditto!

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
WHENEVER YOU'RE BLUE.

(As part of their routine, BILLIE puts her arms around ROY'S neck.)

ROY

(Putting her arms down around his waist) Down here.

BILLIE

But, last time we did it this way.

ROY

Well, that was last time. It kinda spoils it for me, knowing you had your arms around Crandall that way.

BILLIE

All the girls around here say I'm too good and you're saying I'm too bad. I hate this place. And I'll tell you something else. When I lied last night about seeing the drunken man, it was because I promised Steve I'd say that. I didn't know you said the opposite. And I went home to write my mother and ask if a girl was in love, was it all right to marry even if they was both poor. So how would you like to go to...

ROY

(Putting BILLIE's arms around his neck) We'll do it the old way.

(They dance romantically a moment. Suddenly, the buzzer sounds and the light flashes. They rush to get ready for their entrance.)

ROY

On your toes, baby. Don't be nervous!

BILLIE

Roy, I'm scared.

ROY

Remember, I'm right beside you. We'll be the bee's knees! We'll finish in a blaze of glory!

(As they hurry to the cabaret entrance, PEARL comes out of the dressing room and crouches on the landing at the top of the stairs.)

LIL

(Heard from the cabaret stage) And now...performing their act for the very first time...Roy Lane and Billie Moore.

(Applause. ROY and BILLIE go on stage as LIL comes off. NICK comes out of his office.)

NICK

(Joining LIL) I suppose we got to look at this great act.

(NICK and LIL exit through the hallway. ROY and BILLIE launch into their act

As we watch ROY and BILLIE's cheery soft shoe number, a sinister counterpoint takes place backstage.)

(SONG: LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE)

(STEVE enters from NICK's office. As BILLIE and ROY perform, he paces nervously, checking to see he isn't being watched. Then he takes out a gun and methodically load it with bullets and attaches a silencer. Meanwhile...)

ROY AND BILLIE

MAYBE YOU'RE FEELING DOWN AND OUT.
WE KNOW WHAT DOWN IS ALL ABOUT.

BILLIE

BUT, TURN OFF THOSE TARS,

ROY

AND LEND ME YOUR EARS,

ROY AND BILLIE

'CAUSE IN THIS SOMETIMES-SAD AGE,
HERE'S OUR ADAGE:

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
WHEREVER YOU'RE BLUE.
LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
WHATEVER YOU DO.

WHY SIT THERE SOBBIN',
"ALAS AND ALACK"?
STRIKE UP THE MUSIC, MAC,
FROM BEIDERBECK TO BACH
AND BACK.

(PEARL rises and stealthily creeps down the spiral staircase. She sees what STEVE is up to and reacts. STEVE hears something and looks about. PEARL hides. STEVE shrugs it off and continues preparing his gun. PEARL continues creeping down the stairs throughout the following. She takes a gun with a silencer from her purse, aims it at STEVE, and begins slowly stalking him from behind.)

BILLIE
MAYBE YOUR MOOD IS IN THE DUMPS.

ROY
I WANNA SEE YOU SMILE!

BILLIE
EVEN YOUR LUMPS HAVE COME IN CLUMPS.

ROY
YOUR TEETH IN SINGLE FILE.

(Meanwhile, the stage door opens. DOLPH comes in nervously. PEARL runs to hide behind the spiral staircase.)

DOLPH
Pssst...(STEVE comes to him) The car's outside.

STEVE
Good. Here's the number.

(STEVE searches himself, then takes out a scrap of paper and pen; he goes to write on top of the piano. He and DOLPH confer in whispers.)

ROY AND BILLIE

WELL, NEVER SAY "NAY."
 NO NEED TO STAY
 DOWN IN A SAD, LOW-RANGE KEY.
 WHY NOT CHANGE KEY?

AND,
 LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
 WHENEVER YOU'RE SAD.

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE.
 DECIDE TO BE GLAD.

(STEVE gives the paper to DOLPH and signals him to go back outside. DOLPH exits quickly. STEVE takes out his gun and climbs the stairs to the cabaret stage entrance. He takes cool, steady aim at ROY and BILLIE, waiting for the right moment to shoot.)

