

Slay It With Music
A Musical Black Comedy
Libretto by Michael Colby
Music by Paul Katz

PROLOGUE

(The musical begins with an Overture, capped with the following Tag -- uttered by mysterious VOICES [i.e. the COMPANY])

VOICES

EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...

(They sing:)

THIS IS THE TALE OF A STAR...
(THIS IS THE TALE OF A STAR)
WHO MAY HAVE GONE TOO FAR!
(THIS IS THE TALE...)

AND WHEN THE GREATS HAVE LOST THEIR GLORY,
IT'S A GORY HORROR STORY!

THIS IS THE TALE OF A STAR...
(THIS IS THE TALE OF A STAR)
WHO MAY HAVE GONE TOO FAR!
(THIS IS THE TALE...)
(BUT THIS IS THE TALE...)

EDNA...
EDNA...
EDNA...

EDNA...
MISS EDNA BEAUCOUP!

ACT ONE
SCENE ONE

The musical continues on a sunny day amid a Hollywood street lined with palm and orange trees. It's the not so distant past. Pink stucco houses and verdant lawns fill the background, as we see the phosphorescent sign, "**HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD**".

Tour guide, ROSEMARIE CLINGER, leads a group of tourists around the California landmarks -- as if these spots were the Wonders of the World. ROSEMARIE is a twenty-five year-old Jewish American Princess from Queens, who expects to one day be Hollywood's newest Connie Stevens. She carries and uses a whistle to direct traffic.

ROSEMARIE

(Excited; she has a Queens accent -- whereby she pronounces "**R**"s as "**V**"s)

Welcome to Hollywood Bull-a-ward: the stveet on which awl L.A. stars have tvamped. I'm yaw taw guide, Vosemavie Clinger. On our taw, we've seen the homes of Lucille Bawl, Caesar Vomevo, Cavy Gvant, and Annette Funicello. But now we're at the manor of perhaps the golden oldie of them awl...

(She can't remember)

ROSEMARIE (cont'd)
uh, her name escapes me. ... You know, the one you never hear about anymore, who appeared in awl those old, old movies...

TOURIST 1 (JILL)
The one my Grandma liked when she was a girl!

(The OTHERS snap their fingers to remember)

ROSEMARIE
The star of SATAN WAS A LADY!

(Now EVERYONE knows who she means)

TOURIST 2 [CHAD]
Oh, ya mean the sister of who's-it?!

TOURIST 3 [MARCY]
Yeah, I know who you mean! They say she was an incomparable beauty, actress...

TOURIST 1 (JILL)
And wacko!

ROSEMARIE
The critics called her a mankiller, and she took it too seriously.

TOURIST 1 (JILL)
I wanna know everything about her!

TOURIST 3
Yes, me too!

(They sing Whatever Happened to...?)

TOURISTS
YES, TELL US HER STORY!

TOURISTS 2 & 3
THE PLEASURE...

TOURIST 1 (JILL)
THE PAIN!

ROSEMARIE
WELL, NOW SHE'S THE QUEEN...OF AWL MEM'VY LANE!

YOU KNOW THAT MOVIE HEAD-LINER
WHO MADE GVETA GARBO SEEM TAME!

TOURISTS
IS SHE RETIRED?
HAS SHE EXPIRED?

ALL
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME?

ROSEMARIE
STUD-I-OS CLAMORED TO SIGN HER!
THE BOMBSHELL AS HOT AS A FLAME!

TOURISTS
WHAT GOLDEN TRESSES!
WHAT SLINKY DRESSES!

ALL
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME?

ROSEMARIE
FANS LINED UP AT DAWN
TO SEE HER GVEAT SHOW!
NOW SHE'S JUST SEEN ON
"THE LATE, LATE, LATE SHOW"!

ROSEMARIE & TOURISTS
JUST LIKE A THEME BY MAX STEINER
SHE FIDDLLED WITH MAYHEM AND SHAME!

TOURISTS
WHAT JOY SHE'D GIVE YA!

ROSEMARIE
NOW SHE IS TVIV'YA!

TOURISTS & ROSEMARIE
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME?

(Dance break; photography time)

ROSEMARIE

Next stop! Take your picture? Shaw! Smile... Squeeze together.
That's it, gvoup! Say "Cheese"...

TOURIST 2

I can't believe we're at who's-its home!

ROSEMARIE

ONCE AGES AGO...
HER LIFE WAS YUMMY!
NOW NO ONE WOULD KNOW
HER FROM THE MUMMY!

TOURIST 3

THERE WAS NO DIVA DIVINER!

ROSEMARIE

YET NOTHING'S FOVEEVER THE SAME!

ROSEMARIE & TOURISTS

(Dividing parts)
IS OUR STAR TWINKLING
OR MERELY WRINKLING?
IS THERE A TRACE OF
THAT FADING FACE OF...?
IS SHE STILL GROOVING (/GVOOVING)
OR EVEN MOVING?
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME?

ROSEMARIE

Next stop!

ROSEMARIE & TOURISTS

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME...
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME...
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO WHAT'S-HER-NAME...

(Their voices fade, as they walk onward
and off-stage. **Lights fade**)

ACT ONE
SCENE TWO

We enter the baroque Hollywood manor of EDNA BEAUCOUP, aging movie star of the 40s. Presently, we peek into the entranceway/sitting room of the manor: a nightmare of Hollywood architecture, reminiscent of the House of Usher as depicted by Hammer Films. There are creeping shadows; blood-red, dripping curtains; ominous closets, corners, and cornices; and a general sense of creaky, ghostly luxury. Among furnishings, there are a prop trunk, a television set, a long rug, and a medium-size table with a telephone on top and chairs surrounding it. In addition, the room is bedecked with gaudy souvenirs of EDNA's career: movie posters, photographs, and props; as well as a tall French guillotine.

ZACHARY VON ZELL, EDNA's faithful retainer, enters with a tea tray. He is a weather-beaten, one-time movie hound -- physically a cross between Leo G. Carroll and Edward Everett Horton. We'll later discover that he secretly loves EDNA.

ZACHARY is on his daily rounds: bringing in the mail and dusting around the guillotine. He roams over to a red-draped window to tidy it. Suddenly, unseen by ZACHARY, the drapes start rustling -- to reveal the outline of someone hiding behind them. A hand pokes out, threateningly, with a long shiny dagger. Just as ZACHARY turns around taking notice, the hand jabs the dagger into him, repeatedly and violently. ZACHARY screams out.

ZACHARY

Aaagghhh!

(He reels backwards and discovers the identity of the person behind the drapes: EDNA BEAUCOUP, who is just rehearsing a scene. EDNA is a pathetic, time-ravaged spectre of what was once "*Glamour*" with a capital "Gee!". Her Medusa-like mop of platinum-pink hair seems to be tied together by an ice-blue ribbon; her lips are a vampire-crimson slash, her eyes whirl around like big, sharp pinwheels, and she is dressed in a shopworn, satin Adrian gown and shawl [probably 25-years old]. Dazed, but unharmed, ZACHARY regains his composure and dusts off. He also frequently uses his pocket handkerchief to wipe offbrow sweat)

ZACHARY

Really, Miss Beaucoup. ... Not again!

EDNA

Oh, Zachary. Don't quibble. I'm just keeping in practice.

ZACHARY

For what, pray tell? Greeting the Avon lady?

(He cleans up the place)

EDNA

No, for my comeback, darling. My old producer, Happy Hathaway, confirmed yesterday. He wants me -- the great Edna Beaucoup -- to star in his marvelous new horror flick, CHOP CHOP!

(ZACHARY puts the head back in place, while EDNA sings a preview stanza of Second Chance)

AFTER LONG YEARS OF COLD SECLUSION,
MY CAREER GETS A BLOOD TRANSFUSION,
LOVELY AS SCREEN ILLUSION...
A SECOND CHANCE.

ZACHARY

But you haven't been in anything for twenty five years. And movies today use all kinds of new techniques...

EDNA

(Interrupting)

Shush, Zachary. That's the very reason I must make this flick! My creative juices have been fermenting in the cellar too long. I'm vintage stuff, my darling. And it's time to fizz again!

ZACHARY

(Going through mail)

Junk mail.

EDNA

(Sings)

TROUBLE AND RUMOR ONCE CONSPIRED
SO SOMEHOW I COULD NOT GET HIRED;
NOW I'VE WHAT I DESIRED...
A SECOND CHANCE.

ZACHARY

But you're no Juliet anymore. No Blanche DuBois even.

EDNA

So, who needs those old chestnuts? Happy's offered me a superb role, one that is a reflection of the real world today. I'm going to play a mass murderer -- masquerading as a housewife!

ZACHARY

Gracious.

(EDNA, in her own world, continues singing)

EDNA

NOW I'VE FOUND
WITH EV'RYTHING I'VE FACED --
SECOND ROUND --
NO SECOND WILL I WASTE.

FAREWELL TO EV'RY SAD AND BLUE TIME,
DEALING WITH TYPES WHO LIE AND TWO-TIME.
THIS DAY BEGINS A NEW TIME:
(Aloud)
A SECOND CHANCE.

