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The Belle of New York

Bernard Dunn and Emile Littler

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

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FOUNDED 1830

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THE BELLE OF NEW YORK

CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

HARRY BRONSON, a wealthy young man
BRIDGET, his housekeeper
WILLIAM, his butler
PANSY PINS, a showgirl
DOC SNIFFKINS, a theatrical impressario
CORA ANGELIQUE, an actress
BLINKY BILL, a punch-drunk boxer
KISSY FITZGARTER, his sister, a dancer
KENNETH MUGG, a ham actor
FRICOT, Harry's French chef
FIFI FRICOT, his little daughter
REV. MR SHEEP, a confused cleric
ICHABOD BRONSON, Harry's father
KARL VON PUMPERNICK, a polite lunatic
VIOLET GREY, a Salvation Army girl
MAMIE CLANCY, from the Bowery, Bill's best girl
GATEMAN, at Grand Central Station
PLATINUM PETE, a rich, blond giant
CASINO MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Small Roles:

There are twenty-one one- or two-line speaking parts (twelve for men, nine for girls), three non-speaking roles for men and one male voice off.

Chorus and Dancing Girls:

Party Guests, Housemaids, Bridesmaids, Wedding Guests, Mambbers and Banner-bearers of the Anti-Cigarette Society, Leaguers, Banner-bearers, Drummer Girls and Instrumentalists of the Young Men's Rescue League, Chinese Girl Dancers, Chinese Workers, Rich Chinese Merchants and their ladies, Pell Street Toughs and their girl-friends, Pell Street Sight-seers and Toffs, Members and Band of the Salvation Army, Candy Store Assistants and Customers, Band Members and Brigadiers of the Purity Brigade, Train Passengers, Casino Visitors, Casino Waiters, Bonnebouche Dancers.

SYNOPSIS OF MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

Overture

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. When a Man is Twenty-one | Harry, Party Guests and Housemaids |
| 2. When I was Born the Stars Stood Still | Cora, Pansy, Wedding Guests and Housemaids |
| 3. Entrance of Mr Mugg | |
| 4. Little Sister Kissy | Bill, Mugg, Kissy and the Housemaids |
| 5. Wedding March | |
| 6. Oh, Teach Me how to Kiss | Fifi, Harry, Male Wedding Guests and Housemaids |
| 7. We come this Way | Ichabod, Member of the Anti-Cigarette Society, Leaguers of the Young Men's Rescue League, Bridesmaids and Wedding Guests |
| 8. Wine, Women and Song | Harry, with Chorus as for Musical No. 7 |
| 9. La Belle Parisienne | Fifi, Pansy and the Bridesmaids |
| 10. My Little Baby | Ichabod (and dance with Cora) |
| 11. Pretty Little China Girl | Chinese Girl Dancers and full Pell Street Ensemble |
| 12. They All Follow Me | Violet, Salvation Army Members and Pell Street Ensemble |
| 13. The Belle of New York | Bill and Pell Street Toughs (and dance with Mamie) |
| 14. <i>Not included in present version</i> | |
| 15. Violet's Entrance | |
| 16. Finale, Act One | Ichabod, Violet, Harry, Cora, Pansy, Fifi, the Bridesmaids and full Pell Street Ensemble |

ACT II

Entr'acte.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 17. Oh, Sonny | Harry, and Candy Store Customers |
| 18. When We are Married | Fifi and Harry |
| 19. Lucky Jim
(optional number)* | Ichabod |
| 19a. I Want to Go Tomorrow
(optional number)* | Mugg |
| 20. Whistling Solo
(optional number)* | Bill (and danced by Bridget Snifkins, Mugg, Harry and Ichabod) |
| 21. The Purity Brigade | Violet, Members of the Purity Brigade and full Ensemble |
| 22. I Do, So There | Violet with Chorus as for Musical No. 21 |
| 23. Take Me Down to Coney Island | Bill and Mamie |
| 24. On the Beach at Narragansett | Ichabod, Snifkins, Mugg, Gateman (and Train Passengers <i>ad lib</i>) |
| 25. For the Twentieth Time We'll Drink | Casino Visitors |
| 26. <i>Not included in present version</i> | |
| 27. At ze Naughty Folies Bergere | Violet (and danced by the Bonnebouche Dancers) |
| 28. For in the Field
(Finale, Act Two) | Ichabod, Violet, Cora, Fifi, Harry, the Bridesmaids and Full Company |

* Musical Nos. 19, 19a and 20 are not included in the vocal score.