Meanwhile, PEARL comes out of hiding and tips toes up the stairs behind STEVE.)

ROY AND BILLIE

WHY SEE THE HOLES,
 WHEN YOU COULD SEE THE CHEESE?
 I THINK IT WAS SOCRATES
 WHO SAID,

ROY

"Enough kabitzin', please!"

ROY AND BILLIE

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
 WHENEVER YOU'RE BLUE.

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
 WHATEVER YOU DO.

WHY SIT THERE SOBBING,
 "ALAS AND ALACK"?
 STRIKE UP THE MUSIC, MAC,
 FROM BEIDERBECK TO BACH
 AND BACK...(Etc.)

(Threatening underscoring grows louder and louder, eventually drowning out "Look On the Bright Side.")

PEARL sticks her gun in STEVE's back.
 He freezes.)

PEARL

Drop it!!

(STEVE tosses his gun.)

Turn around, Rat!

(STEVE turns, shaken.)

I don't want to give it to you like you did him
- in the back -- 'cause the last thing you'll see
before you go straight to hell is Scarface Casino's
woman, who swore to God she'd get you!

STEVE

Don't, don't kill me...don't!

PEARL

Whine, you rat, I knew you would!

STEVE

No!!!

(PEARL fires four shots into STEVE's chest.
STEVE reels and dances with each hit.
He falls and tumbles down the stairs and
lands in a heap on the floor. He appears
dead.)

PEARL, shocked and faint, turns away and
leans on a chair. STEVE begins to come
to life, reaching out for the gun he dropped
on the floor.

He picks up the gun and aims it at PEARL's
back. PEARL turns around just in time
and fires a final, fatal shot at STEVE.

Suddenly, ROY and BILLIE's song blares
out.)

ROY AND BILLIE

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
WHEN LIFE IS UNFAIR!

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
WHEN YOU'RE IN DESPAIR.

(PEARL picks up STEVE's legs and, with
great effort, drags his body into NICK's
office.)

YOU'VE GOT THE CHOICE
TO SAY "YES" OR SAY "NO."
NOTHING IS GOOD OR BAD,
BUT HOW YOU MAKE YOUR MIND UP
MAKES IT SO.

(PEARL throws her pistol and STEVE's into the office and shuts the door. She turns and runs, then remembers he left her purse on the floor. She dashes back for it and exits through the hallway.)

SO,
LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE,
THAT HAPPY LIGHT SIDE,
AND WATCH THE WHOLE WORLD GLOW!

(We hear applause from the cabaret. ROY and BILLIE come in from the stage, then go out to take another bow. The GIRLS come in through the hallway. ROY and BILLIE come back in from the stage.)

MAZIE

And they rehearsed that!

BILLIE

(To the GIRLS and ROY) How do you think it went?

RUBY

You'll be a riot at the Roxy.

ROY

(To BILLIE) I'll give the boys in the band a buzz and see how they liked it.

(He exits through the hallway. The GIRLS start upstairs.)

BILLIE

(Following the GIRLS) I did my best.

MAZIE

Sure ya did, kid. I thought it was swell.

(They go upstairs as loud voices are heard from NICK and DAN, who enter from the hallway.)

DAN

All right, I'm ready to talk to Crandall. Where is he?

(NICK shrugs.)

Listen, Greek, he's up for a murder rap. Now, where's Crandall?

NICK

He's in the office.

DAN

Tell him I want him.

(NICK opens the office door and stops abruptly.)

NICK

(Gasps) Sweet Jesus!

DAN

What's the matter?

(He looks in.)

My God, it's a blood bath!

(DAN pushes NICK into the room and follows him, shutting the door behind them.)

ROY rushes in through the hallway with a business card in his hand.)

ROY

Hey! Everybody! I got this card from an honest to God agent! (Reading the card) "I can book your act in Chamberburgh and Pottsville next week!!"

(Silence. ROY rushes up the dressing room stairs and exits.)