ZACHARY

A second chance?...

EDNA

Yes... Now I can show those Lalas in Lotusland what a real actress is! And not in those silly new films with robots and spies and kewpie dolls! No...I'll be in the kind of film only someone with my background and pizazz can do!

ZACHARY

Are you sure?

EDNA

(Maniacally laughing, then calmly stating:)

Darling, this is a role I'd kill for!

(She sings Slasher Movie)

YOU'RE GONNA SEE MY NAME AGAIN --
OTHER THAN IN THE OBITS!
IT'S TIME TO BE TOLD NEWS
THAT I'M MORE THAN OLD NEWS--
FOR A REAL STAR NEVER QUILTS!

WHEN FEWER ROLES WERE OFFERED,
WAS BETTE DAVIS BLUE?
OR SWANSON OR JOAN CRAWFORD?
WHAT DO THE GREAT ONES DO?
THEY GRAB A GLEAMING CUTLASS

AND CUT THEIR CO-STARS GUTLESS,
MAKING A SLASHER MOVIE!
THAT'S FOR ME!

WAS TONY PERKINS DOUR,
BUT NOW HE'S BACK IN STYLE!
FOR ZINGIN' IN THE SHOWER,
HE MAKES A BLOODY PILE!
NO OTHER FILM OUTGROSSES
LIKE GORE IN DAZZLING DOSES!
FANS LOVE A SLASHER MOVIE!

EDNA & ZACHARY

YESIREE!

EDNA

MY FILM WILL BE A WHOPPER.

ZACHARY

EV'RY SCENE -- A HEART STOPPER.

EDNA

NO CHEAP FILM WHERE PEOPLE SHED CLOTHES...

ZACHARY

NEVER!

EDNA

JUST ME, AN AX, AND EDITH HEAD CLOTHES!

(ZACHARY likes the idea)

ZACHARY

CLEVER!

I'M CERTAIN THERE ARE NO STARS
WHO RANT WITH MORE FINESSE...

EDNA

WHEN I SLICE UP MY CO-STARS,
I'LL WIN AN OSCAR!

ZACHARY

YES!

EDNA
MY FILM WILL HAVE NO EQUAL
UNTIL I MAKE THE SEQUEL --

ZACHARY
ANOTHER SLASHER MOVIE!

EDNA
THAT'S MY DREAM!

(She pulls an ax out of the prop trunk)

ZACHARY
YOU'RE GOING TO BE SUPREME!

EDNA
(Posing with ax)
A THRILLING SLASHER MOVIE!

ZACHARY
GUT-SPILLING SLASHER MOVIE!

EDNA
MY SLASHER MOVIE WILL BE A SCREEEEAM!

ZACHARY
Cut! Print!

EDNA
Yeah!

(Song ends)

EDNA (Cont'd)
Now I must rehearse some more! I've borrowed Boris Karloff's props.

(She shows off the prop trunk -- with
its guns, crossbows, maces, etc.)

ZACHARY
Oh...

EDNA
And, besides, there's always my own guillotine -- to practice with.

ZACHARY

All right. Orate. Just be careful.

EDNA

Of course.

(After clearing her throat, she slinks over to the guillotine and emotes to the dummy:)

So, my darling, you turned your back on me! Well –

(She picks up and slaps the dummy)

smack, smack, smack -- I won't have it! Yes, I know a sure way to see that you never neck again!

(She pulls the lever of the guillotine -- and the blade slashes down with a thud, decapitating the dummy)

Yaaa! Oh, rats!

ZACHARY

(Having other things on his mind, he gently interrupts)

Mind if I turn on the television, Miss?

EDNA

(Suddenly focussed on the T.V.)

Why? Is one of my movie classics on?

ZACHARY

No, it's time for...

EDNA

(Shocked by what she sees)

Aaaah! It's her!

ZACHARY

It's only your sister. I thought it would be nice -- playing her series when she arrives...

EDNA

Oooh. I forgot she was coming today. Damn it! I would have stayed in bed!

ZACHARY

Oh, but she's quite good.

(EDNA sneers, as they watch the T.V. set)

TELEVISION ANNOUNCER

And now for another episode of the daytime drama, POUGHKEEPSIE, starring Marcy Beaumont.

(Music underscores the **series**)

ZACHARY

Ah, there's your sister.

EDNA

(Dryly)

America's favorite bucktoothed bitch! *(alternatives for "bucktoothed": big bone / big hair)*

(We hear the **daytime show**, already in progress:)

MARCY'S VOICE (**Recorded**)

I warn you. I'll never let you marry Carrie, Larry.

MAN'S VOICE

But I love your daughter.

(We see MARCY BEAUMONT peeking through a window: in a double-vision effect so that the window-frame suggests the "live" MARCY is on television [She even mouths her lines as they are spoken on her series]. MARCY is a well-preserved, glamorous, 45-ish "star". Physically somewhere between Joan Collins, Elizabeth Taylor, and Betty White, she is a survivor. When she became too old to play young leading ladies in movies, she latched onto even more success as the queen bitch of daytime television. In person, she is regal and gracious. She dresses in the

most flattering Jackie Kennedy-style outfits,
plus her trademark, **a mauve scarf**)

MARCY'S VOICE (**T.V.**)

Listen. You leave her alone, or I'll tell the world your pitiful
secret: how your mother sold her body to put you through medical
school!

MAN'S VOICE

But I thought my mother was your best friend!

MARCY

No, toots! I am my best friend!

(EDNA can't take it. She bangs the
T.V. set, muffling all sound)

EDNA

(Shaking)

Ohh. Spare my nerves! Why is it -- all the good television jobs
go to the arrogant and breathy!?

(MARCY has moved onward)

ZACHARY

Miss Beaucoup. I was enjoying it!

(She stares at him with dragon eyes)

EDNA

Please.

ZACHARY

Oh, give your sister some credit. No one's quite like you. But
she's won two Golden Globes, an Oscar, and the Otto Preminger
Humanitarian Award.

EDNA

All cheap sentimentality.

ZACHARY

For her age, she looks remarkable.

EDNA

Sure. She has more plastic in her than Dow Chemical.

ZACHARY

Now, please. I've prepared a tea. You'll be civil to her, won't you?

EDNA

(Playing with ax)

Of course, darling. She's my flesh...and blood.

ZACHARY

Yes. Your sister, and I know that you love her.

EDNA

I suppose. ... In fact, now that I'm filming CHOP CHOP, I may be lucky to have her around. The great daytime thespian, Marcy Beaumont. Perhaps she can help me rehearse my slasher movie!

(The doorbell rings with a **gong** sound;
and ZACHARY goes to answer it)

ZACHARY

It's her. She's arrived! Coming!

EDNA

(Fixing herself up)

Am I presentable, Zachary?

ZACHARY

(Glancing back)

You always look beautiful to me, Miss Beaucoup.

EDNA

Thank you, my darling.

(He opens the door, finding a beaming
MARCY and her suitcases)

MARCY

Zachary, hello, hello! Would you rescue me?

ZACHARY

(After a double take)

Ah... Certainly, Miss Beaumont.

(He drags in the suitcases)
Come right in. Someone is waiting for you.

(Suddenly, outside the doorway, ROSEMARIE CLINGER darts into sight. ROSEMARIE has her autograph book and a pen -- raised in her clutching hands. She looks like she might stab MARCY, toward whom she lunges. MARCY, about to enter the manor, is startled)

ROSEMARIE

(To TOURISTS "outside")

It's her! It's her!

(Turning to the sisters)

It's you!

MARCY

(Looking at ROSEMARIE as if she's some maniac)

Aaaah!

ROSEMARIE

(Thrilled)

Aren't you Mossy Beaumont -- the teviffic, gorgeous star of films, soap operas, and mouthwash ads?

MARCY

Why, yes, my child.

(With every compliment to MARCY, MARCY swaggers with pleasure and EDNA twitches in agony)

ROSEMARIE

Oh, this is the happiest day of my entire life. Yaw my idol! I've seen ev-e-vy masterpiece you've ever made. Miss Beaumont, if you would be so kind, may I have yaw autogvaph?

(She hands the flattered MARCY the pad and pen)

MARCY

Why not...

ROSEMARIE

Oh vapture! ... Sign it "to Vosemavie Clinger."

MARCY

(Signing)

It would be my pleasure. "To my dear, dear friend and fan, Rosemarie. All my love, Marcy."

ROSEMARIE

Thank you, Mossy!

(Excitedly spotting the seething, jealous EDNA)

Oh, oh -- wait! You're her sister, aren't you!? You're what's-her-name?!!

EDNA

What?!

ROSEMARIE

Oh, would you sign my book too?

EDNA

(Thinks for a moment; then answers:)

Ssscram, kid!

(ZACHARY forces out ROSEMARIE and bolts the door -- as MARCY steps inside)

ZACHARY

Get!

(ROSEMARIE gives one last admiring look and giggle toward MARCY, then leaves)

EDNA

(Greeting MARCY)

My sister -- in person!