No. 19 may be purchased separately from Samuel French Ltd.

Nos. 19a and 20 are available on loan, free of charge, on request.

NOTE: A Licence to perform THE BELLE OF NEW YORK does **not** automatically grant permission to include the song *Lucky Jim*. For productions in which it is decided to include No. 19, this fact **must be made clear** when applying for the Licence.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action takes place in New York and at Narragansett, in the summer, about 1900.

ACT I

SCENE 1 The dining-room of Harry Bronson's house on Riverside Drive, New York. (Full set)

SCENE 2 The conservatory of Harry Bronson's house. (Front cloth)

SCENE 3 Pell Street, New York. (Full set)

ACT II

SCENE 1 Smyler's Candy Store, Broadway. (Full set)

SCENE 2 Outside the platform gates of Grand Central Station, New York. (Front cloth)

SCENE 3 The lawn of the Casino at Narragansett. (Full set)

ACT I

SCENE I

SCENE—*The dining-room of Harry Bronson's house on Riverside Drive, New York, 1898. It is a beautiful, richly furnished apartment. Through high and wide arches, hung with curtains, it opens at C back and at the L to a splendid conservatory, two steps up from stage level. A sideboard is upstage R suitably laden. Immediately below this is a door, and below this again a large open fireplace with high mantel. There are entrances at stage level extreme downstage R and L. A little to R of C is a banqueting-table, set up and downstage, with chairs at the top and to the sides, set irregularly. The table is decorated with flowers and there is a punch bowl in its centre. Wine coolers, empty champagne bottles and boxes of cigars or cigarettes litter the table, sideboard and floor.*

When the CURTAIN rises, sounds of laughter and joviality are heard. It is eleven o'clock on the morning of Harry Bronson's wedding day, which is also his twenty-first birthday, but the curtains on the arches are closed, shutting out the daylight, and electric lights are still burning. HARRY BRONSON is discovered at the head of the table with his GUESTS. The party, given to bid good-bye to his single days, is almost at an end. As Harry and his friends are unhappy without female company, even at a "bachelor" celebration, there are some highly decorative young ladies in attendance. ALL are carousing and singing, holding glasses aloft and shouting. As they sing, some of the MALE GUESTS help themselves and the ladies to more wine from the sideboard.

WHEN A MAN IS TWENTY-ONE

No. I

(The original score at this point is for male voices only. LADY GUESTS should sing the tenor line)

ALL GUESTS *(singing)*

When a man is twenty-one
Let him drink hot rum
Let him drink it hot and cold

MALE GUESTS. Hot and cold.

ALL GUESTS. When a man is twenty-one
Let him make things hum
Let his life be free and bold

MALE GUESTS. Free and bold.

ALL GUESTS. For never will you be so gay again
And never will you see such fun

MALE GUESTS. See such fun.

ALL GUESTS. As you will when the sparkling cup you drain
On the day when you are twenty-one.

(THE GUESTS rise, rather uncertainly, and for the umpteenth time raise their glasses to toast Harry. A few groups leave the table before turning up towards their host)

Then here's to the day when you're
Twenty-one years old
And you laugh in the face of sorrow,
When you don't fear liquor and you
Drink it hot or cold,
And you don't care a hang for tomorrow.

(As EVERYONE repeats this refrain, two MALE GUESTS pull HARRY to his feet to reply to the toast, and assist his rather tottery climb on to the table)

Then here's to the day when you're
Twenty-one years old
And you laugh in the face of sorrow,
When you don't fear liquor and you
Drink it hot or cold,
And you don't care a hang for tomorrow.

(ALL cheer and applaud, and cry "Speech speech" as HARRY attempts to gather his wits. He waves his arms for quiet, but the GUESTS only applaud in time with his beating, so he decides to conduct them like an orchestra)

HARRY. Then let the fiddle, fife and drum
The cymbals and bassoon play,
For I am twenty-one years old,

(He holds a pause but almost loses his balance)

And going to be married at noon-day

ALL GUESTS. And he's going to be married at noon-day.

