

# of elephants and ladies

by

**Larry Gene Fortin**

Registered  
WGAwest  
#1217866

Larry Gene Fortin

[larrygeneauthor@roadrunner.com](mailto:larrygeneauthor@roadrunner.com)

EXT. POLISH COUNTRYSIDE - JAN 1884

SUPER: JANUARY 1884

32 YEAR OLD MAMA AND 2 YEAR OLD PHILIP, HER SON, are riding in the back of a COVERED WAGON FILLED WITH EMIGRANTS headed to America. It is a cold overcast day with blowing snow.

Mama begins to not look well and finally signals the driver.

**\*\*\*THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN YIDDISH WITH SUBTITLES.\*\*\***

MAMA

You will have to let me down.

DRIVER

I can not wait here.

MAMA

It's all right. Just let me and my son off. There is a house near.

DRIVER

Are you sure? I must keep going. It is not safe with the authorities and Cossacks raiding the country.

MAMA

Yes. Go. I will be fine. God in his wisdom will guide my hand.

Mama, carrying a small bag, and Philip disembark from the wagon. The wagon leaves them at the side of the road.

MAMA (CONT'D)

Your brother or sister does not wish to wait. Come, let's find a warmer place.

Mama takes Philip to the nearby house.

INT. HOUSE POLISH COUNTRYSIDE

**\*\*\*THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN YIDDISH WITH SUBTITLES.\*\*\***

Mama is in labor, soon having her baby.

An OLD WOMAN assists near a roaring fire.

MAMA

Aaahhhh!! Aaahhhh!!

OLD WOMAN

It is soon. The baby is in a hurry to get here. God alone knows why.

MAMA

I will bet it will be another boy.

OLD WOMAN

Girls are the impatient ones.

MAMA

We will see. Aaahhhh!!!

INT. HOUSE POLISH COUNTRYSIDE - ONE HOUR LATER

**\*\*\*THIS SCENE IS SPOKEN IN YIDDISH WITH SUBTITLES.\*\*\***

The old woman is handing Mama her daughter wrapped in a warm wrap.

OLD WOMAN

You see. That was a bet you would have lost. And her name will be?

MAMA

For one in such a hurry, Sophia Kalish.

OLD WOMAN

Kalish? You said your name was Abuza. You must remember what your papers say or you will never get to America.

MAMA

You looked at my papers?

OLD WOMAN

Of course. I had to be sure of who you were, baby coming or not.

MAMA

You are okay with this?

OLD WOMAN

I came here three years ago after our shtetl was ravaged by the Cossacks. My husband and son were both killed when they took our farm.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)

Joseph was one of commitment. He did not want to give it to them. They shot him as I watched them beat my son. He died six days later.

MAMA

Oh my god. Why did you not go to the United States as we are? You would be safe.

OLD WOMAN

It is not my home and I am too old for such a long journey. Where is your husband?

MAMA

He is in Bremen, Germany. He hides from the same Army he was once part of.

OLD WOMAN

You and your son and daughter have a long trip ahead of you. Your son is sleeping. You should do the same.

BABY SOPHIE squirms and cries loudly.

OLD WOMAN (CONT'D)

What a gifted sound. She will be strong and healthy.

INT. ABUZA RESTAURANT KITCHEN - HARTFORD CONNECTICUT -  
1894 - EVENING

SUPER: HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT - 1897

THIRTEEN YEAR OLD, 145 POUND, SOPHIE is peeking around the open kitchen door eavesdropping on all the ACTORS and MUSICIANS in the next room.

Mama comes up behind Sophie and bops her on the back of the head.

SOPHIE

What mama? I'm just listening.

MAMA

Well you shouldn't be listening. They talk of things a child should not hear.

SOPHIE

Oh mama.

MAMA

Besides, what about all these dishes to wash.

PAPA enters from dining room.

PAPA

Oi mama, don't be such a nudge. Sophie, go now. Their plates are full. Give them what they want.

Papa pats Sophie and she runs into the dining room.

MAMA

Oi Papa, why do you encourage her to be around those puskudnicks?

PAPA

Mama, they're not worthless people. They're just good people. Our Sophie is just like them.

MAMA

Oi vey just like them. I let you talk me into buying her that piano. Did she practice? No.

PAPA

Mama, who's to say....she doesn't have the hands to play but what a big, healthy voice. And lots of personality.

MAMA

Personality is it? She has so much personality she couldn't use the piano stool and her fingers are like sausages.

Sophie is standing by the piano with a PIANO MAN accompanying her.

MUSIC CUE: SOPHIE SINGS "AFTER YOU'VE GONE."

SOPHIE

NOW WON'T YOU LISTEN HONEY, WHILE I SAY,  
HOW COULD YOU TELL ME THAT YOU'RE GOIN' AWAY?  
DON'T SAY THAT WE MUST PART,  
DON'T BREAK YOUR BABY'S HEART

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

YOU KNOW I'VE LOVED YOU FOR THESE  
MANY YEARS,  
LOVED YOU NIGHT AND DAY...  
OH! HONEY BABY, CAN'T YOU SEE MY  
TEARS?  
LISTEN WHILE I SAY:  
AFTER YOU'VE GONE AND LEFT ME  
CRYIN'  
AFTER YOU'VE GONE THERE'S NO  
DENYIN'  
YOU'LL FEEL BLUE, YOU'LL FEEL SAD  
YOU'LL MISS THE DEAREST PAL YOU'VE  
EVER HAD  
THERE'LL COME A TIME, NOW DON'T  
FORGET IT  
THERE'LL COME A TIME WHEN YOU'LL  
REGRET IT  
SOMEDAY, WHEN YOU GROW LONELY  
YOUR HEART WILL BREAK LIKE MINE AND  
YOU'LL WANT ME ONLY  
AFTER YOU'VE GONE, AFTER YOU'VE  
GONE AWAY  
AFTER YOU'VE GONE AND LEFT ME  
CRYIN'  
AFTER YOU'VE GONE THERE'S NO  
DENYIN'  
YOU'RE GONNA FEEL BLUE, AND YOU'RE  
GONNA FEEL SAD  
YOU'RE GONNA FEEL BAD  
AND YOU'LL MISS, AND YOU'LL MISS,  
AND YOU'LL MISS THE BESTEST PAL YOU  
EVER HAD  
THERE'LL COME A TIME, NOW DON'T  
FORGET IT  
THERE'LL COME A TIME WHEN YOU'LL  
REGRET IT  
BUT BABY, THINK WHAT YOU'RE DOIN'  
I'M GONNA HAUNT YOU SO, I'M GONNA  
TAUNT YOU SO  
IT'S GONNA DRIVE YOU TO RUIN  
AFTER YOU'VE GONE, AFTER YOU'VE  
GONE AWAY.

As Sophie winds her way back to kitchen, several people hand her tips.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

See Mama, they like me. Some of  
these days, I'm gonna be on stage.  
I'm gonna be big cause I got  
personality.

MAMA

Ai yi yi, such personality.

Mama hands her a bag of trash.

SOPHIE

And I'm gonna have fine dresses too. You watch.

MAMA

I'll watch. Just make sure you put an apron on you when you wash dishes or those fine dresses might get wet.

SOPHIE

Oh mama. Yah don't wash dishes in them. You sing in them, on the stage.

Sophie exits back door.

MAMA

Oh yeah.

EXT. - BACK ALLEY OF RESTAURANT.

Sophie enters from kitchen door onto porch, dumping TRASH over the railing into BINS.

SOPHIE

You'll see mama. I'm gonna be big on the stage any day now.

EXT. - BACK ALLEY OF RESTAURANT. - FOUR(4) YEARS LATER

SUPER: "4 YEARS LATER"

Sophie enters from kitchen door onto porch, dumping TRASH over the railing into BINS.

SOPHIE

I'm gonna be big, mama. You watch.

Sophie sits on the top stair, glum.

LOUIS TUCK strolls up the alley.

LOUIS

Hey Sophie. What's up?

SOPHIE

Oh just the same. You know.

Louis plops next to her.

LOUIS

How come you look so down?

SOPHIE

You wouldn't understand.

LOUIS

Try me. You get surprised.

SOPHIE

I feel stuck here.

LOUIS

But it's your home.

SOPHIE

I know, I know. But I want more.  
Lots more. There's more out there  
than this place and I need to see  
it. I need to be part of it. I  
need some fun.

LOUIS

Sophie, how long have we known  
each other?

SOPHIE

Oh Louis.

LOUIS

Don't we have fun together?

SOPHIE

Sure we do.

LOUIS

Then here's what we do.

They conspire, making plans.

INT. - HOLLYOKE CHAPEL - THE NEXT SATURDAY-MAY 14, 1903

CLOSE-UP OF SOPHIE'S FACE

CAMERA ZOOMS BACK REVEALING WEDDING.

Louis and Sophie are standing in front of the JUSTICE.

SOPHIE

I do.

JUSTICE

And do you, Louis Tuck, take this woman, Sophie Abuza, to be your lawfully wedded wife, for richer and poorer, in sickness and health, til death do you part?

LOUIS

I do.

JUSTICE

I now pronounce you Mr. and Mrs. Louis Tuck.

Louis and Sophie just stand there.

JUSTICE (CONT'D)

Well go ahead. Kiss the bride. It's customary.

LOUIS

Oh yeah.

Louis kisses Sophie.

INT. TRAIN CAR - EVENING

CAMERA CLOSE-UP ON SOPHIE'S DETERMINED, SCARED FACE.

CAMERA ZOOMS BACK REVEALING BOTH LOUIS AND SOPHIE, SCARED.

EXT. - FRONT STREET NEAR ABUZA RESTAURANT - SAME EVENING

CAMERA CLOSE-UP ON SOPHIE'S FACE.

CAMERA ZOOMS BACK REVEALING BOTH LOUIS AND SOPHIE WALKING BRISKLY TO THE ABUZA HOME.

Sophie abruptly stops, swallowing very hard.

Mama is standing on the top stair with arms crossed.

INT. - ABUZA'S KITCHEN

Papa, Louis and Sophie are seated around the kitchen table.

Mama is fidgeting around the kitchen, furious.

Mama exits into dining room carrying an arm load of DISHES.

PAPA

Don't worry. She'll get over it.  
You're just growing up to fast for her.

LOUIS

Sir, Sophie and I were married this afternoon.

A CRASH OF DISHES FROM THE DINING ROOM.

MAMA (O.C.)

You what?!?

PAPA

Faster than even I thought.

Mama enters from the dining room.

MAMA

You what?

PAPA

(to Louis)  
Here it comes.

MAMA

You what?

LOUIS

We were married.

MAMA

What Rabbi performed such a marriage without the parents of the bride present? I should know this. He should be run out of the temple and stoned for such an act.

SOPHIE

We weren't married by a Rabbi  
mama.

LOUIS

No Mrs. Abuza, we went to the  
justice in Holyoke and....

PAPA

Oi ya oi...

MAMA

Then you are not married.

SOPHIE

What?

MAMA

Without an Orthodox wedding,  
performed by a Rabi, you are a  
scandal.

(to Louis)

No scandal will touch my daughter.

LOUIS

Of course not.

Mama hands Sophie an APRON and TOWEL.

MAMA

Then it is settled. It is done.  
You two have made your bed and now  
you must lie on it.

Mama escorts Louis to the back door pushing him out.

MAMA (CONT'D)

But not until you have an Orthodox  
wedding.

(to Sophie)

We have dinner to start, people to  
feed.

Mama pulls Sophie to the sink.

MAMA (CONT'D)

WASH!

INT. - SYNAGOGUE- WEEKS LATER

CAMERA PANS WEDDING GUESTS AS SOPHIE SPEAKS.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Mama and Papa were so happy.  
Everyone was there. Louis' parents  
were proud. Maybe because they  
didn't have to pay for the  
wedding. Papa said she used to go  
through his pants pockets whenever  
he slept. It was a wedding that  
lasted into the night and then  
some.

INT. - BATHROOM OF THE RESTAURANT - 8 MONTHS LATER

Sophie is vomiting into the toilet.

Sophie, green with morning sickness, goes to the sink and  
washes her face, straightening up.

INT. - HALLWAY OF RESTAURANT

CLOSE-UP: SOPHIE'S FACE AS SHE EXITS TOILET.

An extremely pregnant Sophie attempting to walk upright.

INT. HOSPITAL MATERNITY WARD - FEBRUARY 5, 1905

SFX: BABY CRYING.

Sophie is lying in a hospital bed.

Louis is by her side.

All smiles Mama and Papa enter room.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

All the wait was worth it. When  
Bert came into my world I knew  
there was so much more to life.

NURSE hands Bert to Sophie.

Mama and Papa coo over Bert.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Life as I had dreamed it changed.  
There was work to be done.

INT. ABUZA RESTAURANT KITCHEN - HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Sophie darts into the kitchen carrying used dishes.

She spots Louis on the back porch DRINKING.

EXT. BACK ALLEY OF RESTAURANT - PORCH

Sophie enters from kitchen.

SOPHIE

Louis Tuck, what are you doing here.

LOUIS

What does it look like.

SOPHIE

Looks like you're sitting on your ass instead of being at work.

LOUIS

What can I say?

SOPHIE

Louis, I can't keep doing this. You ain't working and I spend too much time here, on my feet all day.

LOUIS

Why not?

SOPHIE

Because if I'm doing all the work I don't need you around soaking up space.

Louis back hands her causing her to fall back against the door jam.

Sophie pulls herself together then goes back into the kitchen.

Sophie returns carrying a meat cleaver.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Louis Tuck, I've put up with your lazy mean ass doing nothing for more than two years and that will be the last time you lay a finger on me.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Get off this porch and I best  
never see your face again. Go!  
Now!

Louis backs off the porch, stumbling into the trash cans.

LOUIS

Ah, who needs you anyway.

Louis walks off, throwing his empty bottle into the trash.

INT. ABUZA RESTAURANT DINING ROOM

Sophie enters, wiping face.

Mama moves quickly to Sophie.

MAMA

Sophie, what is wrong? Are you  
crying?

THE HOWARD BROTHERS enter the front door.

SOPHIE

Of course. Anytime the Howard  
Brothers are in town at the Abuza  
Restaurant, I cry.

Sophie runs to them, excited, hugging them.

WILLIE

Oh my God. Little Sophie is all  
grown up.

SOPHIE

Sophie was never little and  
gettin' married and havin' a baby  
will grow any one up and out.

They chuckle.

Sophie shepherds them to a table.

WILLIE

Don't tell me a man has got a hold  
of you?

SOPHIE

How else do you think I had a  
baby? It wasn't no baby fairy or  
nothin'.

WILLIE

Not the last I heard.

SOPHIE

What can I get the famous Howard Brothers to eat? We got the best.

BROTHER 2

You pick. Something delicious.

WILLIE

How come you're not in New York by now, singing your heart out.

SOPHIE

Got a little side tracked, baby and all.

WILLIE

You're still singing aren't yah? You didn't stop on account of gettin' married?

SOPHIE

Aww, I ain't had much time.

WILLIE

Soph, you're the best. You can't stay cooped up here.

Willie spots piano.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

How about you give us a welcome home tune.

SOPHIE

Now?

Willie, enlisting other diners.

WILLIE

Come on. How about it? You want to hear her?

Other customers cheer her on.

SOPHIE

Okay, okay. Just one.

Sophie walks to piano.

INT. - ABUZA'S KITCHEN -

Mama walking to door leading to dining room.

CAMERA ANGLE: FROM BEHIND MAMA AS SHE PUSHES OPEN DOOR TO DINING ROOM.

We see Sophie through door walking to piano.

PAPA

What's the noise?

MAMA

It's more ruffian show people again. They're gettin' our Sophie all worked up to sing.

Mama turns and takes off her apron, folding it neatly, placing it on the table.

PAPA

What are you doing?

MAMA

I'm going out there and stop that misha gass. We have customers to serve.

Papa grabs her by the waist, mama falls into his lap.

PAPA

No. It's the customers that miss her singing.

MAMA

But what am I suppose to do now?

PAPA

Listen.

CAMERA ZOOMS INTO DINING ROOM THROUGH THE DOOR.

Sophie at piano.

SOPHIE

Okay, okay. But Willie, you'll have to work for your supper. Come on over here and play this thing for me.

Willie gets up and sits at the piano.