(Hereupon, the sisters greet each other with almost forced affection. They sing My Darling, My Dearest!)

OH, EDNA! MARCY

MARCY! EDNA

(They force a hug)

OOO! BOTH

WHY, MARCY
I
COULD CRY!

ME TOO! EDNA

MARCY
MY DARLING,
MY DEAREST,
I'VE LONGED TO SEE YOU SO!

THIS WEEK WILL BE
SO HEAVENLY,
YOU WON'T WANT ME
TO GO!

I NEVER GET TO SEE YOU...
WE MUST CATCH UP, MY DEAR!
YES, EDNA,
MY HONEY,
I'M HERE!

EDNA
(Responding -- equally emphatic;
somewhat mocking)
MY DARLING,
MY DEAREST,
I'VE LONGED TO SEE YOU TOO!
I'LL MAKE YOUR STAY
SO GRAND -- YOU MAY
BEMOAN THE DAY

IT'S THROUGH.
 I MISS YOU IN NEW YORK WITH
 (Condescendingly)
 YOUR T.V. HIT, ALAS...
 MY SISTER,
 MY ALLY,
 (To herself)
 MY ASS!

MARCY
 OH DEAR! SHE SOON HAS GOT TO KNOW
 THE NETWORK CANNED MY T.V. SHOW,
 SO I NO LONGER CAN AFFORD
 TO PAY FOR MY SISTER'S BED AND BOARD!

ZACHARY
 IT'S DELIGHTFUL
 HAVING THE SISTERS TOGETHER AGAIN!
 NOTHING SPITEFUL;
 IT'S LIKE OLD TIMES, BUT BETTER THAN THEN!

EDNA
 I HELPED TO LAUNCH HER, YEARS AGO;
 WHILE HER FAME ROSE -- MINE TUMBLED SO!
 BUT WHAT'S DESERVED WILL BE RESTORED
 TILL EACH OF US GETS HER REWARD!

(The parts combine)

MARCY	ZACHARY	EDNA
OH DEAR! SHE SOON	IT'S DELIGHTFUL	I HELPED TO LAUNCH HER,
HAS GOT TO KNOW	HAVING THE SISTERS	YEARS AGO,
THE NETWORK CANNED	TOGETHER	WHILE HER FAME ROSE --
MY T.V. SHOW	AGAIN!	MINE TUMBLED SO!
SO I NO LONGER	NOTHING SPITEFUL;	BUT WHAT'S DESERVED
CAN AFFORD	IT'S LIKE OLD	WILL BE RESTORED
TO PAY FOR MY SISTER'S	TIMES, BUT	TILL EACH OF US GETS
BED AND BOARD!	BETTER THAN THEN!	HER REWARD!

ALL
 OH DEAR! WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
 IF THIS KEEPS UP, I'LL FAINT -- I FEAR!
 BUT STILL, AT LEAST I WON'T BE BORED!
 (For different reasons, each exclaims,
 overlapping:)

OH LORD!...
 OH LORD!...

OH LORD!...
OH LORD!

(They look at each other, then continue
as they started)

MY DARLING! EDNA

(Overlapping)
DARLING! MARCY

DEAREST! EDNA

DEAR... MARCY

YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHAT'S NEW... EDNA

WHAT'S NEW? MARCY

(Edging to a corner of
the room) ZACHARY
I'LL GET MORE TEA.

DO, ZACHAR-Y! MARCY

A POTENT, STEA- EDNA
MY BREW!

(ZACHARY observes from the side)

I'VE JUST BEEN HIRED! EDNA (Cont'd)

I'VE BEEN FIRED! MARCY

BOTH
 (Shocked -- for different reasons)
 SISTER, I COULD CRY!

EDNA
 MY DARLING!

MARCY
 MY DEAREST!

EDNA, MARCY, & ZACHARY
 (Facing outward)
 MY, MY!

EDNA
 (Secretly delighted)
 You were fired?

MARCY
 Actually, the whole company was fired. The station axed POUGHKEEPSIE.

EDNA
 How could anyone be so cruel? Give me the details.

MARCY
 Well, our ratings never recovered after my character had that affair with the reformed cannibal.

EDNA
 (Friendly)
 What a shame. But the public doesn't always respond to truth in art.

(ZACHARY serves a tray of tea,
 buns, and finger sandwiches)

MARCY
 And, what's worse, Edna. I soon may not have the salary to support this house.

EDNA
 (Lips trembling)
 Ww-what! You know this house means my very...sanity!

ZACHARY

Anyone want a bite?

MARCY

Believe me, I don't want to hurt you. I love this house.
I love you, Edna. But I may have no choice.

EDNA

(Taking a sandwich)

What about all the loot you snared on T.V.?

(Bites into sandwich)

MARCY

Oh, forgive me, Edna. But it was all squandered by my three
ex-husbands. You know how I'm always falling for young,
vital men.

(To ZACHARY)

I'll have a honeybun, please.

EDNA

Damn it! Why do you have to marry them all?

MARCY

Well, what should I do? Just let them take advantage of me?

EDNA

You sure know how to pick 'em! There was Manuel, the bullfighter
who looked for work...in Manhattan. And Gunther, the Olympic
swimmer who almost gave you a stroke. But the worst was Chad Walker,
that beach bum who deserted you when the surf was up.

MARCY

Please, Edna. Don't go on. Now, you know that I went to an astrologer
to see why I **always** have such bad luck with men. And she said,
"Marcy, you can't help it. You've got Pluto in Uranus."

EDNA

Oh my.

MARCY

(Changing subjects)

Well, I am sorry that I may not be able to help you financially now.
We may have to sell the house.

EDNA

(Getting a hold of herself)

No matter. I'll pay my own way. Happy Hathaway wants me to make a comeback in his marvelous new slasher movie!

MARCY

(Her spoon rattling against her tea cup)

Oh my God! A slasher movie... You're kidding!

ZACHARY

No. It's absolutely true.

(ZACHARY nods in concurrence)

MARCY

Oh, Edna, you can't, you mustn't! Why, you'll rattle the skeletons in our closet!

ZACHARY

(Calming MARCY and looking at EDNA)

Stir carefully.

EDNA

I've nothing to hide!

MARCY

(Jumping up and pacing)

Nothing, hah! Only a lifetime of tragedy, violence, and our rivalry for your hairdresser, Grant Foster, ending in his unsolved murder -- his hair parted by a hatchet!

EDNA

(Shaking head)

Oh, bringing that up again! Well, the hell with the past. You're just jealous 'cause it's my turn in the spotlight!

MARCY

Listen, dear! I had to lie on the witness stand to clear you when Grant was hacked up. I had to say you were with me that night, when I was busy on my own.

(MARCY paces nervously)

EDNA

(With an edge)

And, incidentally, where were you that night...?

MARCY

(Changing subject)

And I won't have you reminding people of it all!

EDNA

Aw, stop nitpicking. I want to make this movie!

MARCY

(With angry tone)

I'm putting my foot down!

EDNA

My, aren't we sour today.

MARCY

It's hard to be sweet!

ZACHARY

Now, ladies, be nice!

EDNA

(Defiant)

Well, what 're ya gonna do?

MARCY

I'm going to march right over to Hathaway's office and convince him what a **bad** idea it is to cast you in a slasher film!

(She prepares to leave, but EDNA has her own idea)

EDNA

(As if giving her sister a warning shot)

Marcy, don't do that to me. I'm warning you.

(In reflex, EDNA bangs the T.V. set. She hears MARCY'S T.V. VOICE blast out)

MARCY'S VOICE

(From the T.V.)

You'll suffer for what you've done. You parasite!

EDNA

You are not going...

(EDNA again bangs the T.V.)

You are not going anywhere!

MARCY

(Gesturing determination -- on her way out)

Edna, please -- just drop it!

(MARCY starts to leave, almost tripping over the rug. EDNA contemplates pulling the rug under the oblivious MARCY)

ZACHARY

Careful.

EDNA

(On cue)

All right, darling. If you insist!

(She subtly pulls the rug, which MARCY doesn't see. Thinking she has misstepped, MARCY falls back and hits the ground)

MARCY

Ohh!

(In pain -- her right leg broken)

My million dollar leg. I think I've broken it!

ZACHARY

(Running over to the grounded MARCY; inspecting her leg)

Looks bad. I'd better go make a splint.

(He leaves)

EDNA
Yes, Zachary. Use the old sheets, darling.

ZACHARY
Yes, Miss.

EDNA
("Comforting" her sister)
Oh, I'm so sorry, sister dearest. But at least this time -- you
fell for something other than a husband!

MARCY
Edna, what am I going to do?

EDNA
It'll be okay. I'll throw out that rug tomorrow...

MARCY
No, Edna. I mean about my leg?

EDNA
Oh, that? Well, don't worry. I'll take care of you!

(They reprise My Darling, My Dearest)

MARCY
BUT WON'T YOU MIND?

EDNA
NAH!

MARCY
YOU'RE TOO KIND.

EDNA
(Pushy)
NOW JUST UNWIND!

MARCY
I'LL TRY...
MY DARLING...