HARRY. It's easy enough to be twenty-one,
And it's easy enough to marry;
But when you play both games at once,
It's a pretty load to carry.

ALL GUESTS. He's got a big load to carry.

(HARRY almost falls from the table, and is helped down by GUESTS who set a chair for him c stage. Instead of sitting in the chair, HARRY picks it up in his arms and, to the great amusement of the others, dances sentimentally with it)

HARRY. And I guess I'm just a
Wee bit woosy,
Little woo—

ALL GUESTS. Little woo—

HARRY. Trifle woo—

ALL GUESTS. Trifle woo—

HARRY. Couldn't blame you if you
Said I was boosy,
Little boo—

ALL GUESTS. Little boo—

HARRY. Trifle boo—

ALL GUESTS. Trifle boo—

HARRY. But I'm just about to take a bride,
And I'm twenty-one years old beside;
Hence the highness of this rising tide,
Little tide

ALL GUESTS. Little tide,

HARRY. Tidy tide.

ALL GUESTS. Tidy tide.

(The GUESTS follow HARRY's example and dance with studied care; some with the LADY GUESTS, others with chairs, or affectionately clasping wine bottles in their arms. HARRY sets down his chair, just R of C bows graciously to it, and then sits on it)

Oh, we guess he's just a
Wee bit woosy

HARRY. Little woo—

ALL GUESTS. Little woo—

HARRY. Trifle woo—

ALL GUESTS. Trifle woo—

Couldn't blame you if you
Said he is boosy,

HARRY. Little boo—

ALL GUESTS. Little boo—

HARRY. Trifle boo—

ALL GUESTS. Trifle boo—

But he's just about to take a bride—
And he's twenty-one years old beside;
Hence the highness of his rising tide,

HARRY. Little tide

ALL GUESTS. Little tide

HARRY. Tidy tide

ALL GUESTS. Tidy tide.

(Most of the GUESTS end their dance in the R half of the stage, in groups behind Harry, who is lolling in his chair, facing L. Suddenly the curtains of the archway up L are swept back, letting in a flood of brilliant daylight.)

HARRY is almost blinded and the GUESTS shield their eyes and complain. Standing in the archway, hands on hips, is BRIDGET, Harry's housekeeper confidante and willing slave. She is Irish, spoils Harry abominably, and is a perfect darling)

BRIDGET (*spoken*) The Saints preserve us, what carryings-on. You'll be going to the devil, the lot of you.

(As BRIDGET busies herself opening the rest of the curtains, letting in more and more light, a number of HOUSEMAIDS enter, some through the arches, some down L. They are trimly dressed, and prepared to dust, sweep, polish and tidy up generally)

HOUSEMAIDS (*singing*)

Oh, naughty Mister Bronson
You haven't been to bed,
And in another hour
You're due, you know, to wed.
The house is topsy-turvy,
And our dusting isn't done, not done;
The sweeping and the other things
Aren't even yet begun.
No not even yet begun,
No not even yet begun,
Not begun,
Not begun,
Not begun.

(*Good-humouredly the GUESTS take the hint and prepare to leave; the MALE GUESTS help the ladies into their cloaks*)

Oh, fie, fie, fie!
You naughty Mister Bronson,
My, my, my!
You're such a dreadful man!
You'd better stop your tarrying,
Today's your day for marrying,
Oh, naughty Mister Harry Bronson
Fie, fie, fie!

(*Beneath this barrage of criticism, HARRY rises to bid his guests farewell. The HOUSEMAIDS start to tidy up, clearing the flowers and bottles from the table and the smaller items that are littering the room. They continue to sing their reprimands as they do so, and now the GUESTS surround Harry and pretend to join in the chiding. BRIDGET has finished opening the curtains and comes to stage level carrying a mop with which she is quite prepared to complete the work of removing GUESTS who have outworn their welcome*)

ALL. Oh, fie, fie, fie!
You naughty Mister Bronson,
My, my, my!
You're such a dreadful man!