SOPHIE SINGS "FOLLOW A STAR:"

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

OFTEN TIME'S  
 JUST WHEN I'M  
 READY TO DESPAIR  
 WHEN MY SHARE OF CARES  
 SEEMS TOO MUCH TO BARE  
 THAT'S WHEN I  
 HERE APPLY  
 THINKING OF A SONG  
 ONE THAT KEEPS ME STRONG  
 WHEN THE ROAD IS LONG  
 FOLLOW A STAR  
 WHERE IT TAKES YOU  
 JUST KEEP YOUR STAR IN VIEW  
 THOUGH IT BE FAR  
 LET IT PROCEED YOU  
 UNTIL YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE  
 TAKE MY ADVICE  
 HITCH YOUR TINY WAGON TO IT  
 YOU WILL NEVER RUE IT  
 IF YOU DO  
 FOLLOW A STAR  
 TO FORTUNES BE YOU  
 AND MAKE IT A LUCKY STAR FOR YOU  
 FOLLOW A STAR  
 WHERE IT TAKES YOU  
 JUST KEEP YOUR STAR IN VIEW  
 THOUGH IT BE FAR  
 LET IT PROCEED YOU  
 UNTIL YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE  
 TAKE MY ADVICE  
 HITCH YOUR TINY WAGON TO IT  
 YOU WILL NEVER RUE IT  
 IF YOU DO SO  
 FOLLOW A STAR  
 TO FORTUNES BE YOU  
 AND MAKE IT A LUCKY STAR FOR YOU

WILLIE

Sophie, You're terrific. You  
 should be on a stage, not in a  
 restaurant.

CLOSE-UP OF SOPHIE'S FACE, SMILING AS THOUGH SHE IS IN A  
 HALLUCINOGENIC DAZE.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Bingo! As painful as it was, I  
 knew exactly what I had to do.

EXT. - FRONT STREET NEAR ABUZA RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Sophie exits front door of restaurant carrying a suit case followed by Papa and Mama carrying Bert.

SOPHIE

(kissing Bert)

I love you more than anything.

MAMA

If you love him more than anything  
you should stay and raise him  
yourself.

PAPA

Let her be. She'll be back in no  
time.

SOPHIE

I hope not. I'll send money every  
week. As soon as I get me some  
work.

Papa leans into her, takes her hand in a hug and slips her a hand full of cash without Mama seeing.

Papa whispers in Sophie's ear.

PAPA

You see, she didn't find all my  
pockets.

SOPHIE

Oh Papa, I love you.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

I knew then I was on the right  
track. I hated leaving Bert behind  
but just starting in show business  
was no place for a baby.

Sophie runs down the steps wiping tears from her cheeks.

MAMA

(to Papa)

Any woman who leaves her son to go  
to New York is no longer a mother.  
As god is my witness, Sophie Abuza  
no longer exists and will never be  
spoken of again.

Mama turns and marches back into the restaurant.

INT. 125TH STREET THEATRE, NEW YORK - AMATEUR NIGHT

SOPHIE'S FACE COVERED IN CORK MAKE-UP.

Sophie stands in the wings watching the ANNOUNCER on stage.

BANNER on back of stage reads "AMATEUR NIGHT."

ANNOUNCER

She's big, she's ugly, but she's  
gonna sing. Miss Sophie Tucker.

Sophie enters the stage area.

Audience laughs at her.

SOPHIE SINGS "I AIN'T GOT NOBODY."

SOPHIE

THERE'S BEEN A SAYIN' GOIN' ROUND  
AND I BEGIN TO THINK IT'S TRUE  
IT'S AWFUL HARD TO LOVE SOMEONE  
WHEN THEY DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU  
ONCE I HAD A LOVIN' MAN  
THE SWEETEST LITTLE THING IN TOWN  
BUT NOW HE'S GONE AND LEFT ME  
SHE DONE TURN ME DOWN  
NOW I AIN'T GOT NOBODY, AND NOBODY  
CARES FOR ME!  
THAT'S WHY I'M SAD AND LONELY,  
WON'T SOMEBODY COME AND TAKE A  
CHANCE WITH ME?  
I'LL SING YOU LOVE SONGS, HONEY,  
ALL THE TIME,  
IF YOU'LL ONLY SAY YOU'LL BE SWEET  
DADDY MINE,  
OH, I AIN'T GOT NOBODY, NOBODY  
CARES FOR ME!  
I'LL SING YOU LOVE SONGS, HONEY,  
ALL THE TIME,  
IF YOU'LL ONLY SAY YOU'LL BE SWEET  
DADDY MINE,  
OH, I AIN'T GOT NOBODY, NOBODY  
CARES FOR ME!

SOPHIE EXITS STAGE, COMING TOWARDS CAMERA, WITH TEARS OF  
JOY CAUSING HER CORK MAKE-UP TO RUN.

INT. DRESSING ROOM

Sophie is sitting in front of a mirror crying, trying to wipe off cork make-up with a towel.

DOORMAN enters.

DOORMAN

What's the matter? You were great.

SOPHIE

Look at me. I'm a joke in this burnt cork blackface. And the announcer called me "too big and too ugly." They all laughed at me.

DOORMAN

Miss, I hate to say it but you ain't exactly little and it was the make-up that put the ugly out there.

SOPHIE

I know I ain't small but I got a voice. I want them to hear me, not just see what I look like.

DOORMAN

But that's the best part. They see you come out lookin' like that and they hear that voice. They remember the big girl in blackface with the even bigger voice.

Sophie, wipes face hard with towel

SOPHIE

I guess you're right, but I want them to see me.

DOORMAN

Oh, they will. Try a little soap and water.

Doorman exits.

Sophie looks down at towel, realizing.

SOPHIE

Oh, yeah.

JOE WOODS knocks on the open door.

JOE

Miss Tucker?

SOPHIE

Didn't I see you talking with the theatre manager before?

JOE

Yes, I'm Joe Woods.

SOPHIE

Sophie Tucker. You heard me sing?

JOE

Heard you sing? They could hear you sing in Jersey City. You got some pipes.

SOPHIE

Then you liked me? Maybe?

Joe hands her his card.

JOE

Come down to my office tomorrow and we'll set you up.

CLOSE-UP ON SOPHIE'S SMILING FACE, IN A DAZE.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

I was determined to be a headliner.

INT. VARIOUS THEATRES

A MONTAGE OF VARIOUS THEATRE MAKE-UP ROOMS AND STAGES

SOPHIE IS IN VARIOUS MAKE-UP ROOMS GETTING DRESSED AND PUTTING ON HER MAKE-UP AS WELL AS VARIOUS STAGES SINGING.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

I made the right move by connecting with the agent Joe Woods. For over a year I played small houses known as the Park Circuit. The theatres were small and many of them were terrible, run down, infected fire traps. Even the rats ran away.

MONTAGE CONTINUES OF HER CLEANING HER DRESSING ROOMS,  
CHASING RATS AND BUGS, ETC.

SOPHIE (V.O.)  
But it was also a regular pay  
check.

INT. WESTERN UNION OFFICE

Sophie is at counter wiring money.

SOPHIE (V.O.)  
I could send money home for Son  
every week and I did without fail.

INT. A BOSTON THEATRE - ONE MONTH LATER

SOPHIE (V.O.)  
It wasn't until I started playing  
the New England circuit that I got  
a taste of what it was all about.

ANNOUNCER 2  
And now ladies and gentlemen, we  
proudly present, that manipulator  
of "Coon" melodies, Sophie Tucker.

Sophie enters in a BIG DRESS AND LONG OPERA GLOVES WITH A  
BLACK WIG IN FULL BLACKFACE.

SOPHIE SINGS "MOANIN LOW."

SOPHIE  
I FEEL TOO BAD  
I'M FEELING MIGHTY SICK AND SORE  
SO BAD I FEEL  
I SAID I'M FEELING SICK AND SORE  
AND SO AFRAID  
MY MAN DON'T LOVE ME NO MORE  
MOANIN' LOW  
MY SWEET MAN I LOVE HIM SO  
THOUGH HE'S MEAN AS CAN BE  
HE'S THE KIND OF MAN  
WHO NEEDS THE KIND OF WOMAN LIKE ME  
I WANNA DIE  
IF SWEET MAN SHOULD PASS ME BY  
IF I DOUBT WHERE HE'D BE  
HE'S THE KIND OF MAN  
WHO NEEDS THE KIND OF WOMAN LIKE ME  
DON'T KNOW ANY REASON WHY HE TREATS  
ME SO POORLY  
WHAT HAVE I GONE AND DONE

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

MAKES MY TROUBLE DOUBLE  
 WITH THESE WORRIES WHEN SURELY  
 I AIN'T DESERVIN' IT NONE  
 MOANIN' LOW  
 MY SWEET MAN IS GONNA GO  
 WHEN HE GOES OH LORDY  
 HE'S THE KIND OF MAN  
 WHO NEEDS THE KIND OF WOMAN LIKE ME  
 DON'T KNOW ANY REASON WHY HE TREATS  
 ME SO COOLLY  
 WHAT HAVE I GONE AND DONE  
 HE MAKES MY TROUBLE DOUBLE  
 WITH THESE WORRIES WHEN SURELY  
 I AIN'T DESERVING ENOUGH  
 MOANIN' LOW  
 MY SWEET MAN IS GONNA GO  
 WHEN HE GOES OH LORDY  
 HE'S THE KIND OF MAN  
 WHO NEEDS THE KIND OF A WOMAN LIKE  
 ME.

Sophie exits to wings where STAGE MANAGER 2 is waiting.

Audience continues to APPLAUD and WHISTLE.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

What do I do? I already gave them  
 four songs.

STAGE MANAGER 2

Give them more.

SOPHIE

Really?

STAGE MANAGER 2

Absolutely!

SOPHIE

Well, here goes nothing.

Sophie returns to the stage.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

I was a hit. The only problem,  
 nobody would know it was me under  
 all that blackface. No matter how  
 hard I tried, no one would let me  
 go on stage as me, Sophie Tucker,  
 great Jewish songstress. Not  
 until....

INT. BOSTON-HOWARD ATHENEUM THEATRE - AFTERNOON

Sophie enters through stage door and stops at office window.

STAGE MANAGER 3

Can I help you?

SOPHIE

Yah sure can. I'm Sophie Tucker.

STAGE MANAGER 3

(reading clip board)

Oh yeah. You're the "Coon shouter." You got dressing room number four.

He comes out of the office and walks down the hallway.

They enter dressing room four.

Sophie runs hands over shelves, etc., checking for dirt.

SOPHIE

When was the last time this place was cleaned?

STAGE MANAGER 3

(sarcastically)

Right after Mr Lincoln was here. I'll have your personal cleaning crew come right over.

Sophie pulls towels from purse.

SOPHIE

Aw, it's okay. I'll handle it. Where'd you put my luggage?

He checks CLIP BOARD.

STAGE MANAGER 3

Lowell, Massachusetts.

SOPHIE

Lowell, Massachusetts?

STAGE MANAGER 3

Yes ma'am. But don't worry. It'll come right back on the next train.

SOPHIE

And when's that?

STAGE MANAGER 3

If you're lucky, this afternoon.

SOPHIE

I got a matinee this afternoon.  
What am I suppose to do till it  
gets here? I do blackface,  
remember.

STAGE MANAGER 3

Not my problem.

Stage Manager turns and leaves.

Sophie switches on the mirror lights and stands looking  
at herself.

SOPHIE

Oi, what have I gotten myself  
into?

CUT TO:

INT. BOSTON-HOWARD ATHENEUM THEATRE

CLOSE-UP: MR. KLAU SITTING IN THE AUDIENCE.

ANNOUNCER 3

Ladies and gentlemen, that world  
renowned coon shouter, Sophie  
Tucker.

Sophie enters from the wings, wearing her travel clothes  
with no make-up.

The audience reacts in dismay and surprise.

SOPHIE

Bet you're as surprised as I am.  
You're surprised I'm really white  
and I'm surprised my make-up and  
costumes were sent to New Jersey  
instead of here to Boston. At  
least I won't have to take six  
showers after I'm done singing  
just to get my make-up off. So if  
it's okay with you folks, I'm  
gonna do what I came out here for.  
So,

(to conductor)

If you don't mind.

SOPHIE SINGS "THERE'LL BE SOME CHANGES MADE."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

THEY SAY DON'T CHANGE THE OLD FOR  
 THE NEW  
 BUT I'VE FOUND OUT THIS WILL NEVER  
 DO  
 WHEN YOU GROW OLD YOU DON'T LAST  
 LONG  
 YOU'RE HERE TODAY AND THEN TOMORROW  
 YOU'RE GONE  
 I LOVED A MAN(GAL) FOR MANY YEARS  
 GONE BY  
 I THO'T HIS(HER) LOVE FOR ME WOULD  
 NEVER DIE  
 HE(SHE) MADE SOME CHANGES THAT  
 WOULD NEVER DO  
 FROM NOW ON I'M GOIN' TO MAKE SOME  
 CHANGES TOO  
 FOR THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE WEATHER  
 THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE SEA  
 SO FROM NOW ON THERE'LL BE A CHANGE  
 IN ME  
 MY WALK WILL BE DIFF'RENT, MY TALK  
 AND MY NAME  
 NOTHIN' ABOUT ME IS GOIN' TO BE THE  
 SAME  
 I'M GOIN' TO CHANGE MY WAY OF  
 LIVIN' IF THAT AIN'T ENOUGH  
 THEN I'LL CHANGE THE WAY THAT I  
 STRUT MY STUFF  
 'CAUSE NOBODY WANTS YOU WHEN YOU'RE  
 OLD AND GRAY  
 THERE'LL BE SOME CHANGES MADE THEY  
 SAY THE OLD TIME THINGS ARE THE  
 BEST  
 THAT MAY BE VERY GOOD FOR ALL THE  
 REST  
 BUT I'M GOIN' TO LET THE OLD THINGS  
 BE  
 'CAUSE THEY ARE CERTAINLY NOT  
 SUITED FOR ME  
 THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I THOUGHT  
 THAT WAY  
 THAT'S WHY I'M ALL ALONE HERE TODAY  
 SINCE EV'RY ONE OF THESE DAYS SEEKS  
 SOMETHING NEW  
 FROM NOW ON I'M GOIN' TO SEEK SOME  
 NEW THINGS TOO  
 FOR THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE WEATHER  
 THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE SEA  
 SO FROM NOW ON THERE'LL BE A CHANGE  
 IN ME

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
 WHY, MY WALK WILL BE BE DIFFERENT,  
 AND MY TALK AND MY NAME  
 NOTHING ABOUT ME GONNA BE THE SAME  
 I'M GONNA CHANGE MY WAY OF LIVIN',  
 AND THAT AIN'T NO SHOCK  
 WHY, I'M THINKING OF CHANGIN' THE  
 WAY I GOTTA SET MY CLOCK  
 BECAUSE NOBODY WANTS YOU WHEN  
 YOU'RE OLD AND GRAY  
 THERE'S GONNA BE SOME CHANGES MADE  
 TODAY  
 THERE'LL BE SOME CHANGES MADE

ALTERNATE/ADDITIONAL CHORUSES:

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
 FOR THERE'S A CHANGE IN THE  
 FASHIONS  
 ASK THE FEMININE FOLKS  
 EVEN JACK BENNY HAS BEEN CHANGING  
 JOKES  
 I MUST MAKE SOME CHANGES FROM OLD  
 TO THE NEW  
 I MUST DO THINGS JUST THE SAME AS  
 OTHERS DO  
 I'M GOIN' TO CHANGE MY LONG, TALL  
 DADDY (MAMMA) FOR A LITTLE SHORT  
 FAT  
 GOIN' TO CHANGE THE NUMBER WHERE I  
 LIVE AT  
 I MUST HAVE SOME LOVIN' OR I'LL  
 FADE AWAY  
 THERE'LL BE SOME CHANGES MADE TODAY  
 THERE'LL BE SOME CHANGES MADE

The theatre audience goes nuts.

INT. SOPHIE'S DRESSING ROOM

SFX: KNOCK AT DOOR.

SOPHIE  
 It's open.

Sophie pulls open the door.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
 Bring it on in.

MR KLAW

Miss Tucker?

SOPHIE

Yes. Where's my trunk?

MR KLAW

Oh no. I'm Mr. Klaw.

SOPHIE

You ain't from the railroad?

MR KLAW

No ma'am. I'm an agent for Mr. Ziegfeld.

CLOSE-UP ON SOPHIE'S FROZEN WIDE SMILING FACE.

INT. JARDIN DE PARIS ATOP THE NEW YORK THEATRE - 1909

SUPER: JARDIN DE PARIS ATOP THE NEW YORK THEATRE - 1909

Sophie is standing in the rear of the theatre, clutching her contract, patiently waiting.

ZIEGFELD is at the center, a work table, with JULIAN MITCHELL, director of the Follies.

JULIAN

But Flo, we need to split them to give the other girls time to change during the number.

ZIEGFELD

Okay, then in the first number we'll use Mae Murry, Rosie Green and Gertrude Vanderbilt and in the second, let's see, we'll use Vera Maxwell, Annabelle Ward and Lillian Lorraine.

JULIAN

That'll be fine as long as we don't interfere with Nora Bayes' number that follows.

ZIEGFELD

Leave Miss Bayes to me.

JULIAN

My pleasure.