EDNA
MY DEAREST...

BOTH
(With an ominous overtone)
MY, MY!

(Blackout)

ACT ONE
SCENE THREE

We enter the kitchen of the manor. Therein, a red-curtained, windowed door casts an eerie shadow. A meat cleaver and knives may be in view on a kitchen table.

ZACHARY may have a bucketful of ice nearby. He sings In Love.

ZACHARY

THERE'S TROUBLE AFOOT
AND I NEED A HAND.
SHOULD I STAY PUT?
SHOULD I TAKE A STAND?

WHEN THOSE SISTERS MEET,
IT'S MURDER -- AND SO
CAN I KEEP THINGS SWEET?
KEEP EDNA IN TOW?

YES, I MUST
BECAUSE OF JUST
ONE THING ABOUT EDNA
NO ONE MUST KNOW...

I'M IN LOVE
 WITH THE NUT --
 SINCE I FIRST BEHELD HER ON-SCREEN!
 THOUGH HER MIND IS KIND OF UNWINDING,
 I STILL FIND HER AS SPELL-BINDING
 AS THE BEAUTY WHO ONCE STOLE EACH HEART
 AND SCENE!

THOUGH HER THOUGHTS AND LOOKS ARE FADING,
 AND HER LANGUAGE NEEDS UPGRADING,
 SHE'S THE LIFE AND LIGHT PERVADING
 ALL I DO!

I'M IN LOVE
 WITH THE NUT --
 I DON'T CARE WHATEVER SHE'S DONE!
 MY INFATUATION IS FERVENT
 THOUGH -- TO HER -- I'M JUST A SERVANT;
 JOBS WITH NORMAL PEOPLE WOULDN'T BE AS FUN!

SINCE SHE FLASHED THROUGH SOME PROJECTOR,
 SHE'S MY CAVIAR AND NECTAR;
 AND I'LL STAND BY AND PROTECT HER
 MY LIFE THROUGH.

AND ALTHOUGH
 SHE'S A NUT,
 SO -- SHE'S A NUT!

(Aside, possibly gazing at a
 framed picture of EDNA)

ZACHARY (Cont'd)

THERE'S NONE I'D RATHER VIEW...
 I'M SLIGHTLY NUTTY...TOO!

(He ponders)

It's not easy being in love with someone who'd shove her sister's leg into a cast and then insist on autographing it. Now I have both of them to care for. So, today's luncheon is fruit salad. Ah, bananas. Perfect for Edna. She needs her potassium.

(ZACHARY prepares a lunch of fruit. Meanwhile, JILL LITTLE is seen peeking through a window. She is a creepily perfect 11-year-old girl in the tradition of "*the Bad Seed*". Furtively, JILL steals into the kitchen. She silently stares at ZACHARY, who is slicing up a banana. Suddenly, he is surprised to see JILL -- her eyes fixed on him)

JILL
I like bananas. May I have one?

ZACHARY
No, you may not! And who are you?

JILL
Jill Little. From next door.

ZACHARY
Next door? Doesn't Mrs. Jenkins live there?

JILL
Yes. She's my grandma. My mom and dad left me with her when they moved to Australia.

ZACHARY
Really...

JILL
Grandma tells me a famous T.V. star is here visiting. Where is she?

(She starts playing with a kitchen knife. ZACHARY cautiously takes it away)

ZACHARY
Jill! You shouldn't do that.

JILL
Grandma says the lady who lives here was once a star too -- and that she may have turned her boyfriend into hamburger with a hatchet!

ZACHARY
That's just not true!

JILL

(Bordering on ferocity)
Are you calling my grandma a liar?

ZACHARY

(Stashing away all the knives in
sight)
Of course not. But no one ever could prove who killed that fellow.
So don't spread malicious rumors. You know, the Boogyman punishes
bad little girls.

JILL

(Tittering)
Oh, the Boogyman can't hurt me!
(She pulls out
slingshot and shoots
at ZACHARY)
I have a slingshot!

ZACHARY

Ow!

JILL

See how good my aim is!

ZACHARY

Well then,
(In an annoyed tone:)
Jill, if you just keep quiet -- why then, you may have a banana.

JILL

Okay.

(He gives her a banana)

ZACHARY

Here, sweetheart.

JILL

(Her mouth full of banana)
Mmmm...

ZACHARY

(Gently forcing her out the door)
Now run along. Go back to Granny.

JILL

But Grandma keeps telling me to go play, near the highway.

ZACHARY

Goodbye, Jill.

JILL

Bye -- for now.

(She drops the banana peel and leaves.
ZACHARY sits and muses)

ZACHARY

Turned her boyfriend into hamburger. What a monstrous thing for that child to say. How horrid to be reminded of the day, twenty five years ago, when Grant Foster died. Everything started out so well that day. Edna had arranged for Marcy's big break in her new movie *SHIEK TO SHIEK*. She even gave Marcy a monogrammed mauve scarf...

(Lights dim around ZACHARY, as he recalls that fatal day. We flash back to a shadowy lot. The movie, ***SHEIK TO SHEIK*** is being rehearsed. EDNA and MARCY -- i.e. the actresses playing the older versions, now portraying the characters, 25 years beforehand -- enter in costume)

EDNA

(Taking out mauve scarf)

Marcy, I have a special, good-luck present for you. A monogrammed mauve scarf --

(Tying the scarf tightly around
MARCY's neck)

as a symbol of our everlasting ties...

MARCY

(Touched)

Aww...

EDNA

And to cover that ugly mole on your neck.

You're too good to me.

 MARCY

Right.

 EDNA

(Recalling)

 ZACHARY

 During the rehearsal, there was no sign of impending mayhem. But after the rehearsal of their big musical number, the nightmare began...

(He fades out, as we concentrate on the past. EDNA and MARCY are seen, rehearsing their number, You're There When I Need You. They both wear red capes and carry scimitars. RHONDA CARLISLE, a production assistant [portrayed by the actress playing ROSEMARIE], is seen, attending to production preparation)

Places please! People, places. Okay. On-camera rehearsal for SHEIK TO SHEIK! Ready on the controls.

 RHONDA

Ready!

 VOICE 1

Harry, music.

 RHONDA

Check!

 VOICE 2

Miss Beaucoup.

 RHONDA

Yes, darling, let's do it!

 EDNA

Okay. Let's take it from the last section. And action...

 RHONDA

Five, six, seven...

 VOICE 2

(EDNA and MARCY sing You're There When I Need You)

EDNA

YOU'RE THE
HOOD ON MY HEAD,
THE CAPE FOR MY BACK,
THE JAM ON MY BREAD,
THE KNICK FOR MY KNACK.
YES, I HAVE TO SAY
YOU'RE THERE WHEN I NEED YOU!

MARCY

YOU'RE MY
WINE WHEN I'M DRY,
MY TOW'L WHEN I'M DAMP,
THE SUN IN MY SKY,
THE OIL IN MY LAMP.
IT'S FUNNY THE WAY
YOU'RE THERE WHEN I NEED YOU!

EDNA & MARCY

LET OTHER PEOPLE DRIFT
IN AND OUT OF MY LIFE,
THERE'S NO ONE WHO'S AS SWIFT
CHASING MY STRIFE.

EDNA

THAT'S FOR SURE!

MARCY

YOU'RE THE
SOAP FOR MY SCENT!

EDNA

THE WALL FOR MY FORT!

MARCY

THE ROOF TO MY TENT,

EDNA

MY BRA FOR SUPPORT,

BOTH

THE HINGE FOR MY DOOR!
YOU'RE THERE WHEN I NEED YOU;

EDNA
YOU'RE THERE WHEN I NEED YOU...

MARCY
YOU'RE THERE WHEN I NEED YOU...

EDNA (or ENSEMBLE)
THERE WHEN I NEED YOU...

ALL
NEED I SAY MORE?

(The number ends. EDNA and MARCY hug each other in triumph)

RHONDA
That's a wrap! Did you get it?

VOICE 1
Got it!

RHONDA
Okay! That's it, everyone. Thanks, Miss Beaucoup.

EDNA
Fine, darling.

MARCY
How was I, Edna?

(The following exchange should be reminiscent
reminiscent of the **conversation in Scene 4:**
after YOUNG EDNA and YOUNG MARCY performed
for their father)

EDNA
Wonderful, just wonderful. Especially your hair.

MARCY
But you're the real actress, Edna.

EDNA
Yes, but you'll get there.

(We see ZACHARY -- looking like a
younger version now)

ZACHARY

Superlative, Miss Beaucoup. And your sister shows great promise.

EDNA

Thank you, Zachary. You're so kind.

(Taking off her red
cape, handing it over)

Now would you ask wardrobe to add some emeralds and sapphires to this.

ZACHARY

Yes, Miss Beaucoup.

(GRANT FOSTER appears, played by the actor
also portraying CHAD. GRANT is a dashing,
truly virile 35-year old **hairedresser** -- a
1940s counterpart to Warren Beatty in
"SHAMPOO". Though he is EDNA's lover, he
seems somewhat infatuated with MARCY, whom
he approaches)

GRANT

Marcy, Marcy, I adored you. You were magnificent!