You'd better stop your tarrying,
Today's your day for marrying,
Oh, naughty Mister Harry Bronson!
Fie, fie, fie!

(As a final gesture two MALE GUESTS lift Harry shoulder high and lead a parade round the stage)

MALE GUESTS.

For he's a jolly good fellow,
Yes, he's a jolly good fellow,
Oh, he's a jolly good fellow,
And he'll never be sober again.

(They set Harry down, down c and surround him for a back-slapping farewell. BRIDGET busies herself prising bottles of wine from the tight-clenched fists of some of the Male Guests, and putting the bottles back on the sideboard. The HOUSEMAIDS continue with their work, but augment the singing at this point)

ALL GUESTS and HOUSEMAIDS.

Which nobody will deny,
Which nobody will deny,
Yes, he's a (jolly) good fellow,
Yes, he's a jolly good fellow,
Yes, he's a jolly good fellow,
And he'll never be sober again.

(The MALE GUESTS shake hands with HARRY and some of the LADY GUESTS kiss him good-bye. They all begin to drift away through the arches leading to the conservatory)

1st MALE GUEST *(spoken)* Jolly fine party.

2nd MALE GUEST. Best I can ever remember.

1st LADY GUEST. Can we come again the next time you're twenty-one?

(ALL the GUESTS roar with laughter)

2nd LADY GUEST. The next time he gets married would be easier.

1st LADY GUEST. Now, get some sleep, Harry. You might need it.

3rd MALE GUEST. Good night, Harry old boy.

3rd LADY GUEST. Yes. And good luck.

3rd MALE GUEST. You'll need *that* all right.

(HARRY makes an expansive farewell gesture which is intended to indicate that he has everything perfectly under control; unfortunately he almost loses his balance as he does so, and two GUESTS have to prop him carefully upright before they go)

ALL GUESTS *(singing, as they leave)*

Oh, we guess he's just a
Wee bit woosy,

HARRY. Little woo—

ALL GUESTS. Little woo—

HARRY. Trifle woo—

ALL GUESTS. Trifle woo—

Couldn't blame you if you
Said he is boosy

HARRY. Little boo—

ALL GUESTS. Little boo—

HARRY. Trifle boo—

Boo—

ALL GUESTS. Trifle boo—

(BRIDGET "mops" the final Guests up the steps and away. The HOUSE-MAIDS take the last of the party properties off stage, and HARRY is left alone as the voices die in the distance. He returns to the chair, C and falls into it, exhausted)

HARRY and (off-stage)	{	. . . woo,
ALL GUESTS.		Boo, woo,
		Boo, woo,
		Boo, woo.

(HARRY takes a watch from his pocket and tries hard but vainly to bring it into focus. WILLIAM, Harry's butler, enters up R, takes his stand just behind and to the R, of Harry's chair, and coughs discreetly)

HARRY (abandoning his efforts to read the time for himself) What time is it, anyhow? (He giggles)

WILLIAM (very correctly) Close to eleven o'clock, sir.

HARRY. A.M. or P.M.?

WILLIAM. A.M., sir. You've been up all night, sir.

HARRY. Only one night, William?

WILLIAM. Only one, sir, and you're to be married at twelve o'clock.

HARRY (aghast) Twelve o'clock today?

WILLIAM. Yes, sir.

HARRY (beckoning William to lean closer to him, confidentially) Tell me, William, who's the lady? Anyone we know?

WILLIAM (wrinkling his nose in disdain) Miss Cora Angelique, sir: "The Queen of Comic Opera".

HARRY (sobering just a little, and somehow finding renewed energy) Oh, that one. (He rises and moves down L) It all comes back to me. (Trying to get a grip on himself, and turning to William) William, you had better dip me in a bath, take me out again, and guide my foot prints to the altar.

WILLIAM. Can you . . . (He realizes this is tactless) . . . er. . . will you walk to the bathroom, sir?

HARRY (*trying to rise, and failing*) No, bring the bath here.

WILLIAM. I'm afraid it is attached to the floor, sir. But I'll prepare it for you. (*He turns to go up R, then pauses and takes a telegram from his pocket. He returns towards Harry*) And here's more trouble for you, sir. (*He hands the telegram to Harry*)

HARRY. Trouble? What sort of trouble? Not another lady suing for breach of promise?