Sophie approaches from behind, trying to interrupt.

ZIEGFELD

The entire Follies is staged  
around her and we'll do it with  
absolutely no interruptions.

SOPHIE

Mr. Ziegfeld?

ZIEGFELD

Yes? And who are you, may I ask?

MOLLIE, Nora Bayes' 45 YEAR OLD, BLACK MAID, approaches,  
watching the goings on.

Sophie nervously stumbles in front of Ziegfeld.

SOPHIE

Oh, I'm sorry. I'm Sophie Tucker.  
Mr Klaw gave me a contract. It's  
really Sophie Tuck. That's from my  
husband, Louis. Louis Tuck. But  
everyone calls me Tucker so it  
kind of stuck and I kept it, like  
that, as Sophie Tucker. I'm  
talking too much, aren't I?

ZIEGFELD

Yes, but it's enlightening. It's a  
pleasure. Have a seat somewhere  
and we'll call you when we're  
ready for you.

Sophie backs off, embarrassed, and walks up the aisle,  
chastising herself.

SOPHIE

(to herself)

I have a contract Mr. Ziegfeld. I  
sing, Mr. Ziegfeld. The man don't  
look like no fool.

Sophie turns and is startled to find Mollie right behind  
her.

MOLLIE

Don't worry Patsy. He does that to  
everyone the first time they meet  
him.

SOPHIE

Does what?

MOLLIE

Makes them stumble all over  
themselves, lookin' like a fool.

SOPHIE

I looked like a fool?

(Sophie sits)

I must have.

MOLLIE

I'm Mollie. I work for Miss Bayes  
but don't let that scare you  
either.

SOPHIE

Really? Everyone gets like that  
around him?

MOLLIE

Look, Miss Bayes will be here  
anytime now and I better have  
everything ready or all hell will  
break loose. You need anything  
Patsy, you let me know.

SOPHIE

Okay, Mollie. You got yourself a  
deal. I'll just sit. And wait. For  
someone to call me. Like Mr.  
Ziegfeld said.

Mollie smiles and walks away.

Sophie gets comfortable lighting a cigarette.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I'll just sit right here until  
you're ready for me, Mr. Ziegfeld.

INT. JARDIN DE PARIS ATOP THE NEW YORK THEATRE

WE NOW GO THROUGH A MONTAGE OF SHORT SCENES WITH SOPHIE  
SITTING IN THE SAME SEAT, SMOKING, BUT A DIFFERENT OUTFIT  
EACH TIME.

SUPER: A TIME BANNER APPEARS DESIGNATING EACH OF THE 49  
DAYS.

REHEARSAL WEEK 1 DAY 1

Sophie sits there.

REHEARSAL WEEK 1 DAY 2

Sophie sits there.

The banners begin in real time then fast forward til...

INT. JARDIN DE PARIS ATOP THE NEW YORK THEATRE

REHEARSAL WEEK 6, DAY 1

Sophie is sitting there.

Julian and Mr. Ziegfeld enter the aisle door directly behind where Sophie is seated. Mr. Ziegfeld is referring to an open NEWSPAPER HEADLINE READING "TEDDY ROOSEVELT RETURNS FROM AFRICA."

ZIEGFELD

Julian, everyone is talking about Teddy Roosevelt. The entire front page is covered. We have to have a jungle number. Have the boys write a jungle number.

JULIAN

But Flo, the Atlantic City opening is next week. That's impossible.

ZIEGFELD

Julian, nothing is impossible.

Julian and Ziegfeld approach Sophie from behind.

JULIAN

Who's gonna sing it? We cannot spare a single person.

ZIEGFELD

(referring to Sophie)  
Here's your singer. Miss. Tucker, you sing?

SOPHIE

(jumping to feet)  
Yes, Mr. Ziegfeld.

ZIEGFELD

You see Julian. You have your singer. Now, have the boys put it on paper and we'll stage it tomorrow with full costumes.

SOPHIE AND JULIAN

Yes, Mr. Ziegfeld.

Ziegfeld continues walking down the aisle.

Julian looks at Sophie.

Sophie beams with contract in hand.

INT. JARDIN DE PARIS ATOP THE NEW YORK THEATRE - NEXT DAY

Sophie seated in her "waiting seat" in COSTUME OF LEOPARD SKIN AND AN ANIMAL HEAD AS A HAT, IN FULL BLACKFACE, SMOKING A CIGARETTE.

SERIES OF SCENES OF SOPHIE AGAIN WAITING.

SUPER: TIME BANNER

REHEARSAL WEEK 7, DAY 2

Sophie is sitting there.

REHEARSAL WEEK 7, DAY 3

Sophie is sitting there.

ON REHEARSAL WEEK 7, DAY 5....

JULIAN (O.C.)

Miss Tucker, we're ready to stage  
the jungle number.

Sophie jumps up, loosing the animal head hat and runs  
down aisle to stage.

CHORUS is dressed in various animal costumes.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Thank you, Miss Tucker. Now,  
you'll enter stage right from  
behind the grass hut. Once you hit  
your mark, here, at the campfire,  
the chorus enters from side to  
side. We've already staged the  
dancers behind you, so just stay  
here.

SOPHIE

Left or right of the campfire?

JULIAN

You'll enter right so it will be easier for you to be right of the campfire.

Julian crosses back to table at left wing of stage.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Okay folks. Now we'll run the first act finale.

SOPHIE

Ah, excuse me. Excuse me.

JULIAN

Yes, Miss Tucker? Is there something else?

SOPHIE

Well, yes. Aren't we gonna run through the number, like with the music and all?

JULIAN

Miss Tucker, have you learned the number?

SOPHIE

Of course I have.

JULIAN

Okay, the chorus has also. Do you know when to come in and where to stand?

SOPHIE

Yes, by the campfire.

JULIAN

Perfect. We'll see you the night before the show opens for the full dress run through. Now....

NORA BAYES, 38, elegantly dressed, enters from wings, followed by Mollie.

Mollie stops before entering stage area but stays within camera.

NORA

Julian. Julian. There you are.

Nora looks "down" at Sophie in her animal costume, surveying her.

NORA (CONT'D)

How cleaver to have clowns in the Follies.

SOPHIE

Hello Miss Bayes....

We see Mollie in background trying to stop Sophie from speaking to Nora.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I'm Sophie Tucker.

NORA

I'm sure you are. All of you. Now Julian, you promised me a red satin gown for my number in the second act. Now they tell me it's been changed to green. I hate green. I look fat in green. I need red.

Sophie crosses to Mollie in wings.

JULIAN

Red doesn't work. The chorus is in red bell men outfits as you enter the hotel lobby.

NORA

I thought they were wearing black? Who on earth would change them to red?

ZIEGFELD

I wanted the number to be authentic. With a Nora Bayes in the number it must be authentic. It must be more than authentic.

NORA

I was all set on red and....

ZIEGFELD

Only green satin will bring out the shine of your emerald eyes.

NORA

Really? Well if you insist.

SOPHIE

Is she for real?

MOLLIE

That she is.

SOPHIE

Who's gonna be able to see the color of her eyes from way out in the audience?

MOLLIE

Patsy, nobody is gonna care. Once they hear your voice in your spot in the opening of the second act, all else will be over.

SOPHIE

Yah think so Mollie?

MOLLIE

I know so. Nobody's going to even remember the color of her dress.

INT. BACK STAGE, ATLANTIC CITY - JUNE 17, 1909 OPENING NIGHT

Sophie walks up to the stage manager wearing a red satin dress.

The Follies is in progress on the stage.

STAGE MANAGER 4

You're next Miss Tucker.

Mollie approaches from behind Sophie, startling her.

SOPHIE

Oh Mollie, you scared me.

MOLLIE

Scared? That ain't the Patsy I know.

SOPHIE

Everybody is out there Mollie. Lillian Russell, Diamond Jim Brady, George M. Cohen, even Irving Berlin. I'm scared to death.

MOLLIE

Patsy, you'll be great. Just bowl them over like you usually do and you'll be fine.

Sophie's entrance music begins.

STAGE MANAGER 4

You're on Miss Tucker.

Sophie walks on stage to polite applause.

SOPHIE SINGS "THERE'S A BLUE RIDGE ROUND MY HEART  
VIRGINIA."

SOPHIE

VIRGINIA STATE  
IT SEEMS OF LATE  
YOU'RE ALWAYS IN MY DREAMS  
I MISS YOUR PALE MOON BEAMS  
I MISS YOUR BLUE RIDGE TRAILS  
VIRGINIA YOU'LL KEEP CALLING TO  
OVER THE HILL AND DALE  
I'VE BEEN LONESOME  
NIGHT AND DAY  
SINCE I WONDERED AWAY  
THERE'S A BLUE RIDGE ROUND MY HEART  
VIRGINIA  
I'M AS LONESOME AS A LONESOME PINE  
THAT I WOULD GIVE MY SOUL  
IF I COULD BUT STROLL  
WHERE THE FLOWERS NOD TO YOU  
AND THE BIRDS SING HALLELUJAH  
IN THAT BLUE RIDGE ROUND MY HEART  
VIRGINIA  
RINGS A SONG AND ALL DAY LONG I  
FIND  
TO SEE THE TIME  
WHEN YOUR SUNSHINE  
I WILL SEE  
AND ALL MY TROUBLES  
THEN WILL HEAL  
THERE'S A BLUE RIDGE ROUND MY HEART  
VIRGINIA MINE  
THERE'S A BLUE RIDGE ROUND MY HEART  
VIRGINIA  
I'M AS LONESOME AS A LONESOME PINE  
THAT I LONG FOR WAKING MORN  
WITH THE SUN AT DAWN  
TONS OF PEOPLE  
IN THAT BLUE SPOT AROUND MY HEART  
VIRGINIA  
I CAN PICTURE HONEYSUCKLE VINES  
AS SWEET AS WINE  
IF I HAD MY WAY I FEAR  
I'D BE WITH AN OLD TIME DEAR  
THERE'S A BLUE RIDGE ROUND MY HEART  
VIRGINIA MINE

CAMERA GETS ANGLE OF SOPHIE WITH NORA BAYES DIRECTLY BEHIND HER IN THE WINGS YELLING AT JULIAN, POINTING AT SOPHIE AND HER RED DRESS.

Sophie finishes song and audience goes crazy with standing ovation, whistling, etc.

Sophie does several curtain calls.

Stage manager finally grabs Sophie as she goes to do another bow.

STAGE MANAGER 4

Sorry Miss Tucker, the show must go on.

CAMERA ANGLES TO GET NORA BAYES STANDING ON OPPOSITE SIDE OF WINGS, GLARING WITH FIRE IN HER EYES AT SOPHIE.

Sophie swallows hard.

INT. STAGE IN ATLANTIC CITY - NEXT DAY

The entire cast is gathered on stage.

Ziegfeld and Julian come on stage.

ZIEGFELD

Ladies and gentlemen, you had a marvelous opening last night.

They all applaud.

ZIEGFELD (CONT'D)

But, that said, we will have some changes. Things to make the show run a bit "smoother." The dancers will report to wardrobe for some changes in the costumes for Miss Baye's production number in the second act. The Jungle number is going to be moved to Act one from Act two and Miss Tucker, you will only be doing the Jungle number as the second act is running long.

Nora Bayes enters carrying a BRIGHT RED SATIN EVENING GOWN.

NORA

Julian, this is my new gown for my production number.

NORA (CONT'D)

Will you see that wardrobe has it  
cleaned for this evening's show?

JULIAN

Certainly Miss Bayes.

CLOSE-UP OF SOPHIE'S CRUSHED FACE.

NORA

Flo, thank you for fixing my  
number in the second act and  
removing all the distractions.  
Julian, you don't need me for the  
changes do you?

JULIAN

Not at all Miss Bayes.

NORA

I'll be in my dressing room.

Nora exits.

NORA (CONT'D)

Mollie...

Mollie runs across stage, following Nora.

ZIEGFELD

That will be all folks. Let's get  
it all in place.

Ziegfeld and Julian exit the same way they came in.

Sophie sits stunned as others pass.

DANCER 1

I'm sorry Miss Tucker.

MALE 1

Tough luck Miss Tucker

Sophie finally gets up and walks off stage into wings.

Mollie approaches.

MOLLIE

Patsy, I'm sorry. You know....

SOPHIE

I know, I know.

MOLLIE  
You was great last night.

SOPHIE  
I was, wasn't I.

MOLLIE  
You got eight calls.

SOPHIE  
More than the green dress got.

Mollie looks around, giggling then holds up three fingers.

MOLLIE  
Three more, but who's counting.

SOPHIE  
I was!

MOLLIE  
You got to, cause no one else will. Besides, you got that son of yours to think about. He's gonna see his mamma as a star.

SOPHIE  
I'm gonna be big so I can be with son and fix it so mamma and papa ain't got to work so hard at the restaurant.

INT. ABUZA RESTAURANT KITCHEN - HARTFORD CONNECTICUT -  
EVENING

Mama and Papa are seated at the table.

Mama is preparing food etc for the next day.

Papa is looking at the mail.

MAMA  
Papa, hand me that bag of peas.

Papa hands her a PAPER BAG OF FRESH PEAS.

Papa holds up a wire.

PAPA  
We got another wire.

MAMA

I don't know anyone to send us a wire. Did someone die? Aunt Sarah? She's ninety six. I would expect it from her.

PAPA

No not aunt Sarah. It's from Sophie. Ten dollars this week. It says she's working again after Mr. Ziegfeld.

Mama spits in a bag.

MAMA

I know no Sophie.

PAPA

Mama! Still?

MAMA

No! No!

BERT, 5 years old, comes in dressed for bed.

YOUNG BERT

Grandpa, I'm all ready. Will you tell me a story?

Bert sits on Papa's lap.

PAPA

A story? Which one? Or would you like something new?

MAMA

You should be reading him scripture lessons.

PAPA

Mama, he's only five. There is time enough for that.

MAMA

Better you should be filling his head with your stories?

YOUNG BERT

But I like the ones about the pretty Sophia singing and being famous on stage.

MAMA

Papa!?!

PAPA  
A child should know.

MAMA  
No! NO!

Mama storms out of the room.

YOUNG BERT  
Why is grandma so mad at me?

PAPA  
Oh, Bert. She's not mad at you.  
She's just a little closed minded  
and well....she's a bit hurt.

YOUNG BERT  
Who hurt her?

PAPA  
Ah, now that's a real story.

YOUNG BERT  
About the Sophia?

PAPA  
Yes, about the grand Sophia so big  
on the stage.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. STAGE IN ATLANTIC CITY

MOLLIE  
Patsy, you're the best.

They hug.

NORA (O.C.)  
Well isn't this touching.

NORA (CONT'D)  
(to Mollie)  
It seems you have a new circle of  
friends.

MOLLIE  
Miss Bayes, I'm....

NORA  
You're nothing. I'll be finding  
myself a new maid. One that knows  
her place.

SOPHIE

But Miss Bayes, it's not Mollie's fault. I was talking to her.

NORA

Well, now she'll have all the time in the world to talk.

Nora walks off.

SOPHIE

Mollie, I'm so sorry.

MOLLIE

Oh it's all right. I don't need to be working. My husband makes enough and he's been wanting me to stop.

SOPHIE

Well, as long as I'm around you can work for me. I'll find a way to pay you.

MOLLIE

I don't need your money. I just liked taking her money cause she's so mean and uppity. There ain't no reason for a woman to be that way just cause she's made it and got a little money.

SOPHIE

You know Mollie, you're absolutely right. I ain't ever gonna let that happen.

MOLLIE

That's cause I ain't gonna let you.

INT. STAGE IN ATLANTIC CITY - ONE WEEK LATER

CAMERA IS FOCUSED ON THE LIT STAGE CURTAINS.

AUDIENCE IS SOLD OUT.

ORCHESTRA LEADER waves baton and the "Moving Day In The Jungle" number music starts.

SOPHIE AND CAST DO THE "MOVING DAY IN THE JUNGLE" NUMBER.