(EDNA observes and GRANT covers his
tracks with the added statement:)

Just like your sister!

(EDNA interrupts, taking GRANT aside)

EDNA

Grant, my love. I need you to prepare me for tomorrow's shooting.

(She saunters to her
dressing room area)

I'll wait for you in my dressing room.

GRANT

Yes, yes, of course.

(Upset, MARCY approaches GRANT)

MARCY

But, Grant. What about our plans?

We'll just have to put them off. GRANT

Ohh... MARCY

(GRANT joins EDNA in the dressing room.
EDNA poses in front of a dressing-room **vanity**
-- where there is a collection of cosmetics
and hair-styling paraphernalia.)

Hurry, my love. I'm waiting. EDNA

I'm coming, Edna. GRANT

(Referring to a backdrop)
All right. Let's lose this! RHONDA
(She practises a
tap step. Then
becomes frustrated)
I said lose it!

(The focus shifts to the dressing room.
GRANT is somewhat distracted and nervous)

Relax, lambchop. I'm here. GRANT

Oh, Grant. Caress me. EDNA

(Half reluctantly he hugs -- possibly
kisses -- her, actions which EDNA
passionately reciprocates)

(After the fact)
Will that do? GRANT

Oh, Grant. You're as adept a lover as a hairdresser! EDNA

GRANT

Yes. But right now your hair needs my attention -- for tomorrow.

EDNA

(A bit disappointed)

As you wish, Grant...

(GRANT takes out a comb and other
hairdressing items; he acts distracted)

You know, I wouldn't let just anyone else into my curls.

GRANT

Among other things...

EDNA

(Laughing)

Oh, you're such a naughty boy. Someone should spank you!

GRANT

(Ignoring her flirtations)

Well, Edna, which would you prefer: rinse or dye?

(He runs his hands through her hair)

EDNA

Dye...dye...my darling.

GRANT

As you chose. But first, I must condition.

(He runs his hands through her hair
again)

EDNA

Oo, Grant. You send caterpillars down my spine. Now make me
look pretty. As pretty as Marcy did today.

(Acting as if EDNA has hit a raw nerve, GRANT
doesn't really notice what he's doing -- as
he mixes the peroxide and ammonia proportions
for EDNA's hair solution)

GRANT

Yes, she was beautiful.

What? EDNA

(Covering) GRANT
I said...it was beautiful -- beautiful the way you encouraged Marcy today.

Yes, thanks to me, wasn't Marcy...umm...fairly good? EDNA

Absolutely. GRANT

(While GRANT dyes EDNA's hair, they sing Got It All (To Get Ahead))

HOW OUR POPPA EDNA
WOULD BE PROUD!

SHE SANG BRIGHTLY... GRANT

(Interrupting to qualify) EDNA
IF SLIGHTLY
TOO LOUD.

(Joking)

HER CHURNING
WAS TURNING
MEN RED.

SHE'S GOT IT ALL GRANT
TO GET AHEAD!

SHE WAS NEARLY GOOD AS I. EDNA

CAN'T DISPUTE YOU... GRANT

EDNA
 (Increasingly verging on
 jealous sarcasm)
 SO CUTE, YOU
 COULD DIE.

GRANT
 YOUNG, ZESTY,
 AND CHESTY!

EDNA
 WELL SAID.

GRANT & EDNA
 SHE'S GOT IT ALL
 TO GET AHEAD!

EDNA
 (Catching on, as GRANT feels compelled
 to confess)
 YOU SEEM AS THOUGH SHE IS
 YOUR LOVER -- NOT I.

GRANT
 MY SWEET -- WHAT YOU SEE IS
 NOT FAR FROM A LIE:
 THOUGH SHE HAS, IN ESSENCE,
 REFUSED ME AS YET,
 I'VE LOVED MARCY...YES, SINCE
 THE FIRST TIME WE MET.

(The hurt in EDNA'S face builds)

EDNA
 GRANT, YOU MONSTER!

(She starts to rise)

GRANT
 PLEASE DON'T LEAP!

EDNA
 ALWAYS FLIRTING...

(He's unintentionally pulling
at her hair)

YOU'RE HURTING
ME, CREEP...

GRANT

YOU'VE FAME AND
ACCLAIM; AND
YOU'LL SEE...
YOU'VE GOT IT ALL --
YOU DON'T NEED ME!

EDNA

WE CAN MAKE IT!

GRANT

IT WON'T WORK...

EDNA

DON'T FORSAKE ME!
YOU'LL MAKE ME
BERSERK!

GRANT

STOP SHOUTING;
OUR...OUTING
NOW ENDS.

EDNA

I WOULD STILL...

CHAD

(Interrupting)
WE COULD STILL
BE FRIENDS...

EDNA

DON'T SHAME ME!

GRANT

DON'T BLAME ME...

DROP DEAD! EDNA

YOU'VE GOT IT ALL! ... GRANT

SHE'S GOT IT ALL!
OH, DAMN IT ALL... EDNA

(Sadly pausing for a moment, then bitterly stating:)

I'LL HAVE YOUR HEAD!

(At this point, we see **handfuls of hair** coming out of EDNA's head -- as the oblivious GRANT works on her. After the number, she tries to regain her cool)

Oh, Grant, how could you! EDNA

(She notices something strange)

Hey! What's happening here? My head -- it feels so funny... Ahh!
My hair -- it's falling out! It's all falling out!

GRANT
(Seeing bunches of hair in his hands and realizing)
I've been so nervous talking to you -- I mixed the conditioner with your depilatory.

Oh no! No! You've scalped me, you savage! EDNA

This could be serious. GRANT

EDNA
(Hysterical)
You bet it is! It's bad enough your lusting after my sister! But for doing this to my hair...!

Edna, get a grip... GRANT

(She has bald spots now)

EDNA

Look at me! I resemble Erich Von Stroheim!

(GRANT reaches out to comfort her,
possibly with a scarf -- which she
may wrap around her head)

GRANT

I'm sorry, Edna.

EDNA

Stay away, you butcher! ... I could murder you for this!

(She starts to run off)

GRANT

Edna, wait!

EDNA

(Exiting)

No! No!!

GRANT

Wait!

(For a moment, he looks devastated)

Holy smoke! What she looked like!

(Gazing at the hair in his hand)

I guess I did take a little too much off the top.

(Against his better nature, he starts
to giggle. Then subdues himself)

Well, on to Marcy -- for a while. No woman ties down Grant Foster for long. ...

(Ominous shadows pervade the area.
GRANT gathers his things. Still nervous,

he calms himself down by whistling the
tune of You're There When I Need You)

Oh shoot, I forgot. They say it's bad luck to whistle in a
dressing room.

(Lights dim)

Hey, what's with the lights?

(Suddenly, a FIGURE appears in the
shadows -- concealed in a black, hooded
coat or robe. The FIGURE carries the
hatchet/tomahawk -- used earlier as a
prop in the rehearsal. Meanwhile,
GRANT overhears something)

Is someone there? ... Who is it?

(The FIGURE approaches GRANT in the
dressing room. GRANT is cleaning up
the fallen hair)

Oh, it's you. Well, what do you want? I'm waiting. ...

(No answer)

Speak up. ...

(The FIGURE moves in with the
weapon)

What are you doing with that? Hey, hold it! That's not funny! Stop!

(He raises his arms to protect his
face)

Stop!! Ahhh!!!

(There is a rush of Bernard Hermann-type
"Slash Music". If possible, we see the
hatchet plunged into the head of GRANT --
dead with a tortured expression. The
FIGURE may run off. Then, the murder
tableau fades. In stream-of-consciousness

fashion, we see present-day **ZACHARY's shadow** in the **kitchen** -- as his flashback ends with one final vignette: on another side of the stage, LENORE HOOPER -- a quintessential 40s gossip columnist -- broadcasts the **radio news**. LENORE is played by the actress also portraying ROSEMARIE CLINGER)

LENORE

(Tapping microphone)

Good evening! This is Lenore Hooper -- with one of Hollywood's hottest headlines of the 40s. Today, Hollywood queen, Edna Beaucoup, was cleared of charges in the bloody scimitar slaying of Grant Foster, her paramour-coiffeur.

(Rolling eyes and acting skeptical:)

Seems there was inconclusive evidence, and Edna has the best lawyers in town. ... Currently, Edna is sequestered in her house -- in a bad, bad way from all the bad, bad publicity. Anyway, while Edna is indisposed, her concerned sister, Marcy will replace Edna in the lead role of SHEIK TO SHEIK. My, what those sisters won't do for each other!

(Lights fade on LENORE, as we return to the modern-day ZACHARY and **kitchen** of the Beaucoup manor.

ZACHARY

How horrid to be reminded of the day Grant Foster died...and Miss Beaucoup went bald.

(He sighs and reprises
In Love)

I'M IN LOVE
WITH A NUT...
LOVE WITH A NUT...
THOUGH IT CAN BE BIZARRE,
I'M NUTS ABOUT THAT STAR!