WILLIAM. No, sir, a telegram from your father.

HARRY (*closing his eyes in despair, and handing the telegram back to William, his head averted*) Read it to me, William.

WILLIAM (*opening and reading the telegram*) "Leaving Cohoes STOP Bringing with me the Young Men's Rescue League and Anti-Cigarette Society STOP With you in a few hours STOP Feel need of a real crusade against New York vice STOP You and I will lead it STOP Ichabod Bronson . . ."

HARRY. STOP! (*Urgently*) William, we're lost. The Governor will arrive and find the house filled with girls—find my bride here and see the life we're leading: then out we'll go and I'll never have a penny piece to call my own.

WILLIAM (*crossing behind Harry towards the arches leading to the conservatory*) I'd better get rid of the wedding guests, sir?

HARRY (*rising and starting R*) Yes, do that, William. (*He pauses and turns*) And bring me a magnum of champagne and a glass of Prussic Acid. (*He exits R*)

WILLIAM. Very good, sir.

(BRIDGET *enters through the arch, just below William*)

(*To Bridget*) This room not ready yet; it's disgraceful.

BRIDGET. We couldn't get in, Mr William. The guests wouldn't move out.

(*The front door bell rings*)

Glory be! Who's that now?

WILLIAM (*looking off L*) Here's the bride, and the whole caboodle of them. (*He claps his hands*) Now come along, Bridget, get this room finished. (*He exits L*)

BRIDGET (*running after him to the top of the steps*) All right, Mr William, but I've only got one pair of hands. (*She produces a whistle which is hung on a string round her neck, turns to face downstage and blows a shrill blast*)

(*The HOUSEMAIDS enter from L and each moves near to a chair*)

Come along now, girls, come along. (*Another shrill blast*)

(*Each HOUSEMAID picks up a chair and carries it briskly off stage*)

(She blows the whistle again)

(The HOUSEMAIDS swiftly return to the stage and take up positions around the banqueting-table)

(Another call on the whistle)

(With well-drilled precision, the HOUSEMAIDS lift the table and carry it off stage R)

That's it, girls, smartly now. Left, right, left, right . . . *(She follows the Housemaids and the table off R giving a smart "eyes left" and a salute to the audience as she goes)*

WHEN I WAS BORN THE STARS STOOD STILL No. 2

(As the music begins there are excited happy twitterings from off L. WILLIAM, protesting "You can't come in here", is pushed on backwards and a determined WEDDING PARTY arrives from L, moving round the conservatory to use the C archway on to the stage. First comes PANSY PINS, a showgirl and the chief bridesmaid, with DOG SNIFKINS, father of the bride and unmistakably a theatrical impressario. They are followed by the other BRIDESMAIDS and a number of WEDDING GUESTS. When the stage is well and truly set for her, the bride, CORA ANGELIQUE, makes her entrance. She makes an attractive if rather "showy" bride, and has an elaborate hair style. She moves down C with PANSY in close attendance, slightly behind and to her L)

(WILLIAM exits L with a gesture of despair)

CORA *(singing)*

When I was born the stars stood still
And blinked their eyes in wonder;

CHORUS. With wonder, with wonder,
And blinked their eyes with wonder.

CORA. The man in the moon said "Hully gee."
And his wife said "Well, by thunder!"

CHORUS. By thunder! By thunder!
And his wife said "Well, by thunder!"

CORA. For they could see that I was a kid
That was sure to make things hustle,
I was bound to become a Pauline Hall
Or a beautiful Lillian Russell!

And now I am the pet, you bet
Of bankers, brewers, and all that set,
The idol of the little boys
That sit up in the gallereee.
When in my diamonds I appear
I look like a beautiful chandelier . . .

(She holds the top note, turning triumphantly to Pansy Pins. PANSY pulls a face and puts a finger in her ear to deaden the volume)

And Russell Sage would fall down dead
If he had to pay my salaree.