## SOPHIE

DOWN ON JUNGLE LAND  
 THE JUNGLE BAND  
 IS IN A DREAM  
 ALL EXCITEMENT THERE  
 FOR CONSTERNATION REIGNS SUPREME  
 THEY'VE HEARD OF MAN  
 WHO'S DEALING DEATH WITH EITHER  
 HAND  
 HE HAS COME THEY SAY  
 TO KILL THE MIGHTY BEASTS OF PREY  
 AT A MEETING HELD THE OTHER NIGHT  
 ALL THE ANIMALS AGREED ON FLIGHT  
 THEY DECIDED TO KEEP OUT OF SIGHT  
 OF THE STRENUOUS AMERICAN

IT'S MOVING DAY 'WAY DOWN IN JUNGLE  
 TOWN  
 ALL THE NATIVES WEAR A WORRIED  
 FROWN  
 ALL THE MONKEYS AND THE CHIMPANZEES  
 MOVING 'WAY FROM BANYAN TREES  
 HEAR THE RATTLE OF THE POTS AND  
 PANS  
 GETTING READY FOR THE CARAVANS  
 RUN YOU LIONS AND TIGERS RUN RUN  
 RUN  
 HERE COMES TEDDY WITH HIS GUN GUN  
 GUN

ALL THE BEASTS AND BIRDS  
 TOO SCARED FOR WORDS  
 KEPT VERY STILL  
 EACH ONE WAS AFRAID  
 OF THIS GREAT MAN  
 WHO'D COME TO KILL  
 THE SNAKE BEGAN TO SHAKE  
 AND WHEN HE HEARD THE SOUND OF  
 SHOTS  
 THE PANTHER LOST HIS PANTS  
 AND THE LEOPARD CHANGED HIS SPOTS  
 THE ELEPHANT WAS MUCH UPSET YOU SEE  
 HIS TRUNK WAS LOCKED  
 AND HE HAD LOST THE KEY  
 A MONKEY FOUND IT UNDERNEATH A TREE  
 AND THEN THEY STARTED ON THEIR WAY

IT'S MOVING DAY 'WAY DOWN IN JUNGLE  
 TOWN  
 ALL THE NATIVES WEAR A WORRIED  
 FROWN  
 ALL THE MONKEYS AND THE CHIMPANZEES  
 MOVING 'WAY FROM BANYAN TREES

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
HEAR THE RATTLE OF THE POTS AND  
PANS  
GETTING READY FOR THE CARAVANS  
RUN YOU LIONS AND TIGERS RUN RUN  
RUN  
HERE COMES TEDDY WITH HIS GUN GUN  
GUN

INT. STAGE IN ATLANTIC CITY - NEXT DAY

Cast is gathered on stage for rehearsal.

Ziegfeld and Julian enter from audience stairway on front of stage followed by EVA TANGUAY.

ZIEGFELD  
Ladies and gentlemen. You are all doing a superb job in this years Follies. I would like you all to meet Eva Tanguay. She will be replacing Nora Bayes who has moved on to greener pastures. Now, besides the obvious changes in the rehearsal schedule which will bring Miss Tanguay up to speed for tonight's show, we will be rehearsing the Jungle number which Miss Tanguay will be doing. Miss Tucker, I'm sorry but your services will no longer be needed. You can see my assistant Betty for your final pay slip. Thank you people and continue the good work.

Ziegfeld exits via the audience stairway.

CAMERA ZOOMS IN TO SOPHIE'S STUNNED, TEARFUL FACE.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. AMERICAN MUSIC HALL, 42ND STREET - WEEKS LATER

CAMERA ZOOMS THROUGH THEATRE TO SOPHIE ON STAGE.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

It wasn't long after that fateful day with the Follies that I got booked into the grand American Music Hall at 42nd and 8th for a whopping forty bucks a week. I was on the top of the bucket now.

SOPHIE SINGS "AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL."

SOPHIE

IT'S A FACT IT IS  
 THAT WE WOMEN FOLK ARE BEATING ALL  
 YOU MEN  
 YOU GET EVIDENCE OF IT EVERY DAY  
 NOW JUST LOOK WHAT WE GO THROUGH  
 AND THE CLEVER THINGS THAT WE DO  
 AND WE SURELY HAVE THIS TO SAY  
 AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL  
 AREN'T WOMEN GRAND  
 AREN'T THEY THE RULERS OF THIS  
 HAPPY LAND  
 THEY FLY THE ATLANTIC  
 WILD COUNTRIES EXPLORE  
 WHERE LIONS AND TIGERS AND SAVAGES  
 ROAR  
 THEN THEY FAINT DEAD AWAY  
 WHEN THEY SEE A LITTLE MOUSE ON THE  
 FLOOR, BOYS  
 AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL  
 AREN'T WOMEN GRAND  
 AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL  
 AREN'T WOMEN GRAND  
 AREN'T THEY THE RULERS OF THIS  
 HAPPY LAND  
 A MAN WHO'S SO OLD  
 THAT HE SHOULD TAKE TO HIS BED  
 WILL TRY MONKEY GLANDS  
 AND HE'LL GET MARRIED INSTEAD  
 BUT WE KNOW WHO PUT THE BIG IDEA IN  
 HIS HEAD  
 WOMEN, WOMEN, WOMEN  
 AREN'T WOMEN GRAND  
 THOUGH WE LIKE TO THINK IT'S A  
 BOAST  
 ABOUT MAN BEING SUPREME  
 TILL HE'S GOT A PLACE THAT CAN  
 FIDDLE LOW DOWN  
 THOUGH HE'S BIG AND TALL  
 MAYBE SHE'S SHORT AND SMALL  
 YET SHE CAN COUNT HIM OUT  
 AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

AREN'T WOMEN GRAND  
 AREN'T THEY THE RULERS OF THIS  
 HAPPY HAPPY LAND  
 WHEN BABY'S EXPECTED  
 YOU CHUCKLE WITH GLEE  
 AND THINK HOW YOU'LL DANGLE THE KID  
 ON YOUR KNEE  
 A GIRL OR A BOY YOU'D LIKE  
 BUT SHE HANDS YOU THREE  
 AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL  
 AREN'T WOMEN GRAND  
 AREN'T WOMEN WONDERFUL  
 AREN'T WOMEN GRAND  
 AREN'T THEY THE RULERS OF THIS  
 HAPPY HAPPY LAND  
 HOW KINGS HAVE BEEN CONQUERED  
 THE HISTORY BOOKS TELL  
 FOR INSTANCE ANN BOLEN  
 AND ALSO SWEET NELL  
 SURELY YOU KNOW CLEOPATRA  
 AND SOPHIE TUCKER AS WELL  
 I MUST SAY WE WOMEN ARE WONDERFUL  
 WOMAN ARE GRAND

INT. SOPHIE'S DRESSING ROOM - AFTER SHOW

Mollie is helping Sophie change.

Sophie is smoking and there is a knock at door.

SOPHIE

Don't just stand there knocking.  
 Come on in.

WILLIAM MORRIS, 50, distinguished, enters.

MORRIS

Miss Tucker....

SOPHIE

(interrupting)  
 Sophie.

MORRIS

It will be Miss Sophie Tucker on  
 all your billings and on your  
 contract.

SOPHIE

You got that right. Now all I need  
 is to find me some brave fool to  
 give me a contract.

He pulls PAPERS from pocket.

MORRIS

Well, Sophie, your brave fool has arrived.

SOPHIE

Has he now? And who might he be?

MORRIS

I am William Morris and I own....

SOPHIE

You own every theatre in every town on the American Music Hall circuit. And you want to sign me to a contract? For forty dollars a week?

MORRIS

I'm afraid not.

SOPHIE

That's what I thought.

MORRIS

It's for seventy-five dollars a week.

Sophie grabs contract.

SOPHIE

Seventy-five dollars a week? What's the catch?

Mollie pops her on the back of her shoulder.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Well, you can't be too careful. Some of these guys are pretty slick.

MORRIS

That they are, Miss Tucker. That is exactly why I started my own group of theatres. I wanted to do it right.

SOPHIE

Right for who? You, the audience or those in your shows?

MORRIS

Actually, all of them. Without the entertainers that people want to see I have no audience and without an audience I have no theatres. Without my theatres, I have no money to hire quality people, like yourself. With quality people, like yourself, I now will have an audience, I keep my theatres and I, in turn, will make money....

SOPHIE

Which will let you keep giving quality entertainers, as myself, even more money down the line, right?

Mollie pops her on the back of her shoulder.

MORRIS

Exactly.

CLOSE-UP OF SOPHIE'S SMILING FACE.

EXT. MCVICKERS THEATRE IN CHICAGO - 1915

SUPER: MCVICKERS THEATRE IN CHICAGO - 1915

POV: AERIAL VIEW ABOVE CHICAGO

CAMERA PANS THE SKYLINE THEN ZOOMS INTO THE MCVICKERS THEATRE.

SOPHIE IS ON STAGE SINGING "THE LADY IS A TRAMP."

SOPHIE

SHE GETS TOO HUNGRY FOR DINNER AT  
EIGHT  
SHE LIKES THE THEATRE AND NEVER  
COMES LATE  
SHE NEVER BOTHERS WITH PEOPLE SHE'D  
HATE  
THAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP  
DOESN'T LIKE CRAP GAMES WITH BARONS  
OR EARLS  
WON'T GO TO HARLEM IN ERMINE AND  
PEARLS

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

WON'T DISH THE DIRT WITH THE REST  
 OF THE GIRLS  
 THAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP  
 SHE LIKES THE FREE, FRESH WIND IN  
 HER HAIR  
 LIFE WITHOUT CARE  
 SHE'S BROKE, AND IT'S OKE  
 HATES CALIFORNIA, IT'S COLD AND  
 IT'S DAMP  
 THAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP  
 SHE GETS TOO HUNGRY TO WAIT FOR  
 DINNER AT EIGHT  
 SHE LOVES THE THEATRE BUT NEVER  
 COMES LATE  
 SHE'D NEVER BOTHER WITH PEOPLE  
 SHE'D HATE  
 THAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP  
 SHE'LL HAVE NO CRAP GAMES WITH  
 SHARPIES AND FRAUDS  
 AND SHE WON'T GO TO HARLEM IN  
 LINCOLNS OR FORDS  
 AND SHE WON'T DISH THE DIRT WITH  
 THE REST OF THE BROADS  
 THAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP  
 SHE'D LOVE THE FREE, FRESH WIND IN  
 HER HAIR  
 LIFE WITHOUT CARE  
 SHE'S BROKE, BUT IT'S OKE  
 HATES CALIFORNIA, IT'S SO COLD AND  
 SO DAMP  
 THAT'S WHY THE LADY  
 THAT'S WHY THE LADY IS A TRAMP

FRANK WESTPHAL, Sophie's new accompanist, is seated at the piano playing.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

William Morris was my savior. For the next five years I got bookings in every city he owned a theatre. Which was practically every city in the United States. I was having the time of my life.

INT. SHERMAN HOTEL, CHICAGO - SOPHIE'S ROOM

Sophie is in bed, giggling under the covers.

Sophie leans over and gets a cigarette from the night stand.

Frank Westphal quickly lights the cigarette.

FRANK

Are you sure you'd rather have  
that cigarette than me?

SOPHIE

Frank, I have never had a limit on  
loving but I got to have a  
cigarette once in a while in  
between. I don't want to wear you  
out or anything.

FRANK

You know Soph, if we're gonna keep  
this going there is something you  
need to do.

SOPHIE

I know. I know.

INT. JUDGES CHAMBERS - LATER THAT WEEK

Sophie is seated with the JUDGE behind his desk.

SOPHIE

I want to thank you your honor for  
seeing me on such short notice.

JUDGE

Well Miss Tucker I understand you  
might need some discretion in this  
matter.

SOPHIE

Discretion ain't a problem. I just  
don't want anyone to find out I  
forgot to divorce Louis until now.

JUDGE

I understand.

The Judge signs off on her divorce papers.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

All done. It will take a couple of  
months before it's final.

SOPHIE

That's okay Judge. I have plenty  
to do until then.

INT. ABUZA RESTAURANT KITCHEN - HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Mama is running back and forth from the kitchen to the dining room.

ANNA, Sophie's younger sister, is helping Mama.

Papa is helping to serve up plates of food.

Papa looks drained, not feeling well.

ANNA

I need two more corned beef platters.

PAPA

Right away.

Papa reaches for a PLATE AND GRABS HIS LEFT ARM IN PAIN, dropping THE PLATE.

ANNA

Papa? Are you okay?

Papa drops to the floor.

ANNA (CONT'D)

PAPA!! PAPA!!

Anna runs to Papa.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY OUTSIDE PAPA'S ROOM - TWO DAYS LATER

Sophie runs up the stairs but is stopped by Anna and MOE.

MOE

Soph.

SOPHIE

How is he Moe? I came from Chicago as soon as I could.

MOE

Not good. Doc says his heart is bad.

SOPHIE

How bad?

ANNA

Sophie, you have to be ready.

SOPHIE

Ready for what?

MOE

He's paralyzed on his right side  
and he cannot speak.

SOPHIE

What? No.

MOE

We have to be strong now. For  
Mama.

ANNA

Sophie, the doctor's in with Papa.  
Bert's in his room. Maybe you  
should see him first. Then go in  
and see Papa.

SOPHIE

Okay. I guess so.

Sophie goes down the hall to Bert's room.

INT. BERT'S ROOM

Sophie enters as she lightly knocks.

TEN YEAR OLD BERT turns, running into Sophie's arms.

BERT

Grandpa's sick. What are we gonna  
do?

SOPHIE

I don't know baby. I just don't  
know.

EXT. CEMETARY - MAY 26, 1915

The Abuza family are all standing at Papa's grave site.

The Rabbi is finishing the Kaddish as Sophie tears her  
blouse in mourning.

INT. SOPHIE'S ROOM ABOVE THE RESTAURANT - ONE MONTH LATER

Sophie is plainly dressed, still in mourning, seated in a  
chair, smoking a cigarette, just looking out the window.  
There is a knock at door.

William Morris enters, sitting across from Sophie.

Sophie slowly acknowledges him.

SOPHIE

I can't do it anymore.

MORRIS

It's been a month since...

SOPHIE

I know but it ain't the same.

MORRIS

No it isn't but you just can't stop.

SOPHIE

Yes I can. I can't ever go back on the stage. Besides, someone has to be here for Mama.

MORRIS

Soph. Moe and Anna can handle it. They both feel it's time for you to be Sophie Tucker again.

SOPHIE

They want to get rid of me?

MORRIS

No. No. They want you to be you. What would Papa want? He'd want to see you singing your heart out. Remember he was the one who got you started when you left. Don't let him down.

SOPHIE

I would never let Papa down.

MORRIS

How about we give you a couple more weeks? It'll give you time to put things in order.

SOPHIE

Do me a favor?

MORRIS

Sure. Anything.

SOPHIE

Call Frank. Let him know Soph is coming back.

MORRIS

Sure Soph. I'll call him today.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

It was actually a total of three months before my first booking in Detroit at the Temple Theatre. Until I stepped on that stage I was not positive I was doing the right thing.

INT. TEMPLE THEATRE - AUGUST 1915

Sophie is standing in the wings nervously smoking.

Frank walks up behind her, hugging her.

Sophie returns a panicked hug.

ANNOUNCER

...Miss Sophie Tucker.

SOPHIE

That's me.

Sophie walks out on stage.

Franks waits a moment while audience gives her a standing ovation. He then goes out and sits at the piano on stage.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Thank you. Thank you.

SOPHIE SINGS "APRIL IN PARIS."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I NEVER KNEW THE CHARM OF SPRING  
 I NEVER MET IT FACE TO FACE  
 I NEVER KNEW MY HEART COULD SING  
 I NEVER MISSED A WARM EMBRACE  
 TILL APRIL IN PARIS, CHESTNUTS IN  
 BLOSSOM  
 HOLIDAY TABLES UNDER THE TREES  
 APRIL IN PARIS, THIS IS A FEELING  
 THAT NO ONE CAN EVER REPRISE  
 I NEVER KNEW THE CHARM OF SPRING  
 I NEVER MET IT FACE TO FACE  
 I NEVER KNEW MY HEART COULD SING  
 I NEVER MISSED A WARM EMBRACE

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
TILL APRIL IN PARIS  
WHOM CAN I RUN TO  
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MY HEART

INT. - JUSTICE OF THE PEACE - 1917

Sophie and Frank are standing in front of a justice getting married.

SOPHIE  
I do.

JUSTICE  
I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride.

Sophie and Frank kiss.

INT. NEW YORK CABARET - BACK STAGE

Sophie and Frank are in a heated argument.

SOPHIE  
What do you want me to do? I've been paying all the bills on your auto mechanics shop since you decided to open it. I've been losing money.

FRANK  
You mean we've been losing.

SOPHIE  
No I mean me. I don't see you bringing in anything. Just me paying out.

FRANK  
Not my fault. Business is slow.

SOPHIE  
It ain't slow. You're just lazy. I can't do it any more. We got to close it down and cut the loses.

FRANK  
And what am I suppose to do?

SOPHIE  
Go back to playing the piano. I don't know and don't care.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I only can see how much you're costing me.

FRANK

It's all about Soph ain't it?

SOPHIE

It's gotta be or I won't have anything left.

TED SHAPIRO, Sophie's new accompanist, approaches.

TED

It's time to go on.

SOPHIE

I'll be right there Teddy.

FRANK

Soph.

SOPHIE

You know, I thought you would last longer than a year. You had potential.

Sophie walks towards the stage, stops, then turns.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

And yeah, I knew about Lucille and Jinny. I didn't need to know about any others.