(He hugs the cheese souffle, as the scene ends. **Blackout**)

ACT ONE
SCENE FOUR

The spotlight hits CHAD WALKER, MARCY's last ex-husband. He is a Troy Donahue-type, aging hunk. He once used his magnetic good looks to get women, money, and movie roles; but -- in his late-thirties -- the glow has dimmed. Still, CHAD is struggling to maintain his high style of life.

Currently, he is dressed in what resembles an old and moth-eaten outfit of Warren Beatty's -- along with dark sunglasses. He waves goodbye to an unseen woman; she has dropped him off at the corner of a sunny Hollywood Street -- where there's a public telephone. His face and shirt are covered with lipstick marks, and he is somewhat ruffled. On the side, ROSEMARIE CLINGER and JILL have been observing.

CHAD

(Gazing off-stage)
Thanks for the lift. Ciao, baby!

(ROSEMARIE runs over to him)

ROSEMARIE

Wait up, group. Hey, you. Aren't you Chad Walker -- Mossy Beaumont's ex-husband and star of early beach movies like LOCO IN ACAPULCO and DANGEROUS BIKINI?

CHAD

(Thrilled to be recognized, he whips off his sunglasses)

Yeah, that's me!

(JILL, who may be playing with a fake spider or snake, notices:)

JILL

Your fly is open.

(CHAD pushes the JILL out of the way. Unseen by CHAD, she puts her licked lollypop or melting candybar into his pocket; then she leaves)

ROSEMARIE

I recognized yaw famous magenta eyes.

CHAD

That's cool, baby. I dig your style!

ROSEMARIE

Now who was that eighty-year old woman, in the Porsche, who left you off?
(She points)

CHAD

(Wiping off lipstick)

Hey, like I don't know what you're talkin' about.

JILL

That lady who was gumming you...

CHAD

An old friend.

ROSEMARIE

(Increasingly annoying him)

Say, Chad. Why haven't you made any films lately?

CHAD

Ya miss me, huh?

ROSEMARIE

Yeah, shaw. Is it because yaw last five films didn't do so hot? Or because of yaw...reviews? Or is it that you can't get a job without Mossy's help?

CHAD

Of course not. I just refuse to take my shirt off for...the cameras anymore.

JILL

I think that's smart.

ROSEMARIE

(Walking away, smugly)

I see...

(To JILL)

Jill, did I tell you that Mossy signed my autogvaph book and called me her deavest fan! Just look! Why, I wouldn't be surprvised if she invited me for dvinks at the Polo Lounge next....

CHAD

Ciao, baby.

(To himself)

This is no life for a grown man. Fast flings with great-grandmothers. Spending my last bucks on Ban De Soleil. No one takin' me serious.

Still, there was someone, once, who treated me like more than just a plaything, more than just a pretty face. Oh, Marcy, have mercy on me...

(He sings I Gotta Get Her Back)

NO MOVIES WILL CAST ME,
THEY KNOW I CAN'T ACT.
MY BEST YEARS ARE PAST ME,
MY CAPS ARE ALL CRACKED...
MY MARCY HAD FAULTS BUT
HAD MONEY I LACK!
OH, I GOTTA GET HER BACK!

CHAD

I CAN'T AFFORD DRINKIN',
I CAN'T AFFORD DRUGS;
MY ASSETS KEEP SHRINKIN',
(Straightening his hair:)

I'VE BEEN THROUGH THREE RUGS.
BEFORE I'M NO LONGER
THAT GOOD IN THE SACK
I GOTTA GET MY MARCY BACK!

(A CHORUS of HOLLYWOOD OBSERVERS echo:)

CHORUS [ROSEMARIE & JILL]

BACK...
BACK...
BACK...
OOO...

CHAD
CRAZY ABOUT HER;
YEAH! I LOST A LOT!
LIVIN' WITHOUT HER
CAN COST A LOT!

CHORUS

...
YEAH... A LOT!
OOO...

COST A LOT!

CHORUS

CHAD
SHE GAVE ME DIRECTIONS
ON GETTING AHEAD;

CHAD

AHEAD!

CHORUS

CHAD
WE MADE GREAT CONNECTIONS
AND NOT JUST IN BED.
BUT NOW SINCE I LEFT HER,
THE HARD TIMES ATTACK!
OH, I GOTTA GET HER BACK!

CHORUS

...
...
OH YEAH...
...ATTACK!
...

GOTTA GET BACK!
OOO...
AAAH...

CHORUS

CHAD
THAT BABE'S WHAT I NEED --
KIND O' SLOW -- JUST MY SPEED!
HER BEAUTY'S A GIFT

SINCE SHE GOT HER LAST LIFT!
 SHE WASN'T TOO TOUGH:
 ONCE A NIGHT WAS ENOUGH!
 OH, I GOTTA GET HER...
 HOW I GOTTA, GOTTA GET HER...
 NOW I GOTTA GET HER

*(or: OUR NIGHTS WERE F' PLAY,
 THEN I'D SLEEP THROUGH THE DAY.
 HEY! I GOTTA GET HER...)*

BB-BB-BB-BB-BACK! CHORUS

BB-BB-BB-BB-BACK! CHAD & CHORUS
 BB-BB-BB-BB-BACK!

YEAH, I GOTTA GET HER... CHAD

BB-BB-BB-BB-BB-BACK! CHAD & CHORUS

(He pulls out a black book or slip of paper and blows the dust off it. Then, he drops a coin in the public phone and dials. On the other side of the stage, EDNA is seen "**in her house**" by a telephone)

CHAD
 Hello, operator. Mary Lou. It's Chad. How's my beach bunny?
 Listen, be a sugar. Uhh, get me Sunset Six, Six-Six-Thirteen.

(EDNA's phone rings)

EDNA
 (Running to pick up)
 That must be the studio for me.

(Answering in a mellow voice, she even primps her hair -- as if someone on the other end can see)

Hello. This is Edna Beaucoup speaking.

CHAD
 Hiya, Edna baby. It's Chad.

EDNA
(Surprised)
What?

CHAD
Yeah, Chad Walker. I understand Marcy's there. I'd like to see her.

EDNA
Oh, it's Chad Walker, huh? The one who sucked up my sister's money like mother's milk.

CHAD
Aw, Edna. Cut the putdowns. When are ya gonna bury the hatchet with me?

(EDNA ponders that idea, then speaks on)

EDNA
Listen good. Marcy's had a little accident. She's broken her leg in three places and can't come to the phone.

CHAD
Bummer! Well, wait. I'm comin' right over.

EDNA
Over your dead body.

CHAD
Huh?

EDNA
My sister's been through enough -- without the heartache of you.

CHAD
Hey, like what's that -- a song title?

EDNA
Look, you stay away, or I'll knock your magenta eyes out!

CHAD
Don't threaten me, baby doll. I've a better bedside cure for Marcy than you've seen in years.

EDNA
That's enough, buster! Marcy's in my hands now -- so don't interfere.

(She slams down the phone. Lights fade around her)

CHAD

(Working up a lather)

Oo...wipeout! Well, I'll go to hell on a surfboard before I let **her** cut me off from my Marcy!

(Sure of himself:)

Yeah...

(He reprises I Gotta Get Her Back)

CHAD (Cont'd)

SHE AIN'T NO SPRING CHICK
BUT HER CLUCK MAKES ME CLICK!
OH, I GOTTA BB-BB-BB-BB-BACK!
BB-BB-BB-BB-BACK!
YEAH, I GOTTA GET HER...
BB-BB-BB-BB-BACK!

(Fade out)

ACT ONE
SCENE FIVE

We shift to inside EDNA
BEAUCOUP's manor.
EDNA is pacing around.

MARCY'S VOICE

(From off-stage)

Edna. Could that call just now have been for me?

EDNA

(Histrionically)

No. Sorry -- wrong number.

(Doorbell rings. An envelope or sheet of paper arrives through the mail chute)

EDNA

(Rushing over to fetch the sheet of paper)

Oh, maybe that's my contract for CHOP CHOP.

(She picks up the paper sheet.
ZACHARY enters)

ZACHARY

Is that your contract?

EDNA

(Anxious)

Wait. Let me read. "You are invited to join us at Uncle Chan's.
This week's special -- hot and spicy orange beef." Zachary,
this couldn't be my contract.

ZACHARY

I doubt it, Miss Beaucoup.

(MARCY enters in a wheelchair. Having
broken her right leg, MARCY is encased --
up to her thigh -- in a sequined, designer
leg-cast: color-coordinated with her silken
robe)

MARCY

Well, you shouldn't make that film anyway.

EDNA

Don't start in again! It's not good for your health. Dr. Lewton
said to conserve your strength.

MARCY

But you'll just be branded as a hatchet woman again!

EDNA

P-lease, Marcy. It's the 60s now. They'll love me!

MARCY

Can't Happy Hathaway find someone else -- like Lana Turner
or Mitzi Gaynor?

EDNA

(Shifting to anger)

Why? Don't you think I'm up to them?

MARCY

No, it's just that...