Billie! Billie!

(NICK and DAN come out of the office.)

NICK

The hooper killed him. That's how I figure it. He was out to get him, the hooper.

(PEARL enters from the hallway. DAN eyes her. She is clearly shaken.)

DAN

No, Nick, never.
HOODS KILL EACH OTHER.
THEY DON'T NEED ACTORS TO HELP THEM.

(DAN starts for the stagedoor. As he passes PEARL, he stops. She is nervous.)

DAN

(Gently running his fist across her chin) Pull yourself together, kid.

PEARL
McCorn?

DAN
Yeah?

PEARL
(Thinks) Nothin'.

(DAN whistles dispassionately as he heads out the hallways. With one final glance at PEARL, he exits. The GIRLS, BILLIE, and ROY come out from the dressing room.)

OLIVE
Billie, you must really love this guy. I mean, Chamberburgh and Pottsville!

(The GIRLS laugh.)

ROY
Say, Billie, I know you're just a shy little girl from Keosaukwa, but --

(BILLIE kisses ROY.)

OLIVE
My God! In front of everybody!

GRACE
When do you two play the matrimonial circuit?

MAZIE
Break time!

ROY
SOMEDAY THE CROWDS ARE GONNA CROWD THE LOBBY,
TO CATCH ME HOOFIN' WITH MY "KEE-MO SAH-BEE."
OUTSIDE, THE SIGN'LL SAY "ROY LANE AND
COMPANY."

BILLIE
YOU'RE FULL OF CHESTNUSTS, ROY,
BUT SOMEHOW YOU'RE THE REAL McCOY
FOR ME.

ROY
FROM THIS DAY ON, WE'RE AN AMALGAMATION.
WE'LL BE AS CLOSE AS AN ABBREVIATION.
MY NEW ASSOCIATE IS TOPS FROM A TO Z.

WE GOT EACH OTHER, BILLIE.

'CAUSE, WHATEVER HAPPENS,
WE'LL BE TOGETHER, BILLIE.

FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, WE'LL BE...

BILLIE
...SO WE'LL ALWAYS BE
AS CLOSE AS AN ABBREVIATION.
MY NEW ASSOCIATE IS TOPS FROM A TO Z.

ROY, I LOVE YOU.
THAT'S WHY FROM HERE ON OUT, WE'RE PARTNERS,
"HE AND SHE."

WE'LL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER.

BECAUSE WE'RE...

ROY AND BILLIE

PARTNERS,
YOU AND --

(Suddenly, the buzzer sounds and the light
flashes. Everyone rushes to line up for
their entrance into the cabaret.)

ROY
There's the gong! All ready, Girls? Hey, c'mon,
Pearl, hurry up!

(PEARL is weak, but joins the line. LIL,
in a different costume, comes out at the
top of the dressing room stairs.)

ROY
(Shouts ad lib instructions) Remember, we're artists!
Here we go! Here we go!

(They dance out on stage, but PEARL, woo
shaken to perform, drops out of the line
and remains behind, leaning up against
the wall by the stage entrance.)

ROY, BILLIE, AND THE GIRLS

WISH ME LUCK.
TELL GRANDPA TO START THE TRUCK.
I'LL EITHER BE ONE MORE SCHMUCK,
OR END UP A PRO.

(We see DAN and two cops enter from the
alley with a stretcher. They load STEVE
on the stretcher as LIL, stopping on her
arduous trek down the spiral stairs, looks
on in disbelief -- trying to focus through

her stupor. NICK, who is a nervous wreck, crosses himself feverishly.

PEARL, still perches atop the stage staircase, watches dispassionately as DAN and the cops haul STEVE's body out through the stage door.)

ROY, BILLIE AND THE GIRLS

SAY, "AMEN,"
AND PRAY WHEN YOU SEE ME AGAIN,
I'LL BE IN A BIG-TIME SHOW ON
BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!
BROADWAY!
THE ADDRESS OF DREAMS.
OOOH. AAAH.
Broadway!!

(Blackout.)