Sophie walks on stage as Teddy begins to play "I KNOW MY BABY IS CHEATING ON ME."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

What can I say. Soph is back.

SOPHIE SINGS: "I KNOW MY BABY IS CHEATING ON ME."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

ONE GOOD TURNS DESERVES SOMEONE  
 DESERVES ANOTHER THEY SAY  
 HE WHO FIGHTS AND RUNS AWAY  
 WILL LIVE TO FIGHT ON ANOTHER DAY  
 I JUST FOUGHT WITH MY BABY  
 HE RAN AWAY YOU SEE  
 HE'LL LIVE TO FIGHT ON ANOTHER DAY  
 BUT NOT WITH ME  
 CAUSE I KNOW THAT MY BABY IS  
 CHEATIN ON ME  
 HE'S NOT ONLY CHEATIN  
 BUT REPEATIN YOU SEE

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

BUT MAYBE MY BABY  
DON'T KNOW THAT I'M CHEATIN TOO  
IF HE WANTS TO MEANDER  
I'LL LET HIM RUN LOOSE  
WHAT SAUCE FOR THE GANDER  
IS SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE  
I'M BETTING I'M GETTING  
MORE PETTIN THAN IF THAT'S TRUE  
I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYBODY  
THAT CAN DO WHAT MY BABY CAN DO  
STILL THEY SAY THAT THERE'S ALWAYS  
SOMEBODY  
THAT STARTS WHEN THE OTHER GETS  
THROUGH  
I KNOW THAT MY BABY IS CHEATIN ON  
ME  
HE'S NOT ONLY CHEATIN  
BUT REPEATIN YOU SEE  
BUT MAYBE MY BABY  
DON'T KNOW THAT I'M CHEATIN TOO  
NOW WHEN THIS EVER LOVIN PAPA  
STARTED ACTING STRANGE  
OF COURSE I CRIED AND WORRIED ABOUT  
THE CHANGE  
BUT THEN WHEN I FOUND OUT  
THAT HE WAS STARTING TO CHEAT  
THIS EYE TO ME THIS PRIMEROSE PATH  
AIN'T A ONE WAY STREET  
AND SINCE HIS AVERAGE INCOME  
IS FOUR AM OR SO  
I FOUND A LOT OF PLEASANT WAYS  
TO MAKE AN EVENING GO  
I KNOW HE DOESN'T KNOW THAT I KNOW  
THAT HE'S HAVING HIS FLING  
BUT I'VE CHEATED CHEATERS FIFTEEN  
YEARS  
HE CAN'T SHOW ME A THING  
CAUSE I KNOW THAT MY BABY IS  
CHEATIN ON ME  
HE'S NOT ONLY CHEATIN  
BUT REPEATIN YOU SEE  
BUT MAYBE MY BABY  
DON'T KNOW THAT I'M CHEATIN TOO  
A WORD TO THE WISE  
IN THE BUSINESS THEY SAY  
BUT I GOT THE WORD  
THAT HE'S STARTED TO PLAY  
BUT HE'LL NEVER CATCH UP TO THIS  
MAMA  
I'M TELLING YOU  
I KNOW HE'S CUTE AND ATTRACTIVE  
AND I KNOW HE KNOWS IT TOO  
WELL I MAY NOT BE SO ACTIVE

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
 BUT HE'LL HAVE TO BE MORE ACTIVE  
 TO BEAT WHAT THIS MAMA CAN DO  
 CAUSE I KNOW THAT MY BABY IS  
 CHEATIN ON ME  
 HE'S NOT ONLY CHEATIN  
 BUT REPEATIN YOU SEE  
 BUT MAYBE MY BABY  
 DON'T KNOW THAT I'M CHEATIN TOO

INT. SYNAGOGUE IN HARTFORD CONNECTICUT - 1918

SUPER DATE: FEBRUARY 1918.

Ben, 13, is called to the TORAH by the RABBI for his Bar Mitzvah.

**\*\*\*THE BLESSING AND RESPONSE IS SPOKEN IN HEBREW.\*\*\***

RABBI  
 We now receive Ben Tucker on this  
 day entering the congregation of  
 Isreal.

BEN  
 Today I become a man....

The ceremony continues.

INT. ABUZA RESTAURANT DINING ROOM

The room is filled with people honoring Ben's Bar Mitzvah.

Ben appears sad.

Mama greets other guests.

BEN  
 I thought she would come.

MAMA  
 Ahh. What can I say. She is what  
 she is. You expect nothing and get  
 even less.

Ben gets up and goes to his room.

INT. BEN'S ROOM

Ben is sitting on his bed. There is a knock at door.

BEN

Go away.

UNCLE MOE enters, sitting next to Ben.

MOE

Ben. I think you are old enough now to understand.

BEN

But I don't want to understand. She said she would come Uncle Moe.

MOE

She did. But life throws things at you sometimes. Things that are hard to understand.

Behind them the door swings open to reveal Sophie.

BEN

I understand all right. She made it all up.

Sophie enters, sitting next to Ben.

SOPHIE

It was my fault. I missed the first train from New York. But I'm here now. If it's okay.

Uncle Moe leaves room, closing door behind him.

BEN

I guess so.

SOPHIE

This is your day and I didn't want anything to mess it up.

BEN

You didn't get to see my Barucha.

SOPHIE

Well, Barucha is important.

**\*\*\*SOPHIE SPEAKS THE NEXT BARUCHA IN HEBREW.\*\*\***

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I give you today this boy that has become a man. Ben Tucker has assumed the age in the eyes of God.

Sophie picks up the PRAYER SHAWL from the bed, placing around Ben.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

This is a man to honor his parents as he does his grandparents in his heart. In spite of a mother that is not always here but always keeps him near and dear in her heart.

**\*\*\*BEN REPLIES IN HEBREW.\*\*\***

BEN

Today I become a man in the presence of my God and family. Especially now that my family has arrived. This is a time when I learn family means more than I knew. It is the love that comes that says "I love you and miss you," in the same way I say I love you and miss you.

Sophie quietly weeps.

**\*\*\*THE NEXT LINES ARE IN ENGLISH.\*\*\***

SOPHIE

And such a strong man you are.

They hug tightly.

INT. SOPHIE'S DRESSING ROOM, MILWAUKEE - 1924

SUPER DATE: 1924 MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Sophie is dressed in a silky robe, not warm, and she is coughing, smoking a cigarette.

Mollie is making a cup of coffee for her.

SFX: THERE IS A KNOCK AT DOOR.

Mollie opens door.

Theatre manager, GORDON, and Eva Tanguay enter.

TANGUAY

Miss Tucker, I thoroughly enjoyed your matinee.

SOPHIE

Thank you Miss Tanguay. Call me Sophie.

TANGUAY

Sophie, with a cold like that you'll never get to tomorrow's matinee if you don't take care of yourself. It's cold out there. Look how you're dressed.

SOPHIE

It's all I got. Besides, it's silk.

TANGUAY

It's twenty-five degrees and snowing. That isn't gonna help keep you warm like you need. You have to take care of that wonderful voice of yours.

Tanguay is looking around the room, inspecting Mollie's coffee making.

Mollie and Sophie exchange funny, bewildered looks.

TANGUAY (CONT'D)

What's this? Coffee?

Drops coffee in trash.

TANGUAY (CONT'D)

This will never do. Gordon would you be a doll and fetch my woolen camisole for Miss Tucker while I run down to pick up a few things at the department store?

SOPHIE

It's Sophie.

GORDON

Certainly Miss Tanguay.

Gordon exits.

TANGUAY

(to Mollie)

You have to make sure she keeps warm or she'll never get over that cold.

Mollie becomes a completely Southern maid.

MOLLIE

Yes ma'am. I was just fixin' to knit her a sweater and a blanket.

TANGUAY

I see. I'll be right back. By the way, what color is that lovely sweater going to be?

MOLLIE

Red ma'am.

TANGUAY

I see.

Tanguay exits.

Sophie and Mollie stare at each other, stunned.

INT. SOPHIE'S DRESSING ROOM, MILWAUKEE - TWO HOURS LATER

CLOSE-UP OF SOPHIE'S HEAD WITH FANCY, WARM SCARF WRAPPED AROUND HER NECK.

Mollie is seated against wall behind Sophie with an odd look on her face.

Sophie is standing in the middle of the room with her arms extended wearing a SILK AND WOOL, FULL LENGTH ROBE AND LEGGINGS.

Tanguay steps back to appraise her work, pleased.

TANGUAY

Now that you'll be warm...

(reaches into bag)

This will sooth your throat. A good swig of this stuff and you won't care, but it will fix you up.

SOPHIE

Well, Miss Tanguay, I don't know how to thank you.

TANGUAY

It's Eva and don't mention it. I must run now but let's have dinner while you're in town.

SOPHIE

Sure, why not.

Tanguay wraps her stole around herself and moves to the door stopping, handing a PACKAGE to Mollie.

TANGUAY  
(sarcastically)  
Just in case you run out.

Tanguay darts out door.

Mollie opens the package and pulls out BUNDLES OF RED YARN.

Mollie and Sophie begin laughing uncontrollably.

EXT. AMERICAN MUSIC HALL, CHICAGO - WEEKS LATER - EVENING

ARIEL VIEW OF THEATRE FULLY LIT

CAMERA ZOOMS TO BILLING POSTER HANGING ON FRONT OF THEATRE.

SOPHIE (V.O.)  
I had finally done it. Mollie and I were going to Chicago and I was actually on the marque billing. Granted I was number four on the list behind Pauline, the hypnotist and Julian Eltinge, the female impersonator, but I got billing. Besides, I had no idea what that first night at the American Music Hall in Chicago located at Peck Court and Wabash was going to bring. William Morris had spread the word and I think every critic alive was sitting right there in that audience.

CAMERA HAS ZOOMED INTO THEATRE.

JULIAN ELTINGE, A FEMALE IMPERSONATOR, is on stage in the middle of his number.

Eltinge completes his number, exiting stage.

ANNOUNCER changes SIGN ON SIDE OF STAGE to "SOPHIE TUCKER."

## ANNOUNCER

And now ladies and gentlemen,  
please welcome to the American  
Music Hall of Chicago's stage,  
Miss Sophie Tucker.

Sophie enters from the wings.

## SOPHIE

Okay, okay. That's what I like to  
hear, lotsa people out there  
enjoying "me." Here's one for you  
that I think you'll like.

SOPHIE SINGS "THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR."

## SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I'VE GOT A SONG FOR SAD FOLKS  
WHO'VE HAD THEIR UPS AND DOWNS  
I'D LIKE TO TURN THEM ALL INTO GLAD  
FOLKS  
AND DRIVE AWAY THEIR FROWNS  
I'D HAD MY LOSES YOU BET  
BUT I GOT PLENTY YET  
I'VE GOT THE BIRDS  
I'VE GOT THE TREES  
YOU CAN'T BE CRUEL  
WITH THINGS LIKE THESE  
AND IF I DIDN'T HAVE A BLESSED  
THING MORE  
THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR  
I GOT THE SUN THE MOON ABOVE  
I'VE GOT MY HEALTH AND FRIENDS I  
LOVE  
AND IF I DIDN'T HAVE A BLESSED  
THING MORE  
THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR  
AS LONG AS I CAN STRETCH AND YAWN  
TO THE MUSIC OF THE DAWN  
SINGING WAKE UP CARRYON  
I'M GLAD I'M LIVING  
I'VE GOT SOMEONE TO SHARE MY LOVE  
WHO'S SATISFIED WITH WHAT I GOT  
AND IF I DIDN'T HAVE A BLESSED  
THING MORE  
THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR  
I'M NOT TOO THIN NOT TOO FAT  
NOT TOO ROUND AND NOT TOO FLAT  
I'VE GOT WHAT I'VE GOT  
AND I'M GLAD IT AIN'T MORE  
THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR  
I'VE GOT MY PET AND I CAN STILL  
ENJOY THAT WELL KNOWN CERTAIN  
THRILL

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

I'M GETTING ENOUGH  
 WHEN I CAN STILL ASK FOR MORE  
 THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR  
 I'VE GOT MY PET AND I CAN STILL  
 ENJOY THAT WELL KNOWN CERTAIN  
 THRILL  
 I'M GETTING ENOUGH  
 WHEN I CAN STILL ASK FOR MORE  
 THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR  
 MY MAN KEEPS ME SATISFIED  
 WHAT I LIKE I'M NOT DENYING  
 AND IF HE WANTS TO CHEAT  
 A LITTLE BIT ON THE SIDE  
 IT'S ALL RIGHT WITH ME I LET HIM  
 HE SHOULD LIVE SO  
 AND AT ANY TIME HE DON'T MAKE GOOD  
 I MEAN IN DOING THE THINGS  
 A GOOD MAN SHOULD  
 I GOT THE BUTCHER THE BAKER  
 THE CANDLESTICK MAKER  
 I'VE GOT MY PET AND I CAN STILL  
 ENJOY THAT WELL KNOWN CERTAIN  
 THRILL  
 I'M GETTING ENOUGH  
 WHEN I CAN STILL ASK FOR MORE  
 AND THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL  
 FOR

INT. ALL NIGHT DELI - AFTER SHOW

Sophie, Mollie and BAND MEMBERS are seated at booth.

Eltinge comes running in with an ARM LOAD OF PAPERS and joins them.

ELTINGE

They're hot off of the presses.

SOPHIE

Hot or not, we gotta know what they're saying'.

ELTINGE

I personally don't care. What can they possibly say to hurt me?

BAND MEMBER ONE

Well, maybe that you look like a man in a dress.

ELTINGE

I am a man in a dress.

SOPHIE

And you fill it out better than most woman.

ELTINGE

Sophie Tucker, I could never fill out a dress like you do.

SOPHIE

You got that right. Don't even try. You don't want to get too hot.

Mollie has been rifling through paper.

MOLLIE

Well would you listen to this in the Chicago Daily News....

SOPHIE

Amy Leslie right?

MOLLIE

Yep. She says you are shocking "but Miss Tucker's calm amiability, ready smile and emphatic gestures carry her through, even without a bump."

SOPHIE

Well, that ain't half bad. Remind me to send her a thank you note when I send money home to Son tomorrow.

ELTINGE

(reading)  
Well I'll be.

SOPHIE

What? Which one you got? Chicago Examiner. That would be Ashton Stevens' column. That's a tough nut.

ELTINGE

He says, "*and speaking of elephants and ladies, there is Sophie Tucker. If life were as large as Sophie Tucker there would be room for all of us.*"

ELTINGE (CONT'D)

*I don't mind saying at once that Sophie Tucker is my headliner, even if the American management does employ other types and positions for her. She has a voice..well, if Julian Eltinge's," that's me, "singing voice was as virile as Miss Tucker's, he would be executing a long overdue male impersonation. Miss Tucker could have sung right through the matinee and into the evening performance, so far as the audience was concerned."*

Sophie's voice takes over as the scene slowly fades.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

*"Some of her songs are red, white and blue, and some of them omit the red and white. But they are never quite dark navy blue. Rather they are inclined to be evil only to the fellow that brings evil with him." Now that's what I call a review.*

INT. LOBBY, HOTEL SHERMAN, CHICAGO - 1929

SUPER: HOTEL SHERMAN, CHICAGO - 1929

Sophie and Mollie enter the lobby from the street, shaking off the snow.

They approach the desk. The DESK CLERK looks up.

DESK CLERK

Oh my. You're Sophie Tucker. Are you checking in? I had no idea.

James, see to Miss Tucker's luggage.

SOPHIE

No no, you don't understand. I ain't checking in. I'm here to visit an old friend, Miss Eva Tanguay.

DESK CLERK

Miss Tanguay hasn't had many visitors lately.

SOPHIE

Well she's got two of the best  
right here.

DESK CLERK

James, would you be so kind as to  
show Miss Tucker to Miss Tanguay's  
room?

JAMES

Yes sir. Right this way Miss  
Tucker.

SOPHIE

Thank you James.

JAMES, 50ish BLACK BELL CAPTAIN, leads Sophie and Mollie  
across the lobby, past the main bank of elevators.

Sophie and Mollie exchange looks of concern.

All three enter a smaller, older elevator at the end of  
the hall.

They exit the elevator into an older part of the hotel.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

James, are you sure this is the  
way to Eva Tanguay's suite?

JAMES

Certainly, Miss Tucker. Her room  
is directly ahead.

Sophie and Mollie exchange looks of concern.

James stops in front of the door and knocks.

TANGUAY (O.C.)

Yes? Who's there?

JAMES

It's James Miss Tanguay. I've  
brought guests to see you.

They enter Tanguay's small room.

Tanguay is in a bed that is very modest, in a modest but  
nice dressing gown. She is partially bed ridden, looking  
very old. HER EYES ARE CLOUDED WITH CATARACTS.

SOPHIE

(to Mollie)

I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes.