ALL. And now she is (I am) the pet, you bet
Of bankers, brewers, and all that set;
The idol of the little boys
That sit up in the gallereee,
When in her (my) diamonds she appears (I appear)
She looks (I look) like a beautiful chandelier
And Russell Sage would fall down dead
If he had to pay her (my) salaree.

(The HOUSEMAIDS re-enter to watch proceedings, and group on the edge of the wedding party. BRIDGET stands with them, her face showing marked disapproval of the visitors)

CORA. When I've been asked to be a bride
I've ne'er been known to falter;

CHORUS. To falter, to falter
She was never known to falter;

CORA. At the tender age of sweet sixteen
I began my trips to the altar

CHORUS. The altar, the altar,
She began her trips to the altar.

CORA. And ev'ry chance I've had since then
I was mighty quick to grab it.
I am known as "the Annual Divorcee"
And marrying is my habit.

And now I am the pet, you bet
Of bankers, brewers, and all that set;
The idol of the little boys
That sit up in the gallereee.
When in my diamonds I appear

(PANSY PINS knows that top note is coming again and braces herself)
I look like a beautiful . . .

(PANSY joins in, taking the top note, and holding it even louder and longer than Cora could. CORA takes the harmony at this point)

PANSY and CORA.
. . . chandelier . . .

(PANSY and CORA turn to each other and exchange smiles which are really intended to kill)

CORA *(spoken)* Thank you, darling. *(She turns to Snifkins)* My understudy, you know. *(With a sweet smile)* I could kill her.

(*singing*) And Russell Sage would fall down dead
If he had to pay my salarée.

ALL. And now she is (I am) the pet, you bet
Of bankers, brewers, and all that set;
The idol of the little boys
That sit up in the gallereé.
When in her (my) diamonds she appears (I appear)
She looks (I look) like a beautiful . . .

(*Sensing another moment of triumph PANSY steps forward again. She is jerked back to her rightful position by CORA, with a vehemence which is quite unbecoming to a true lady*)

. . . chandelier . . .

And Russell Sage would fall down dead
If he had to pay her (my) salarée.

(*The music ends with a short dance, begun by the BRIDE, BRIDESMAIDS and GUESTS, then imitated in an exaggerated manner by BRIDGET and the HOUSEMAIDS, who cross the front of the stage from R to L. CORA treats this piece of impertinence with a contemptuous glare*)

BRIDGET (*catching Cora's expression*) Glory be! Come on, girls.

(BRIDGET and the HOUSEMAIDS dance off L as the music ends)

CORA (*crossing R*) Seems like the servants don't know their place around this joint. I'll soon put that right.

(*The GUESTS chatter and stroll about, examining the room. DOC SNIFKINS moves beside Cora*)

Where's the bridegroom anyway? (*To Snifkins*) Now, Poppa, you just go find Harry and fetch him right here. (*She crosses C*) I haven't had a husband for three weeks and I'm gettin' impatient.

(*Before SNIFKINS can move, WILLIAM enters L*)

And what do you want?

WILLIAM. The minister wishes to know if the bride has been married before today?

CORA. Married before today? Give me a chance, it's only twelve o'clock.

WILLIAM. No, no. He intended to ask if you had been previously married.

CORA. Tell him "yes".

(WILLIAM bows and turns to carry the message back)

Nine times.

(WILLIAM stops dead in his tracks and winces as if he had been struck)

(*Crossing to him*) Being single don't suit me—(*With a Mae West wiggle*) . . . it gets so chilly when the sun goes down. Where is Mr Bronson, anyway?

WILLIAM. He's in his room, madam, resting before the ceremony.

CORA. He needs rest *already*? Now, you go find him, tell him his bride is waiting and he'd better hurry.

(WILLIAM crosses behind Cora and exits R)

(Starting to follow him) Come on, folks, we'll get this settled once and for all.

(The WEDDING PARTY has moved into the R half of the stage when they are arrested by a shrill whistle from off L. They stop and turn as BLINKY BILL enters belligerently, and stands mid L at the top of the steps to the conservatory. He is a boxer, thick-set and dim-witted, not overbright even in his pre-punch-drunk days. He is followed by his sister, KISSY FITZGARTER, a vivacious little cabaret dancer, and KENNETH MUGG, an actor of the barnstorming school and a dreadful old ham. MUGG has a habit of finishing most sentences with "don't you know" which sounds like "doan-ch' know" in his strangled tones. The trio stand BILL R, KISSY C, MUGG L.)