EDNA

(Interrupting)

It's just that you don't want **me** to be a bigger star than you!

MARCY

Don't be ridiculous! I simply think you're making a horrible mistake!

EDNA

Well, I certainly can't depend on you right now. Unless they cast you as...

(She hovers threateningly
over MARCY's wheelchair)

"Peer Gimp".

(*or: "Long John Silver".*)

MARCY

Edna, that's terrible. Why, if it wasn't for your rug, I wouldn't be in this chair!

EDNA

Sure ya would, you klutz!

MARCY

Klutz! I am no klutz! Why, I taught Cyd Charisse to do knee-turns!

EDNA

(Rocking wheelchair)

Oh, you're a crazy woman!

MARCY

Who are you calling crazy? You're the one who...

(Calming down, partly to
survive, partly to ponder)

Oh, Edna. Edna...what's happened to us? When we were younger, we used to love each other, protect each other.

EDNA

Isn't it that way now?

MARCY

No, it's not. We're at each other's throats like...

(Searching for the
right metaphor)

diamond chokers!

EDNA
 Ugh...You're exaggerating.

MARCY
 No, I'm not. But we can change all that! Yes, what could be more important?

EDNA
 I dunno.

MARCY
 (Clinging close to EDNA)
 Let's be close again, Edna.

EDNA
 (Somewhat yielding)
 I'll try, Marcy...

(MARCY and EDNA sing Sisters)

MARCY
 (Reaching out)
 Please...

THOUGH I KNOW WE DIFFER,
 THOUGH AT TIMES WE FIGHT,
 WHO CARES WHY OR WHETHER
 WE DO --
 WE'RE SISTERS.

INTERLOCKING WHEELS
 SHARING MEMORIES AND MEALS,
 FEELINGS NO ONE ELSE FEELS
 BUT SISTERS.

HELP YOUR SISTER IF HER
 WAYS AREN'T ALWAYS RIGHT.
 WE GREW UP TOGETHER --
 WE TWO
 DEAR SISTERS.

ONE IN HOME AND NAME,
 EVEN GESTURES ARE THE SAME;
 WHO CAN MAKE SUCH A CLAIM

BUT SISTERS?

LINKED THROUGHOUT A LIFETIME,
TOUCHED BY WHAT THE OTHER DOES;
THROUGH THE GOOD AND BAD TIMES,
EV'RYTHING THAT WAS,
THERE'S NO ONE ELSE QUITE LIKE A SISTER...

SHARING EV'RY BIRTHDAY,
FAM'LY TRIP AND CHRISTMAS TREE;
EVEN WHEN WE ARGUE,
YOU CAN'T DISAGREE,
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE ANOTHER SISTER....
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE ANOTHER SISTER...
YOU'LL NEVER...

(EDNA is getting nostalgic as well)

MARCY

Edna, don't you remember our lovely childhood in this house...
We were so happy then.

EDNA

We were?

(They fondly reminisce)

MARCY

Yes. Remember that Christmas when Mama and Poppa gave us those puppets.

MARCY

Mine was a small white sheep. I called it "Wee Willy Woolly".

EDNA

Yes. And mine was a squirrel. I called it "Squirrel".

MARCY

Things were so lovely before...before...

(She finds it hard to say)

EDNA

Before Poppa shot out his brains.

MARCY

Yes. But Poppa didn't do that to himself. Hollywood provoked him!

(Concurrently, we flash back 30 years and see a handsome, mustached man of 40 -- hugging together his two daughters. It is MARCEL BEAUCOUP, father of EDNA and MARCY. MARCEL can be played by the actor doubling as CHAD WALKER; 12-year-old YOUNG MARCY is played by the girl later portraying JILL LITTLE; and 17-year-old YOUNG EDNA is performed by the actress doubling as ROSEMARIE CLINGER)

EDNA

Right. How proud we were of him!

MARCY

Marcel Beaucoup, Hollywood's finest scenic designer of the 30s. He had a vision for designing black and white films like no one else.

EDNA

Yes. He was color-blind.

MARCY

Then, he and his career were destroyed...

EDNA

By Technicolor!

(The past and present merge)

MARCEL

(Possibly with a slight **French accent**)

Edna, Marcy -- what are you two girls up to down there?

YOUNG EDNA

Nothing, Poppa. We're just playing dress-up.

YOUNG MARCY

Edna and I are putting on a show with our puppets.

MARCY

He made us so happy to be sisters.

MARCEL

One day you girls are going to be famous.

(YOUNG EDNA and YOUNG MARCY giggle)

EDNA

Yes. How we cherished each other then.

MARCEL

Poppa's little girls.

(Lights fade out on the present -- and
on the older EDNA and MARCY -- as we
focus on the past; YOUNG EDNA and YOUNG

MARCY sing Anything, as MARCEL proudly
observes)

YOUNG MARCY

THEY SAY I'M A SPUNKY CHILD.

YOUNG EDNA

AND I'M FULL OF GRIT AN' CHARM.

BOTH

SO EVEN IF WE ACT WILD,
NOW REALLY WHAT'S THE HA-AH-ARM?!
HA-AH-ARM...

(They affectionately tease each other)

YOUNG MARCY

IF YA SEE ME JUMPIN' ABOUT,
IT'S A JUMP FOR JOY 'CAUSE YOU'RE HERE!

YOUNG EDNA

IF I TEND TA HOLLER 'N' SHOUT,
THAT'S 'CAUSE YOU ARE MAKIN' ME CHEER!

BOTH

THOUGH I SEEM QUITE ROWDY NOW

IN THE THINGS THAT I DO:
 STILL, ANYWAY,
 ANYHOW,
 I'LL DO ANYTHING
 FOR YOU!

YOUNG EDNA
 WHEN I PUT A TACK ON YOUR SEAT,
 IT'S SO I CAN GIVE YOU A LIFT!

YOUNG MARCY
 IF I BAKE YOU MUD PIES TO EAT,
 THAT'S MY KIND O' DOWN-TA-EARTH GIFT!

YOUNG MARCY
 YOU SPILL RED PAINT ON MY FACE

YOUNG EDNA
 'CAUSE I HATE WHEN YOU'RE BLUE.

BOTH
 YES, ANY TIME,
 ANY PLACE,
 I'LL DO ANYTHING
 FOR YOU!

YOU'LL FIND OUT IN A WHILE
 NO ONE ELSE CAN TOP ME!
 I'LL MAKE YOU LAUGH 'N' SMILE,
 AN' NO ONE'S GONNA STOP ME!

(YOUNG EDNA jostles YOUNG MARCY who gives
 a scream)

Watch it. YOUNG EDNA

Oww. Don't do that! YOUNG MARCY

Try and keep up with me. YOUNG EDNA

I just want to play. YOUNG MARCY

Come on.	YOUNG EDNA
	MARCEL
Girls, girls.	(Stopping their argument)
	(Dance break)
	YOUNG MARCY
(Blowing a kiss)	
HAVE A KISS!	
	YOUNG EDNA
THANK YOU, MISS!	
WHEN I PUT A NAIL IN YOUR SHOE, IT'S 'CAUSE YOU NEED IRON TA GROW!	
	YOUNG MARCY
WHEN THERE'S FIREBUGS IN MY STEW, IT'S 'CAUSE YOU LIKE MAKIN' ME GLOW!	
	YOUNG EDNA
WHEN I DROP ANTS IN YOUR PANTS,	
	BOTH
WE PLAY SKIP TA MA LOO! YES, ANY TIME, ANY CHANCE, I'LL DO ANYTHING FOR YOU!	
	YOUNG EDNA
IF I PUNCH YOU, IT'S OKAY -- YOU'LL BE THRILLED WHEN I'M THROUGH!	
	YOUNG MARCY
YES, ANY TIME...	
	YOUNG EDNA
ANY DAY...	

ANYWHERE, ANY WAY, I'LL DO ANYTHING	BOTH
TO...	YOUNG EDNA
FOR... (Correcting YOUNG EDNA)	YOUNG MARCY
YOU!	BOTH
(Aside) IT'S TRUE!	YOUNG MARCY

(As song ends, the girls curtsy to each other. Their father MARCEL applauds)

Wonderful, just wonderful!	MARCEL
Thank you, Poppa.	YOUNG EDNA
That was so much fun, Poppa.	YOUNG MARCY
My beautiful, talented girls. (They all hug)	MARCEL
Ooo.	YOUNG EDNA & YOUNG MARCY
(The girls take turns kissing their father)	
I love you, Poppa.	YOUNG EDNA

I love you more, Poppa.

YOUNG MARCY

No, you don't!

YOUNG EDNA

Do too!

YOUNG MARCY

Do not!

YOUNG EDNA

Do too!

YOUNG MARCY

Do not!

YOUNG EDNA

Do too!

YOUNG MARCY

Do not!

YOUNG EDNA

Do too!

YOUNG MARCY

(YOUNG EDNA looks like she may strangle
YOUNG MARCY, but MARCEL quiets them down)

MARCEL

Stop it, girls! You are sisters. You should not quarrel. You must love each other. You need each other.

Why?