MOLLIE

Dear lord.

TANGUAY

James, you are a sweetheart.

Tanguay attempts to focus on Sophie.

TANGUAY (CONT'D)

Who is this you have brought for a visit?

SOPHIE

It's me, Miss Tanguay. Sophie Tucker and Mollie.

James nods to Sophie and exits, closing the door.

TANGUAY

Sophie and Mollie. How nice. It's been ages.

SOPHIE

It's the middle of the afternoon. How come you ain't up yet? You'll miss the whole day.

TANGUAY

It isn't that easy anymore. My arthritis don't let me get around much. Besides, there isn't much to see when the eyes are covered by cataracts.

Sophie and Mollie begun to unload things from their large CARPET BAGS onto a small table near the window.

SOPHIE

Well Sophie's here and Mollie and I aim to change that.

MOLLIE

We got some liniment and some lamb stew.

SOPHIE

And if you ain't had Mollie's lamb stew you ain't had nothing. We gotta build up your strength.

Sophie helps Tanguay out of bed to the table while Mollie prepares the table of food.

TANGUAY

My that smells wonderful.

Mollie puts a fork in Tanguay's hand. Sophie and Mollie look at each other.

MOLLIE

Her you go Miss Tanguay. Fill yourself up.

SOPHIE

Sure. But we got to talk about those eyes of yours. Don't you think it's time you got them fixed?

TANGUAY

Well, Sophie Tucker, listen to you. Worried about me being able to see a plate of lamb stew. You are the sweet one but I can't even pay for this room much longer let alone all the money it would cost for surgery on these old eyes.

SOPHIE

Exactly. But we got a plan. Don't we Mollie?

MOLLIE

Sure do.

TANGUAY

A plan? To fix my eyes?

SOPHIE

Yep, and I think it's a good one. Where's your phone?

TANGUAY

On the night bed table.

Sophie sits on the edge of the bed, picking up the phone.

SOPHIE

Operator, get me gladstone 5, 0381. Thanks, I'll hold on.

SCREEN SPLITS TO REVEAL IRVING BERLIN.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Hello Irving. This is Sophie.

IRVING

Hello Sophie. Have you seen her?

SOPHIE

Yes, yes. I'm with her now. Irving Berlin sends his regards and says keep a stiff upper lip.

TANGUAY

Oh how nice of him.

SOPHIE

She sends them back to you Irving.

IRVING

Hold on Sophie. There's someone here to speak to you.

Irving hands the phone to Ziegfeld.

ZIEGFELD

Miss Tucker, this is Flo Ziegfeld.

SOPHIE

Mr. Ziegfeld, what a surprise.

ZIEGFELD

Irving has filled me in and I think it is a wonderful thing you're doing.

SOPHIE

Well thank you Mr. Ziegfeld. But I got a question for you before we get on with it.

ZIEGFELD

And what's that?

SOPHIE

How come you ain't never used me in the Follies since the year you fired me?

ZIEGFELD

Miss Tucker, I was a fool. I should have signed you to a ten year contract the day I saw you.

ZIEGFELD (CONT'D)

Now you're just too damned expensive.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

And that was the beginning. One call led to another.

SUPER: BUBBLE PICTURES OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE TALKING ON THE PHONE.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Before long I think everyone in vaudeville knew of Eva Tanguay's plight for sight. It was wonderful. Eddie Cantor, Flo Ziegfeld Irene Castle, Evelyn Lay. Everyone chipped in and we got Eva her operation. It was the beginning of those who can helping those in dire need. Vaudeville had heart.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - AUGUST 1925

SUPER: AUGUST 1925

The PASSENGER LINER ACQUITANIA is poised to depart for London.

Sophie and Ted Shapiro, her pianist, arrive with luggage in tow.

TED

I told you we would make it.

SHIPS ANNOUNCER

All passengers for the grand liner Acquitania bound for the United Kingdom must be on board now. The Acquitania will be departing in twenty minutes.

SOPHIE

Yah, we're here but we ain't on the boat yet and it's getting ready to leave.

A MAN'S VOICE CALLS FROM ABOARD THE SHIP AT THE RAILING.

RUDY (O.C.)

Well if it ain't Sophie Tucker.

Sophie and Ted look up to see RUDY VALENTINO at the railing.

SOPHIE  
Well, we made it Rudy.

RUDY  
Only you could hold a ship from sailing.

A PORTER approaches Sophie for their luggage.

SOPHIE  
That's cause the queen herself is waiting to see me.

PORTER  
May I?

TED  
Yes, all of these go aboard.

RUDY  
I'll tell the captain we can go now that the "Queen of Vaudeville" has made her arrival.

SOPHIE  
Thank you Rudy. We'll be right up. See Teddy, we're gonna have a grand tour in England.

EXT. KIT KAT KLUB - TWO WEEKS LATER

POSTERS OF SOPHIE WITH "SOLD OUT" ON THE MARQUE.

CAMERA ZOOMS IN THROUGH THE FRONT ENTRANCE.

INT. KIT KAT KLUB

Sophie is on stage to a conservative but very happy crowd.

SOPHIE IS SINGING "FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE WRONG."

SOPHIE  
THEY SAY THE FRENCH ARE NAUGHTY  
THEY SAY THE FRENCH ARE BAD  
THEY ALL DECLARE THAT OVER THERE

## SOPHIE (CONT'D)

THE FRENCH ARE GOING MAD.  
 THEY HAVE A REPUTATION OF BEING  
 VERY GAY  
 I JUST GOT BACK FROM PARIS, AND I  
 JUST WANT TO SAY:  
 WHEN THEY GO PARLEY-VEE AND PARLEY-  
 VOU,  
 THIS FOR ME, ZAT FOR YOU,  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 WHEN THEY GO OHH LA LA LA LA LA LA  
 LA  
 ON THE BULLY BOULEVARD  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 THEY SHAKE-A THE HAND  
 THEY SHAKE-A THE FEET  
 THEY ROLL ZE EYES AND KISS CAFE  
 RIGHT ON THE STREET  
 EVEN THOUGH THE IRISH AND THE DUTCH  
 SAY IT DON'T AMOUNT TO MUCH  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 ALL OF OUR FASHIONS COME FROM GAY  
 PAR-EE  
 AND IF THEY COME ABOVE THE KNEE  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 AND IF THEY GIVE THE WORLD A NEW  
 DESIGN  
 TO PROVE A LADY HAS A SPINE  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 THEY SHORTEN THEM HERE,  
 THEY SHORTEN THEM THERE,  
 AND IF HER NAME IS TEDDY, THEY MAKE  
 TEDDY BARE.  
 IF THEY PREFER TO SEE THEIR WOMEN  
 DRESSED  
 WITH MORE OR LESS OF LESS AND LESS,  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 WHEN THEY PUT ON A SHOW, AND IT'S A  
 HIT  
 NO ONE TRIES TO CENSOR IT  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 AND WHEN A BOOK IS SELLING AT IT'S  
 BEST  
 IT ISN'T STOPPED; IT'S NOT  
 SUPPRESSED.  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

WHENEVER THEY'RE DRY  
 FOR BRANDY OR RYE,  
 TO GET IT, THEY DON'T GAVE TO GIVE  
 UP THEIR RIGHT EYE.  
 AND WHEN WE BRAG ABOUT OUR LIBERTY  
 AND THEY LAUGH AT YOU AND YOU AND  
 YOU AND ME  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.  
 IN VIVA LA FRANCE  
 THEY'RE FULL OF ROMANCE  
 YOU'LL FIND POLICEMEN WITH  
 EMBROIDERY ON THEIR PANTS.  
 AND WHEN THEY START TO SING THE  
 MARSEILLAISE  
 THEY SING IT FORTY DIFFERENT WAYS  
 FIFTY MILLION FRENCHMEN CAN'T BE  
 WRONG.

INT. SOPHIE'S LONDON HOTEL ROOM - NEXT DAY

Sophie is nervously smoking, laying out DRESSES ETC all over the room.

TED

How about the yellow one?

SOPHIE

I don't know. Maybe the green one.

Teddy points to his watch.

TED

Soph, you got two hours to get to Buckingham Palace and the queen ain't gonna like it if you are late.

SOPHIE

I know Teddy but I got to look my best.

Teddy takes her by the shoulders.

TED

You will look good no matter what you wear.

SOPHIE

But what if the queen wears the same one. What'll I do then?

TED

You'll tell the queen to go  
upstairs and change.

SFX: THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

Teddy opens door.

The Royal Sensor, ALEX COLE, is standing in the hallway,  
perfectly dressed in a suit and bowler hat.

ALEX

Miss Tucker?

TED

Do I look like Sophie Tucker?

ALEX

I am Alex Cole from the Royal  
Prince of Wales office of  
omissions and censors.

SOPHIE

Let the man in Teddy.

Alex Cole enters pulling PAPERS OUT OF HIS BRIEF CASE.

ALEX

Miss Tucker it is a pleasure to  
meet you.

SOPHIE

All mine.

Handing her a LIST.

ALEX

I have here the list of songs you  
planned to sing this evening and I  
have marked the ones that will  
need to be changed do to the, how  
should I say, lyric subject  
matter.

Sophie looks at the list.

SOPHIE

Are you serious?

ALEX

Quite serious.

SOPHIE

You have more than half of my songs marked.

ALEX

Yes I know.

Ted looks at the list.

TED

Oh my god. We have less than an hour. I don't get it.

ALEX

It's simple. Miss Tucker changes her lineup, removing the questionable songs or she will not perform this evening and that would be embarrassing to say the least.

SOPHIE

Teddy, even "I'm The Last Of The Red Hot Mama's" is on the list.

ALEX

Remember, you are performing for the Royal Family. Not for a club full of ruffians.

TED

Mr. Cole, if you don't mind. We have work to do.

Teddy opens door signaling Alex to leave.

ALEX

Good. I will see you later this evening.

Alex exits.

Ted closes door.

Sophie lights a cigarette, looking around at her gowns.

SOPHIE

Yep, it's the yellow one.

INT. BUCKINGHAM PALACE SHOW ROOM - THAT EVENING

The QUEEN AND KING GEORGE V are seated in the front row.

THE QUEEN IS WEARING AN ORNATE YELLOW GOWN.

Sophie is standing next to the piano wearing her YELLOW GOWN.

Teddy is seated at the piano.

The audience is politely applauding.

Sophie speaks to King George V.

SOPHIE

I don't normally ask this but because it's royalty and all and your censor people told me I wasn't allowed to sing most of my songs, too racy and all, what would you like me to sing? Gotta cover all my bases here.

KING GEORGE V

Well isn't that who Miss Sophie Tucker is? Sing whatever you like. I am sure it will not only be pleasant but quite entertaining.

Sophie smiles and turns to Ted.

SOPHIE

Well Teddy. What shall we do?

TED

Be careful Soph.

SOPHIE

I'm always careful. It's the only way to make a man come back and be happy. Carefully.

TED BEGINS TO PLAY INTRO FOR "I'M THE LAST OF THE RED HOT MAMAS."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

SHIEKS, NECKERS AND JELLYBEANS  
LEND ME YOUR EARS  
SO YOU THINK YOU'VE BEEN PETTED  
DON'T BE SILLY FORGET IT  
DEAD FLAPPERS AND BABY VANS  
BORE ME TO TEARS  
WHAT DO THEY KNOW CONCERNING LOVE  
COME TO ME FOR YOUR BURNING LOVE  
CAUSE I'M THE LAST OF THE RED HOT  
MAMAS  
THEY'VE ALL COOLED DOWN BUT ME

## SOPHIE (CONT'D)

FLAPPER VANS SAY WHAT DO THEY KNOW  
COME GET YOUR HOT STUFF FROM THIS  
VOLCANO  
I'M AN OVERHEATER  
TRY AND BEAT IT  
HOTSY TOTSY HOT IN TOT  
NOW IT MAY BE SLOWING  
BUT WHEN I GET GOING  
OH BABY I'M HOT  
YOU CAN KEEP YOUR COLLEGIATE DOMERS  
THEIR LOVING ISN'T WORTH A DIME  
A WAY UP IN ALASKA WHERE THE  
NATIVES FREEZE  
AN ESKIMO LEFT FOR HIS HUNT IN HIS  
BVD'S  
CAUSE I'M THE LAST OF THE RED HOT  
MAMAS  
I'M GETTING HOTTER ALL THE TIME  
I DON'T WANT TO BRAG  
BUT IN MY HOTEL SUITE  
A DOZEN FIREMEN WERE OVERCOME BY  
HEAT  
A SCOTCHMAN WANTS TO MARRY ME  
THE DEAR SWEET SOUL  
HE THINKS WITH ME AROUND  
HE'LL SAVE A LOT OF COAL  
I MET A MOVIE STAR  
WHO'S FAMOUS FOR HIS CASH  
I GAVE HIM ONE KISS  
AND SINGED OFF HIS MOUSTACHE  
A FUNNY THING HAPPENED  
I NEARLY DIED  
I SAT DOWN ON AN EGG  
GOT UP AND THE EGG WAS FRIED  
I'M THE LAST OF THE RED HOT MAMAS  
THEY'VE ALL COOLED DOWN BUT ME  
I DON'T PET AND ONLY NECKING  
NO SIR I'M A MAMA WHO LOVES TO  
WRECKEN  
I CAN MAKE THEM SIZZLE  
MAKE THEM FRY AND FRIZZLE  
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH  
I CAN WARM THE COLD ONES  
GIVE THE OLD ONES  
BACK THEIR FLAMING YOUTH  
I WAS BORN IN THE HOT BAHAMAS  
RIGHT NOW I'M IN LOVING PRIME  
OTHERS PET AND KISS AND HUG  
AND DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT  
HEY WHEN I KISS MEN  
THEY FEEL LIKE THEY'VE HAD THEIR  
TONSILS TAKEN OUT

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
 CAUSE I'M THE LAST OF THE RED HOT  
 MAMAS  
 AND GETTING HOTTER ALL THE TIME

SOPHIE (V.O.)  
 Now that is the way to leave  
 London. The King himself told me  
 that was one of his favorite  
 songs. If only the trip home had  
 gone so smooth.

INT. LEVIATHAN SHOW ROOM - EVENING JANUARY 25, 1926

SUPER: JANUARY 25, 1926

As the scene fades in we see RUDY VALENTINO on stage in  
 front of a show room filled with people.

THE SHIP IS ROLLING, OFF AND ON, FROM SIDE TO SIDE.

SOPHIE (V.O.)  
 Rudy Valentino and some of the  
 others had put together a big show  
 on board. It had been a bad  
 crossing and most of the  
 passengers had been sea sick for  
 some time. They needed a change in  
 atmosphere.

RUDY  
 And I think it's about time I  
 bring out a lady you all know. My  
 dear friend Miss Sophie Tucker.

Sophie enters from wings.

SOPHIE  
 Thank you Rudy. And first of all I  
 have to apologize to all you  
 people. Seems having me walking  
 around from side to side of this  
 here ship so much made you all sea  
 sick. I guess the Leviathan here  
 couldn't handle the extra cargo  
 moving around. Okay, it's time for  
 a little fun. Here's one you'll  
 know.