MUGG (declaiming in his best melodramatic style) Stop the wedding!

(BILL, KISSY and MUGG come down to stage level, link arms and advance to down L C with the comedy step beloved of old-time vaudeville acts, in which the foot is lifted over the neighbours's leg, in turns, as they progress)

MUGG'S ENTRANCE MUSIC

No. 3

(This consists of the $8\frac{1}{2}$ bars of music on page 25 of the vocal score, using the second-time bar to finish)

BILL (counting carefully in time with the steps) One, two, three, four; one, two, three, four.

PANSY (down R) Well, well! If it ain't Mr Mugg. Hiya, Muggsy!

SNIFFKINS (protectively at Cora's L, to the trio) I admire your style, but really . . .

MUGG (as they come to a halt) Mr Snifkins, I love your daughter Cora, and if she knew her business your daughter Cora would love me, don't you know?

CORA (R C) I know my business all right. Ask any of my nine husbands.

KISSY. And I love the man that's going to marry your daughter Cora, and the man that's going to marry your daughter Cora trifled with my affections. I've got the diamonds to prove it.

BILL (in a very "tough" voice, pointing to himself) Brudder! (Pointing to Kissy) Sister! (With a hand on Kissy's shoulder) Trifled wid her. (Growling, and crossing down towards Snifkins) Devil ter pay, ter pay.

SNIFFKINS (trying to be brave) Are you threatening me, sir?

BILL (a happy, imbecilic smile crossing his face as he turns to the audience) He called me "sir"! (He crosses back to Kissy) I ain't never bin called "sir" before.

KISSY (*sardonically*) I'm happy for you.

MUGG. Did you hear me, Mr Snifkins? I repeat, I love your daughter, don't you know?

SNIFKINS. Keep at it; it's good exercise.

MUGG (*crossing to Snifkins, and overdoing the melodrama as usual*) Your daughter's wedding will be my funeral.

SNIFKINS (*appealing to the skies*) Oh death, where is thy sting? (*In matter-of-fact tone to Mugg*) All right, you can stop acting. The performance is over. And cheer up for pity's sake. One look at your sour old face and a pickled onion tastes like golden syrup.

MUGG (*striking one of his attitudes*) Never fear, I will have my revenge.

SNIFKINS (*producing a cigar and jamming it unceremoniously between Mugg's lips*) Here, have a cigar instead, doan-ch'know.

(MUGG splutters and turns up c in rage)

KISSY (*producing an ear-splitting wail*) And what about poor Miss Kissy? What about me? Didn't this Bronson guy come down to the Tutti-Frutti Music Hall just to see me dance?

CORA (*crossing to meet Kissy c*) Yeah. And when you heard he was in front you did so many high-kicks you nearly split your personality.

KISSY. And didn't he send me a pair of horses next day, and a diamond terrarum? Yet the unfaithful dude presumes to lead another fairy up to the altar.

CORA (*at the top of her voice*) Who are you calling a fairy?

KISSY (*shouting back*) Well, Fairy Queen, then.

CORA. Ooooooh!

(KISSY and CORA fight and the HOUSEMAIDS run on from L to see what the hullabaloo is about. They group upstage as everyone shouts and screams. What could have been quite a scrap is broken up by SNIFKINS, who drags CORA back a few paces)

SNIFKINS. Ladies, ladies! Think of your make-up.

CORA (*to Kissy*) Listen, Pavlova, that dude ain't leading me to the altar; I'm leading *him*.

SNIFKINS. Cora, my sweet, shouldn't you go tidy up before the ceremony—you and your supporting artistes?

CORA. Aw, c'mon, folks. Let's get away from this . . . (*looking Kissy up and down*) . . . small time.

KISSY. Small time!

(KISSY, BILL and MUGG huddle together in conspiracy, L C as CORA, PANSY and the BRIDESMAIDS exit down R. The WEDDING GUESTS follow, leaving the HOUSEMAIDS whispering excitedly, in groups upstage)

SNIFKINS (*bowing politely*) Miss Fitzgarter. (*He turns to leave*)

KISSY (*still in a huddle*) Listen—I got a plan.