YOUNG EDNA

MARCEL

It is like when you sing your songs. Things will always be lovelier when there is harmony between you.

You're right, Poppa...

YOUNG MARCY

MARCEL

(Pushing the girls together)

Show me...

(YOUNG MARCY hugs YOUNG EDNA)

YOUNG MARCY

I love you, Edna.

YOUNG EDNA

(Reciprocating)

I love you, Marcy.

MARCEL

Ah, girls. You lift my spirits.

YOUNG EDNA & YOUNG MARCY

(Embracing)

Ooo!

MARCEL

Remember, no matter what else happens -- I want you sisters to always be close.

(They all cling together)

YOUNG EDNA & YOUNG MARCY

Yes, Poppa.

MARCEL

You need each other.

(The focus shifts to the modern-day
EDNA and MARCY)

EDNA & MARCY

Yes, Poppa.

MARCY

Things were so much lovelier before Poppa shot himself.

EDNA

Yes. And -- right behind him -- accidentally killed Momma.

MARCY

(Lovingly slipping her arm around
EDNA)

But things can still be good between us, Edna.

EDNA

We'll see, Marcy.

(The lights accentuate the two sets of
sisters -- past and present -- as they
harmoniously reprise Sisters)

EDNA (Cont'd)

WE ARE
LINKED THROUGHOUT A LIFETIME,
TOUCHED BY WHAT THE OTHER DOES;
THROUGH THE GOOD AND BAD TIMES,
EV'RYTHING THAT WAS...

MARCY

THERE'S NO ONE ELSE QUITE LIKE A SISTER...

YOUNG EDNA & YOUNG MARCY

SISTER...

EDNA, MARCY, YOUNG EDNA, &
YOUNG MARCY

SHARING EV'RY BIRTHDAY,
FAM'LY TRIP, AND CHRISTMAS TREE;
EVEN WHEN WE ARGUE,
YOU CAN'T DISAGREE...

MARCY & YOUNG MARCY

YOU'LL NEVER HAVE ANOTHER SISTER...

EDNA & YOUNG EDNA

YOU'LL NEVER HAVE ANOTHER SISTER...

EDNA, MARCY, YOUNG EDNA, &
YOUNG MARCY

YOU'LL NEVER HAVE ANOTHER SISTER...
BUT ME.

(MARCEL BEAUCOUP reappears and gazes lovingly at his daughters. As **lights fade**, the scene ends)

ACT ONE
SCENE SIX

We return to the entranceway/sitting room of the manor. EDNA is reading a script -- running through lines -- for her slasher movie. She is using a real ax as a prop.

EDNA

Now where was I in the script. Ahh...

(Reading:)

I'm tired of you grubby little girl scouts, testing my sympathy and making me buy your stale cookies. Well, this Mother's gonna teach you a good lesson.

(The doorbell "**gongs**". EDNA calls for assistance)

Zachary! The door...

(She tries to rehearse)

Yes. This Mother's gonna teach you a good lesson...

(The doorbell "**gongs**" again. EDNA puts the ax down on a table and goes to answer the door)

Never mind, Zachary. I'll get it! ... I'm coming! I'm coming!

(She unthinkingly opens the door without checking. Outside stands CHAD WALKER, possibly drunk)

Oh -- it's Chad Walker!

(She is about to slam the door in his face when he lunges forth, forcing his way into the house and cupping her mouth so she can't scream out)

CHAD

No, you don't, baby! You're not gonna keep me out.

(He muffles her voice and struggles to restrain her)

Listen, your meddling caused enough bad vibes when Marcy and I were married. Now where is she? And speak softly,

(Threatening her mouth with his fist)

or I'll turn you into a **silent** screen star!

EDNA

(Trying to be dignified and unfrightened)

Marcy -- she's taking a nap before lunch...

CHAD

Where?

EDNA

On her back, I guess...

CHAD

Why? Is she in pain?

EDNA

She's used to that!

CHAD

Let me see...

EDNA

Leave her alone!

(He releases EDNA and starts forward) the den)

CHAD
Leave me alone.

(EDNA pounces on CHAD)

EDNA
She's not well!

CHAD
Like step aside, baby.
(EDNA claws at him)
No, not the eyes!
(They tussle)
No, get your claws off me!

EDNA
Get out of my house! Now, you rat!

(CHAD grabs at EDNA, shakes her,
and grasps her by the hair)

CHAD
Okay, baby doll -- I'm through bein' a gentleman!

(He raises his fist to beat her,
viciously pulling at her hair with
the other hand. Suddenly -- to gasps
-- the hair comes loose: EDNA has
been wearing a wig and is completely
bald underneath)

Oo, Baldilocks!

(EDNA stretches her arm to reach the ax.
She clutches it and yells:)

EDNA
How could you! Stay away, you monster!

CHAD
I'll take that!

(Either through inebriation or a slip on the carpet, CHAD staggers forward. The ax accidentally lands right in his head -- or some other fatal place. "Slash Music". Eyes rolling back, he falls down dead. EDNA reels in disbelief)

EDNA

Oh no! No!

(Addressing body)

What's wrong with you? Why don't you look where you're going?

(She retrieves her wig and puts it back on. ZACHARY rushes in -- possibly with a tray of food)

You fool!

ZACHARY

What's all the commotion?

(He sees EDNA beside the dead body and puts his tray down on the table. EDNA sobs between his comments)

Gracious. ... It's like old times again.

(He either feels the body for a pulse or just recognizes death when he sees it)

You've been thorough, Miss.

EDNA

It was an accident. He attacked me! Actually, he murdered himself! Oh, this is awful, Zachary. It could delay my **movie comeback!**

ZACHARY

(Closely comforting EDNA)

Don't worry, Miss Beaucoup. Everything will be fine. At least, this time there's no night watchman to discover the body. No one to accuse you. We'll get rid of the body.

EDNA

(Excited; somewhat contrite)

Yes. And I have the perfect way, Zachary. I can use it to rehearse my big incinerator scene! Just like in my movie -- I'll use the basement furnace and destroy the corpse. Then he won't have died in vain -- right?

ZACHARY

(Pondering a moment, then concurring)

Precisely.

(She nods "Yes". MARCY, fresh from a nap, wheels in -- unaware of what is happening)

MARCY

Zachary, oh Zachary. It's past two already. When is lunch going to be ready?

(She stops in her tracks, seeing the body)

Oh God! Oh God! Oh Chad! ...

(Getting a hold of herself)

Who did this?

(EDNA and ZACHARY throw up their hands like they don't know)

EDNA

Did what?

MARCY

Did what?! My ex-husband's lying dead with an ax in his head.

EDNA

(Gazing at corpse)

Oh, look at that. ...Sorry, sister.

ZACHARY

These things happen.

MARCY

(Appalled)

Well, you can't just ignore this! Someone's got to report it to the police!

(She wheels to the telephone)

Immediately!

(EDNA jumps forward and rips the phone off the wall)

EDNA

Zachary, lock the doors and windows, and move Chad to the basement.

ZACHARY

Yes, Miss.

MARCY

Edna, what are you doing? Edna, I want to leave this house. Now!

EDNA

You're not going anywhere, Marcy!

MARCY

Edna, I helped you before. And I'll help you through this!

EDNA

Baloney! First, you talk about selling the house! Then, you want to call the police and make trouble. And I wouldn't be surprised if you tried to replace

me in CHOP CHOP! Yeah, like ya did on SHEIK TO SHEIK. Well, no way, sister! I'll tell you what you're gonna do...

MARCY

(Gulping)

...What?

EDNA

You're gonna help me right here. Be part of the fun to come, great actress that you are!

MARCY

Oh?

(Slasher Movie is reprised)

EDNA

HEY, SIS, DON'T BE A SISSY,
I NEED YOU BY MY SIDE!
SO DON'T BEHAVE SO PRISSY --
COME, SHOW SOME FAM'LY PRIDE!

(ZACHARY has moved CHAD's body
out of sight, while EDNA pulls --
from the prop trunk -- some rope,
manacles, and a ball & chain to
restrain MARCY)

ZACHARY

I GOT
RID OF THE BODY...NOW, MISS,
JUST WHAT
ARE WE TO DO WITH YOUR SIS?

EDNA

(Patting MARCY as she binds her)
I THINK SHE NEEDS COERCING --
SHE'LL JOIN ME IN REHEARSING
MY COMING SLASHER MOVIE!

EDNA & ZACHARY

WHAT A TEAM!

EDNA, ZACHARY, & MARCY

IT'S LIKE A DREAM!

(ENSEMBLE VOICES blend in with them)

EVERYONE

THIS SLASHER MOVIE WILL BE A...

(MARCY lets out a Lucille Ball-like
whining/screaming note -- in spooky
harmony with the ENSEMBLE)

MARCY

AAAAAH!

EVERYONE (Except MARCY)

A SCREEEEAM!

(ZACHARY muffles MARCY's screams with the side of her scarf. Just before the lights **black out**, JILL LITTLE is spotlighted in the corner, mischievously observing events. It is:

CURTAIN

ACT ONE

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