SOPHIE SINGS "LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
 I'VE OFTEN HEARD IT SAID AND SUNG

## SOPHIE (CONT'D)

THAT LIFE IS SWEETEST WHEN YOU'RE  
YOUNG  
AND KIDS, SIXTEEN TO TWENTY-ONE  
THINK THEY'RE HAVING ALL THE FUN  
I DISAGREE, I SAY IT ISN'T SO  
AND I'M ONE GAL WHO OUGHT TO KNOW  
I STARTED YOUNG AND I'M STILL GOING  
STRONG  
BUT I'VE LEARNED AS I'VE GONE  
ALONG.....  
THAT LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY  
THAT'S WHEN LOVE AND LIVING START  
TO BECOME A GENTLE ART  
A WOMAN WHO'S BEEN CAREFUL FINDS  
THAT'S WHEN SHE'S IN HER PRIME  
AND A GOOD MAN WHEN HE'S FORTY  
KNOWS JUST HOW TO TAKE HIS TIME  
CONSERVATIVE OR SPORTY, IT'S NOT  
UNTIL YOU'RE FORTY  
THAT YOU LEARN THE HOW AND WHY AND  
THE WHAT AND WHEN  
IN THE TWENTIES AND THE THIRTIES  
YOU WANT YOUR LOVE IN LARGE AMOUNTS  
BUT AFTER YOU REACH FORTY, IT'S THE  
QUALITY THAT COUNTS  
YES, LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY  
AND I'VE JUST BEGUN TO LIVE ALL  
OVER AGAIN  
YOU SEE THE SWEETEST THINGS IN LIFE  
GROW SWEETER AS THE YEARS ROLL ON  
LIKE THE MUSIC FROM A VIOLIN THAT  
HAS BEEN WELL PLAYED UPON  
AND THE SWEETEST SMOKE IS FROM A  
MELLOW, BROKEN AND OLD PIPE  
AND THE SWEETEST TASTING PEACH IS  
ONE THAT'S MATURE, ROUND AND RIPE  
IN THE TWENTIES AND THE THIRTIES  
YOU'RE JUST AN AMATEUR  
BUT AFTER YOU REACH FORTY, THAT'S  
WHEN YOU BECOME A CONNOISSEUR  
THEN IT ISN'T GRAB AND GET IT AND A  
STRAIGHT LINE FOR THE DOOR  
YOU'RE NOT HASTY, YOU'RE TASTY, YOU  
ENJOY THINGS SO MUCH MORE  
FOR INSTANCE, A NOVICE GULPS HIS  
BRANDY DOWN, HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND  
OBSERVE A CONNOISSEUR, THE WAY HE  
HOLDS IT IN HIS HAND  
HOW HE STROKES THE GLASS, FONDLES  
IT, WARMS IT AS HE SHOULD  
SMAKS HIS LIPS, AAHHH, SLOWLY SIPS,  
HAH, BOY, IT TASTES GOOD  
LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

THEN IT ISN'T HIT AND RUN AND YOU  
 FIND MUCH MORE FUN  
 YOU ROMANCE A GIRL OF TWENTY AND IT  
 COSTS YOU ALL YOUR DOUGH  
 BUT WHEN A FORTY THANKS YOU, SHE  
 HATES TO SEE YOU GO  
 AND GIRLS OF TWENTY, ALL THEY WANT  
 ARE BIG MEN  
 BIG MEN WITH STRONG PHYSIQUES  
 I DON'T SAY THAT IT'S BAD  
 BUT YOU DO GET TIRED OF THOSE DAMN  
 GREEKS  
 LIFE BEGINS AT FORTY  
 AND I'M JUST LIVING ALL OVER AGAIN

As Sophie finishes the song the SHIP'S CAPTAIN approaches Rudy, whispering into his ear and handing him a TELEGRAM.

Sophie finishes song and crosses to Rudy.

RUDY

Sophie, that was wonderful. They  
 love you. Do something else.

SOPHIE

And I love them. I think I will.

RUDY

The Captain gave me this to give  
 to you.

SOPHIE

Must be from the King George  
 saying he's closing England until  
 I get back there.

Sophie reads the telegram, falling back to land hard in a chair.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Rudy. It's mama.

RUDY

Oh Soph. Let me get someone  
 else....

SOPHIE

No Rudy. They all deserve it.

Sophie walks back onto the stage, crossing to the piano player, whispering to him.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Here's a song I'd like to do for  
all of you on our last night at  
sea.

SOPHIE SINGS "MY YIDDISHE MAMA."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

OF THINGS I SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR  
I'VE HAD A GOODLY SHARE  
AND AS I SIT HERE IN THE COMFORT OF  
MY COSY CHAIR  
MY FANCY TAKES ME TO A HUMBLE  
EASTSIDE TENEMENT  
THREE FLIGHTS UP IN THE REAR TO  
WHERE MY CHILDHOOD DAYS WERE SPENT  
IT WASN'T MUCH LIKE PARADISE BUT  
'MID THE DIRT AND ALL  
THERE SAT THE SWEETEST ANGEL, ONE  
THAT I FONDLY CALL  
MY YIDDISHE MAME I NEED HER MORE  
THEN EVER NOW  
MY YIDDISHE MAME I'D LIKE TO KISS  
THAT WRINKLED BROW  
I LONG TO HOLD HER HANDS ONCE MORE  
AS IN DAYS GONE BY  
AND ASK HER TO FORGIVE ME FOR  
THINGS I DID THAT MADE HER CRY  
HOW FEW WERE HER PLEASURES, SHE  
NEVER CARED FOR FASHION'S STYLES  
HER JEWELS AND TREASURES SHE FOUND  
THEM IN HER BABY'S SMILES  
OH I KNOW THAT I OWE WHAT I AM  
TODAY  
TO THAT DEAR LITTLE LADY SO OLD AND  
GRAY  
TO THAT WONDERFUL YIDDISHE MAME OF  
MINE

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - NEXT DAY

VOICE OVER CONTINUES: SOPHIE SINGS "MY YIDDISH MAMA"

**\*\*\*THE VOICE OVER SWITCHES TO BEING SUNG IN YIDDISH.\*\*\***

SOPHIE (V.O.)

MY YIDDISHE MAME I NEED HER MORE  
THEN EVER NOW MY YIDDISHE MAME I'D  
LIKE TO KISS THAT WRINKLED BROW  
I LONG TO HOLD HER HANDS ONCE MORE  
AS IN DAYS GONE BY  
AND ASK HER TO FORGIVE ME FOR  
THINGS I DID THAT MADE HER CRY HOW

SOPHIE (V.O.)  
 FEW WERE HER PLEASURES, SHE NEVER  
 CARED FOR FASHION'S STYLES  
 HER JEWELS AND TREASURES SHE FOUND  
 THEM IN HER BABY'S SMILES  
 OH I KNOW THAT I OWE WHAT I AM  
 TODAY  
 TO THAT DEAR LITTLE LADY SO OLD AND  
 GRAY  
 TO THAT WONDERFUL YIDDISHE MAME OF  
 MINE

AS VOICE OVER CONTINUES WE SEE A MONTAGE OF SCENES OF THE  
 LEVIATHAN PULLING INTO NEW YORK HARBOR AND DOCKING.

Moe meets Sophie as she exits the quarantine area at  
 ship's dock.

EXT. ABUZA HOUSE - SAME DAY

Sophie and Brother Moe exit a cab. Sophie freezes,  
 staring at house then runs to the front door, stopping at  
 the door.

The front door opens and Anna pushes open screen.

ANNA  
 It's okay Soph. Mama is still in  
 her room. She made us promise.

Sophie enters the house and goes upstairs.

INT. - MAMA'S ROOM

The door opens slowly and Sophie enters.

MAMA LYING PEACEFUL IN DEATH ON HER BED DRESSED IN A  
 TACHRICHIM.

THREE SHOMERIN WOMAN, stand and leave the room.

Sophie crosses to bed.

SOPHIE  
 Oh Mama. I tried to get here in  
 time. I really did.

Sophie tearfully begins to wash Mama's arms from a bowl  
 of water on the dressing table while RECITING A BLESSING  
 IN HEBREW.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Baruch dayon emet.  
 The Lord ruleth me: and I shall  
 want nothing.  
 He hath set me in a place of  
 pasture. He hath brought me up, on  
 the water of refreshment:  
 He hath converted my soul. He hath  
 led me on the paths of justice,  
 for his own name's sake.  
 For though I should walk in the  
 midst of the shadow of Death, I  
 will fear no evils, for thou art  
 with me. Thy rod and thy staff,  
 they have comforted me.  
 Thou hast prepared a table before  
 me, against them that afflict me.  
 Thou hast anointed my head with  
 oil; and my chalice which  
 inebriateth me, how goodly is it!  
 And thy mercy will follow me all  
 the days of my life. And that I  
 may dwell in the house of the Lord  
 unto length of days.

Sophie's next voice over is done while the scene is still  
 showing her blessing and wrapping Mama.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Shortly after we laid Mama next to  
 Papa I lost my dear Mollie. It was  
 a hard blow, but I did what I do  
 best. I got married. I met Al  
 Lackey, a merchant, at  
 Reisenwebers and we danced all  
 night. It was amazing what a  
 younger man could do for a woman's  
 broken spirit.

FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY

MONTAGE OF STILLS OF SOPHIE AND AL GETTING MARRIED, ETC.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

It wasn't long before the  
 honeymoon ended and the great city  
 of New York, as well as the whole  
 United States was plagued with a  
 depression.

MONTAGE OF STILLS OF BROADWAY HOUSES CLOSING AND SOPHIE HELPING TO FEED THOSE IN NEED.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

I thought I had been smart and been investing money in real estate and apartment buildings all over New York. It wasn't grand but it kept me going. In spite of the pervasive gloom on Broadway during the depression I was still working hard. By early 1931 Teddy and I were ruling English clubs and countryside. We could do no wrong.

WE SEE A MONTAGE OF SCENES OF SOPHIE IN VARIOUS CLUBS WITH TEDDY AT THE PIANO. AL IS IN THE AUDIENCE.

INT. SOPHIE'S LONDON HOTEL LOBBY

Sophie is smoking as she, Al and Teddy enter the lobby, crossing to the desk.

SOPHIE

What a fine dinner.

AL

You do know how to pick quality food.

SOPHIE

But it's nothing like the old Abuza deli.

DESK CLERK

Good evening Miss Tucker. I have a cable for you.

SOPHIE

Thank you young man.

The desk clerk hands Sophie the cable.

Sophie puts out her cigarette and takes the cable, opening it.

TED

What is it Soph?

SOPHIE

It's from Bert. My God.

AL

What's wrong?

Sophie reads the cable.

SOPHIE

"Was married today to a nice  
Jewish girl. Love Son." Well I'll  
be.

TED

I didn't think he was old enough.

SOPHIE

We are all getting older by the  
hour.

AL

It only took the right girl to  
catch him.

SOPHIE

Isn't life grand?

INT. SYNAGOGUE IN HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

MONTAGE OF SHOTS OF BERT GETTING MARRIED WITHOUT SOPHIE.

SOPHIE SINGS A VOICE OVER OF "THAT'S WHAT I CALL SWEET  
MUSIC" DURING THE MONTAGE.

INT. BACK STAGE OF CABARETS

A SECOND MONTAGE OF AL BACKSTAGE SNORTING COCAINE AND  
HAVING FUN WITH LOOSE WOMAN.

SOPHIE SINGS A VOICE OVER CONTINUES OF "THAT'S WHAT I  
CALL SWEET MUSIC" DURING THE MONTAGE.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

MOST EVERYBODY LIKES MUSIC  
SONGS MAKE YOU HAPPY AND GAY  
BUT WHEN YOU'RE THINKING OF MUSIC  
HERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SAY  
YOU CAN HAVE YOUR CELLO  
WITH IT'S MELLOW MELODY  
I'M THE KIND OF FELLOW  
LIKES A CERTAIN HARMONY  
I DON'T CARE FOR OPERA GRAND

SOPHIE (V.O.)

BUT WHEN MY SWEETIE SAYS HOLD MY  
HAND  
THAT'S WHAT I CALL SWEET MUSIC  
CLASSIC SONGS I NEVER WILL MEET  
BUT WHEN MY SWEETIE SAYS COME LETS  
SEE  
THAT'S WHAT I CALL SWEET MUSIC  
I KNOW THAT ALL THE LITTLE BIRDS  
THE BEES UP IN THE TREES  
SING MELODIES  
BUT THE PRETTY SONG THEY SING  
DON'T MEAN A THING  
WHEN SWEETIE COOS SWEET NOTHINGS  
YOU MAY LIKE YOUR RHAPSODY BLUE  
BUT WHEN MY SWEETIE SAYS I LOVE YOU  
THAT'S WHAT I CALL SWEET MUSIC  
THAT'S WHAT I CALL SWEET MUSIC  
HONEY THAT'S WHAT I CALL SWEET  
MUSIC  
NO FOOLING  
WHEN I HEAR A BAND  
I CLAP MY HANDS  
SOUNDS SO GRAND  
BUT THE BEST OF ALL  
THE WHO THAT MAKES ME FALL  
IS SWEETIE HOW DEE A DOW DOW  
BYE BYE BABY SONGS ARE ALL RIGHT  
BUT WHEN MY SWEETIE SAYS NIGHTY  
NIGHT  
THAT'S WHAT I CALL SWEET MUSIC

INT. SOPHIE'S LONDON HOTEL ROOM

SOPHIE CONTINUES TO SING A VOICE OVER OF "THAT'S WHAT I  
CALL SWEET MUSIC."

Sophie is seated at a small desk addressing cards.

AL

I'm going down for cigarettes and  
a drink.

SOPHIE

Fine with me.

Al opens his wallet.

AL

I'm a little short. Can you fill  
me up?

SOPHIE

You're on your own tonight.

AL

But...

SOPHIE

No buts. On your own.

Al grabs his jacket, exits room, slamming the door.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY

CAMERA PANS THE CITY SKYLINE DURING VOICE OVER.

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Al returned to New York leaving me to finish my European tour happily by myself. When I returned to New York he had moved out of the house, I filed for divorced then went into union politics.

INT. UNION HALL - 1938

SUPER: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ACTORS UNION HALL - 1938

A LARGE BANNER STRETCHES BEHIND THE PODIUM - "AFA - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ACTORS"

RALPH WHITEHEAD and Sophie are seated beneath the banner.

HUNDREDS OF ADORING UNION MEMBERS fill the room, cheering.

EDDIE CANTOR is at the podium speaking.

EDDIE CANTOR

This has been an historic election. I am now proud to introduce to you the founder of The American Federation Of Actors and the Executive Secretary, Mr Ralph Whitehead.

Whitehead goes to the podium.

WHITEHEAD

Thank you. Thank you. This years election has taken new and surprising turns for the AFA. We have stood up and been heard in every theatre in the United States. We are financially strong and building. We have moved into a new era. I am proud to give you not only your new president but the first woman to be elected to a union office, Miss Sophie Tucker.

The crowd goes nuts.

Sophie approaches podium, beaming, but overwhelmed.

SOPHIE

What can I say. You make me proud. You make me happy. Being here today is like visiting family.

MAN 1

Then when are you going home?

Crowd laughs.

Sophie becomes the ultimate entertainer.

SOPHIE

You want me to leave already? I just got here. You must have voted for the other guy.

MAN 1

Sure did.

SOPHIE

Then that was your mistake.

MAN 1

You have a platform that won't hold.

SOPHIE

We'll see. If I can get a corset that holds all this like a sausage casing, I can surely have a platform that holds.

MAN 2

But when are you going home?

SOPHIE

Let me tell you something. I ain't  
gonna be around forever. And when  
I'm gone, well....

SOPHIE SINGS "SOME OF THESE DAYS."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

SOME OF THESE DAYS  
YOU'LL MISS ME HONEY  
SOME OF THESE DAYS  
YOU'LL BE SO LONELY  
YOU'LL MISS MY HUGGIN  
YOU'LL MISS MY KISSING  
YOU'LL MISS ME HONEY  
WHEN I'M FAR AWAY  
THAT I FEEL SO LONELY  
FOR YOU ONLY  
HOW YOU KNOW HONEY  
YOU'VE HAD YOUR WAY  
WHEN YOU LEAVE ME  
LORD GONNA GRIEVE ME  
YOU'RE GONNA MISS YOUR RED HOT MAMA  
YOUR RED HOT MAMA  
SOME OF THESE DAYS  
SOME OF THESE DAYS  
YOU'LL MISS ME HONEY  
SOME OF THESE DAYS  
YOU'LL BE SO LONELY  
YOU'LL MISS MY HUGGIN  
YOU'LL MISS MY KISSING  
YOU'LL MISS ME HONEY  
WHEN I'M FAR AWAY  
THAT I FEEL SO LONELY  
FOR YOU ONLY  
HOW YOU KNOW HONEY  
YOU'VE HAD YOUR WAY  
WHEN YOU LEAVE ME  
LORD GONNA GRIEVE ME  
YOU'RE GONNA MISS YOUR BIG FAT MAMA  
YOUR RED HOT MAMA  
SOME OF THESE DAYS

All the members laugh and cheer.

INT. HOTEL EDISON - MEETING ROOM - TEN DAYS LATER

SUPER: TEN DAYS LATER

Sophie is at podium.

A cup of water is thrown and hits Sophie in face.

MALE 4 punches MAN 1 causing a brawl to start.

Sophie turns to WHITEHEAD.

SOPHIE

They're out of control.

WHITEHEAD

Adjourn the meeting Sophie.

Another cup of water is hurled at Sophie, covering her in water.

PHOTOGRAPHERS are snapping pictures of the brawl.

POLICE enter through the main doors, breaking up the brawl.

The people on stage make their way out of the room with Sophie close behind.

SOPHIE

This ain't right. Ain't right at all.

INT. RALPH WHITEHEAD'S OFFICE RECEPTION AREA AT AFA

SECRETARY is seated at his desk.

Sophie comes marching up the hall carrying the CURRENT ISSUE OF HOLLYWOOD REPORTER.

SECRETARY

Oh, Miss Tucker. Mr. Whitehead is in a meeting.

SOPHIE

Good. Add me to the list.

INT. RALPH WHITEHEAD'S OFFICE AT AFA

Whitehead is stacking money bundles into a wall safe, putting one bundle into his suit pocket.

Sophie enters the office dropping the Hollywood Reporter onto his desk as well as other trade papers.

Whitehead nervously blocks view of safe content, unknowingly knocking a bundle of money onto the floor.