MUGG. Yeah?

BILL. Yeah?

KISSY. Yeah!

(SNIFKINS *hesitates*)

MUGG. Me!

(BILL *gives a shrill whistle*)

KISSY. Me!

(BILL *whistles again*)

BILL. And me! (*He whistles once more*)

SNIFKINS. You've made your point; that's a neat little act you've got there. (*To Kissy*) But as manager of the Tutti-Frutti Music Hall I can't book you again; you've broken your contract.

KISSY (*checking her costume*) Broken what?

SNIFKINS (*crossing to them*) Clause 12, Paragraph 9: "The artiste shall not insult the management."

KISSY. This artiste will; she'll insult him plenty. Why, if it wasn't for my dancing you'd have to close your Tutti-Frutti joint tomorrow.

BILL (*threateningly close to Snifkins*) And when my little sister Kissy do dance in der theatre—well, dere's devil ter pay, ter pay.

SNIFKINS. Go away, you annoy me . . .

(BILL *draws back a huge fist, destined for Snifkins's nose*)

(*In the nick of time*) . . . sir.

(*At once the smile returns to BILL's face, and the fist is forgotten.*
SNIFKINS *makes dignified exit down R*)

LITTLE SISTER KISSY

No. 4

(*The music begins and KISSY goes into her music-hall routine, which owes more to energy and enthusiasm than grace and decorum, but wins wild appreciation from BILL and MUGG and delightedly shocked giggles from the HOUSEMAIDS, who move downstage for a better view*)

BILL. When little sister Kissy gets a-jumping
In a flippy, trippy, skippy, sloppy dance,

MUGG. You can bet she keeps the fiddlers all a-humping
While she puts the dazzled public in a trance.

BILL. She has made a reputation with her winking
Oh, Kissy has the educated eye,

MUGG. She sets the little chappies all a-blinking
When she turns her pretty slippers to the sky.

(*During the refrain, the HOUSEMAIDS do their best to imitate Kissy's dance*)

BILL and MUGG (*together*)
Oh, little sister Kissy's
A jaunty little missie,

She can turn a somersault or hand-spring,
Her pretty winky eye goes
She's full of dinky-didos
When she represents the art of dancing.

(The HOUSEMAIDS join in the song, and KISSY adds the weight of her own typical beer-hall soubrette tones)

ALL. Oh, little sister Kissy's
A jaunt little missie,
She can turn a somersault or hand-spring,
Her pretty winky eye goes
She's full of dinky-didos
When she represents the art of dancing.

BILL. The chappies never linger in the bar rooms
When the time arrives for Kissy to appear.

MUGG. When she starts to do her capers and tarrarums,
You haven't any appetite for beer.

BILL. All fluttering and funny does your heart feel,
It's enough to make a parson have a fit;

MUGG. When Kissy does a fizzy whizzy cartwheel
And follows up the cartwheel with a split.

BILL and MUGG *(together)*

Oh, little sister Kissy's
A jaunt little missie,
She can turn a somersault or hand-spring,
Her pretty winky eye goes
She's full of dinky-didos
When she represents the art of dancing.

ALL. Oh, little sister Kissy's
A jaunt little missie,
She can turn a somersault or hand-spring,
Her pretty winky eye goes
She's full of dinky-didos
When she represents the art of dancing.

(The HOUSEMAIDS join KISSY in a dance, but after eight bars WILLIAM enters down L. He is horrified to discover his staff consorting with music-hall riff-raff, and coughs imperiously. The HOUSEMAIDS exit past him with a bouncing tip-toe step, going off down L. They are followed by BILL, MUGG and KISSY, who end their number with a vaudeville-type exit and wave to the audience. Following the applause at the end of the number CORA, PANSY, DOC SNIFFINS and the BRIDESMAIDS enter down R. WILLIAM and CORA cross to meet C.)

CORA *(as she enters)* Now, where's the bridegroom? *(To William)* Hey, what's-yer-name, what have you done with my Harry? I love him, I worship him; I treasure the very bank he draws on.

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