THE TRADE PAPERS HEADLINES. "SOPHIE TUCKER SHOUTED DOWN"  
"AFA MEETING A BRAWL" "TUCKER THROWN FROM MEETING" "AFA  
CHARTER REVOKED."

SOPHIE

Whitehead, we got a problem.

Whitehead reads the article headline. Text reads: "AFA  
MISHANDLING MEMBERS FUNDS."

WHITEHEAD

Yes, I saw this.

SOPHIE

We have no alternative at this  
point.

Sophie spies the bundle of money on the floor, picking  
the bundle up she spots the half open safe.

Whitehead steps between her and the safe.

Sophie pulls his jacket to push him aside and the bundle  
of money falls out.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

You gonif! It's all true.

WHITEHEAD

Now Sophie, hold on.

SOPHIE

You son-of-a-bitch! I've been  
fighting to keep this union alive  
against all the bad press and  
you've been pocketing the members  
funds.

WHITEHEAD

It ain't what it appears to be.

SOPHIE

Well, hells bells.

Whitehead's SECRETARY enters.

SECRETARY

Mr Whitehead, these gentlemen from  
the State's Attorney's office are  
hear to see you.

TWO MEN enter.

OFFICER 1 places Whitehead in hand cuffs.

OFFICER 1  
Whitehead, you're under arrest for  
tax fraud and embezzlement.

SOPHIE  
Oi!!

Sophie plops down into the chair.

OFFICER 2  
You're Sophie Tucker aren't you?

SOPHIE  
At this point I'm a plate of  
gefilte fish.

She holds up her wrists anticipating the handcuffs.

OFFICER 2  
Oh, no Miss Tucker. It's Whitehead  
we want not you. The audits  
cleared you.

The Two Officers drag Whitehead out of the office.

SOPHIE  
Well, hells bells. Now maybe we  
can get back to normal.

INT. BROADHURST THEATRE, NEW YORK - DECEMBER 7, 1941

SUPER: BROADHURST THEATRE, NEW YORK - DECEMBER 7, 1941

Sophie and GEORGE JESSEL are on stage in front of a  
packed audience.

GEORGE  
Sophie, how long have I known you?

SOPHIE  
Georgie, I've known you since  
before Lincoln was shot.

GEORGE  
I thought it was longer than that.  
Why can't I get a pretty lady like  
yourself to go out with me on a  
second date?

SOPHIE  
Where do you take them on the  
first date?

GEORGE  
Hopefully to my apartment.

SOPHIE  
But that's not how it's done.

GEORGE  
But what do I do?

SOPHIE  
Treat them like a lady.

Sophie takes George's arm and sings "WHEN A LADY MEETS A GENTLEMAN DOWN SOUTH."

SOPHIE (CONT'D)  
WHEN A LADY MEETS A GENTLEMAN DOWN  
SOUTH  
IT'S A SWANEE MOON AND A SWANEE  
TUNE THEY LOVE  
THEN THE LADY TELLS THE GENTLEMAN  
DOWN SOUTH  
SURE IT'S MIGHTY FINE  
JUST TO KNOW YOU'RE MINE MY LOVE  
THEN THE WALK ALONE  
WHERE MAGNOLIAS GROW  
TWO HEARTS SING A SONG  
THAT WAS WRITTEN LONG AGO  
IF THAT'S NOT SWEET ROMANCE  
THEN HUSH MY MOUTH  
WHEN A LADY MEETS A GENTLEMAN  
A VERY POLISHED GENTLEMAN  
WHEN A LADY MEETS A GENTLEMAN DOWN  
SOUTH  
LIFE IS WELL WORTH A WHILE  
WHEN YOU LIVE IN THE SOUTH  
THERE YOU LEARN HOW TO SMILE  
WHEN YOU LIVE IN THE SOUTH  
FOLKS FALL IN LOVE MOST EVERY DAY  
BUT IN THAT LAND OF SUNSHINE  
IT'S JUST A DIFFERENT WAY  
SOPHIE AND GEORGE DO A LITTLE SOFT  
SHOE ROUTINE  
WHEN A LADY MEETS A GENTLEMAN DOWN  
SOUTH  
IT'S A SWANEE MOON AND A SWANEE  
TUNE THEY LOVE  
THEN THE LADY TELLS HER GENTLEMAN  
DOWN SOUTH  
SURE IT'S MIGHTY FINE  
JUST TO KNOW YOU'RE MINE MY LOVE  
THAT'S WHY I LIKE ROADS  
WHERE THE COTTON GROWS  
THE FELLOWS TAKE YOU HOME

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

BUT A WIGGLE DID YOU KNOW  
 AND YOU DON'T SEE ROUGE  
 ALL SPATTERED ROUND YOUR MOUTH  
 WHEN A LADY MEETS A GENTLEMAN  
 A VERY POLISHED GENTLEMAN  
 WHEN A LADY MEETS A GENTLEMAN DOWN  
 SOUTH

Sophie leads George off the stage.

A stagehand hands Sophie a newspaper and she reads the headlines.

SUPER: NEWSPAPER HEADLINES "JAPAN ATTACKS PEARL HARBOR."

INT. NATIONAL THEATRE, WASHINGTON DC - MONTHS LATER

Sophie is in the lobby of the theatre before the show at a Treasury Bond sales table.

People are lined up buying them.

SOPHIE

Come on folks. It's for a good cause.

WOMAN 1

I'll take one.

SOPHIE

Only one? It's supporting our boys.

WOMAN 1

Okay, make it three.

SOPHIE

Now that's the spirit.

SOPHIE CONTINUES TO SELL AND TALK TO PATRONS AS A VOICE OVER OF SOPHIE SINGING "THE BIGGER THE ARMY AND THE NAVY."

SOPHIE (V.O.)

LIKE EVERY OTHER YANK  
 MY LUCKY STARS I THANK  
 THAT I CAN ALWAYS SEE THE SUNNY  
 SIDE OF LIFE  
 BOYS ARE MARCHING OFF TO CAMP  
 SWEETHEARTS ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND

SOPHIE  
 BUT I SAY TO THE GIRLS  
 CHEER UP GIRLS  
 AND KEEP THIS THOUGHT IN MIND  
 THE BIGGER THE ARMY AND THE NAVY  
 THE BETTER THE LOVING WILL BE  
 THE WOMAN WHO WENT THROUGH THE LAST  
 WAR  
 KNOW WHAT I MEAN  
 WE'RE GETTING THRILLS WE AIN'T HAD  
 SINCE 1918  
 WITH MILLIONS OF SOLDIERS AND  
 SAILORS  
 THERE'S A DIFFERENCE YOU MUST AGREE

FADE TO:

EXT. BROOKLYN NAVAL YARD

THE VOICE OVER CHANGES TO SOPHIE, LIVE, NOW ENTERTAINING  
 THOUSANDS OF TROOPS AND WORKERS ON A STAGE SET UP IN A  
 HANGER.

SOPHIE  
 I KNOW PERFECT GENTLEMEN  
 DISCREET IN EVERY WAY  
 THEY GET INTO A UNIFORM  
 AND IT'S BANG BANG RIGHT AWAY  
 THE BIGGER THE ARMY AND THE NAVY  
 THE BETTER THE LOVING WILL BE  
 AND IT'S GOING TO BE PERFECT FOR ME  
 WHY THE ARMY SURELY DOES SOMETHING  
 TO YOU KIDS IN BASIC TRAINING  
 JUST ASK THE CHAMPION HOST  
 WHO DOES THE ENTERTAINING  
 AND WHEN A SOLDIER GETS A FURLOUGH  
 OR A SAILOR COMES ASHORE  
 THE LONGER YOU MAKE YOUR KISSES  
 THE SHORTER HE'LL MAKE THE WAR  
 AS FOR SAILORS  
 FOR THEM I'VE ALWAYS HAD A HIGH  
 REGARD  
 WHO WOULDN'T AFTER LIVING THREE  
 YEARS  
 NEAR THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD  
 AND WHEN A SOLDIERS SAYS  
 WHAT'S COOKING COOKIE  
 HE AIN'T TALKING TO NO CHEFS  
 AND IF HE'S PHYSICALLY ONE A  
 DON'T YOU BE SOCIALLY FOUR F  
 GIRLS WE ALL CAN'T BE GLAMOROUS  
 WE ALL CAN'T BE A DUCK  
 I'M NO LONGER YOUNG A BEAUTIFUL

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

BUT I'M STILL PATRIOTIC  
 KNITTING SWEATERS IS NOT ENOUGH  
 AND DON'T YOU THINK SO FOR A MINUTE  
 A SAILOR WANTS A SWEATER  
 WITH A LANA TURNER IN IT  
 WE DID OUR SHARE  
 WHEN OVER THERE  
 YOUR PAPA'S BEAT THE HUNS  
 AND WHAT THE MAMAS DID FOR THE  
 PAPAS  
 THE DAUGHTERS CAN DO FOR THE SONS  
 THE BIGGER THE ARMY AND THE NAVY  
 THE BETTER THE LOVING WILL BE  
 AND IT'S CERTAINLY OKAY WITH ME

INT. MIAMI HOTEL, MIAMI FLORIDA - SOPHIE'S ROOM

Sophie is smoking a cigarette, coughing and sneezing with a bad cold and laryngitis.

Ted enters carrying a TRAY WITH HOT TEA AND A BOTTLE OF LIQUOR.

TED

Here yah go Soph. This should help.

SOPHIE

I hope so.

TED

You sound god awful. Are you sure you want to go through with this?

SOPHIE

Teddy, I did not come all the way to Miami Florida to just stay in my room. This is a big night. I've been away too long. I have to be tops for this.

TED

Then you better have some of this.

Sophie grabs the bottle of liquor, pouring a generous amount into an empty glass, she holds it up in a salute.

SOPHIE

This should do it.

Sophie drinks the glass down.

INT. MIAMI HOTEL, MIAMI FLORIDA - GRAND BALLROOM

The room is packed with people finishing their lavish dinner.

Bert Tuck and HIS WIFE are seated down front.

The CEO OF THE HOTEL steps up to the microphone at a podium.

CEO

I do hate to interrupt this fine dinner with duties at hand but it seems there is someone that needs to be honored. Bert Tuck has been with us a short time but has made Miami his home. I am pleased to announce that he will be taking over as the new General Manager of this hotel and act as Chief Operating Officer as well.

The audiences applauds in acknowledgement.

CEO (CONT'D)

And in honor of his new title we have a special surprise to thank him for his services.

A piano begins to play as a curtain behind him rises revealing Ted at the piano and Sophie standing next to it.

SOPHIE SINGS "I'M WASHING THE BLUES FROM MY SOUL."

SOPHIE

WORLD WEARY BURDENED DOWN  
 WITH USELESS CARES AND WORRIES  
 MY HOMELAND IS CALLING ME  
 A VOICE WITHIN SAYS HURRY  
 DOWN THROUGH THE LOWLANDS  
 I'M TRUDGING ALONG  
 WITH EYES UP TO HEAVEN  
 AND A HEART FULL OF SONG  
 LORDIE CAN'T YOU SEE  
 I'M WASHING THE BLUES FROM MY SOUL  
 I HIT ALL THE HIGH SPOTS  
 FOUND THEY WERE VAIN  
 TO LOSE THAT COLD TREASURE  
 WAS REALLY TO GAIN  
 LORDIE CAN'T YOU SEE  
 I'M WASHING THE BLUES FROM MY SOUL  
 I LIFTED MY HOPE TO THE HIGHEST  
 AND FOUND A WORLD FRIENDLY AND TRUE

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

NOW RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE  
 YOU CAN FIND ME  
 YOU ONLY NEED THE RIGHT POINT OF  
 VIEW  
 I'VE PUT OFF THE OLD WAYS  
 TOOK ON THE NEW  
 THE CLOUDS ARE DIVIDED  
 THE LIGHTS SHINING THROUGH  
 LORDIE CAN'T YOU SEE  
 I'M WASHING THE BLUES FROM MY SOUL  
 I'VE FOUND OUT THE THINGS THAT ARE  
 WORTHWHILE  
 THE BLUEBIRD HAS PAID ME A CALL  
 THE GRAY DAYS I'VE BEEN THROUGH  
 HAVE TAUGHT ME  
 THIS LIFE IS NOT SO BAD AFTER ALL  
 CAUSE I'M THROUGH WITH PRETENDING  
 I'M WHAT I DON'T FEAR  
 I'VE GONE BACK TO NATURE  
 WHERE EVERY THINGS REAL  
 LORDIE CAN'T YOU SEE  
 I'M WASHING THE BLUES FROM MY SOUL

As the audience gives Sophie a standing ovation Bert goes up on stage and they furiously hug.

BERT

I had no idea.

SOPHIE

That's why they call it a surprise.

BERT

You're the best mother anyone could want. Ich leibe dir.

SOPHIE  
 (tearing)  
 Ich leibe dir oich.

INT. LATIN QUARTER, NY - OCTOBER 25, 1965

SOPHIE (V.O.)

Life went on and I just sang my heart out whenever I could. It was my true goal in life.

SUPER: LATIN QUARTER, NY - OCTOBER 25, 1965

81 YEAR OLD SOPHIE is on stage performing.

TEDDY is playing the piano.

SOPHIE IS SINGING "I'M DOING WHAT I'M DOING FOR LOVE."

SOPHIE

I AM ONE OF THOSE THE WORLD LOOKS  
DOWN ON  
I'M NOT WHAT THEY THINK I OUGHT TO  
BE  
LOVE HAS MADE ME DO THINGS  
PEOPLE FROWN ON  
BUT LOVE IS LIFE AND EVERYTHING TO  
ME  
THE WORLD MAY THINK I'M WRONG  
BUT I'LL JUST GO ALONG  
I'M DOING WHAT I'M DOING FOR LOVE  
WHO CARES WHAT OTHERS SAY  
I'LL BE THE ONE WHO'LL PAY  
FOR DOING WHAT I'M DOING FOR LOVE  
I'LL GAVE UP ALL I HAD BUT I'M GLAD  
I DID IT FOR YOU  
AFTER YEARS MAY BRING TEARS  
BUT WHAT CAN I DO  
YOU COST ME HOME AND FRIENDS  
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW IT ENDS  
I'M DOING WHAT I'M DOING FOR LOVE  
THE WHOLE WORLD MAY THINK I'M WRONG  
RIGHT OR WRONG I'LL GO ALONG  
I'M DOING WHAT I'M DOING FOR LOVE  
I DON'T CARE WHAT PEOPLE ALL AROUND  
ME SAY  
I KNOW I KNOW I'LL BE THE ONE  
WHO'LL PAY  
FOR DOING WHAT I'M DOING FOR LOVE  
I'LL GAVE UP ALL I HAD BUT I'M GLAD  
I SAY IT WITH PRIDE  
IF THE AFTER YEARS  
BRING ME TEARS  
IT'S ALL RIGHT I'M SATISFIED  
I'VE BROKEN MAN MADE LAWS  
BUT HEAVEN WILL FORGIVE ME BECAUSE  
I'LL GAVE UP ALL I HAD BUT I'M GLAD  
I'M DOING WHAT I'M DOING FOR LOVE

INT. SOPHIE'S DRESSING ROOM

Sophie goes to her dressing table and sits looking into the mirror, lighting a cigarette.

SOPHIE

Oi, what a night girl.

Sophie has trouble breathing and starts coughing.

Ted knocks at her door and enters.

TED

Sophie?

He picks up some water and gives it to her.

TED (CONT'D)

I think this is enough. I'm  
calling Doc Cohen.

He picks up phone and dials.

Sophie collapses unconscious onto the floor.

INT. MT SINAI HOSPITAL EXAMINATION ROOM - NEXT DAY

Moe and Sophie are seating in the exam room. Sophie is  
still in a hospital gown.

DR. COHEN enters with x-rays and charts.

DR COHEN

Well, we need to talk.

SOPHIE

I'm too tired to talk. Just tell  
me how to get rid of this cough.

DR COHEN

That will take chemotherapy and  
radiation as well as a bit of a  
stay here to get your kidneys back  
on track.

MOE

Her kidneys? What's wrong with her  
kidneys?

DR COHEN

She has pretty advanced kidney  
disease.

SOPHIE

Well, I guess you got to sign me  
up for a room with a view.

MOE

Oh my god, Soph.

SOPHIE

Don't worry Moe. It'll all be  
fine.

INT. SOPHIE'S ROOM AT HOME - 4 MONTHS LATER

SUPER: 4 MONTHS LATER

Sophie is sitting in a wheel chair. She is frail and thin.

CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON SOPHIE'S SMILING FACE.

FREEZE FRAME:

THE SONG "SOME OF THESE DAYS," SOPHIE'S 1926 RECORDING, BEGINS TO PLAY.

SUPER:

"ON WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 9, 1966, AT THE AGE OF 82, SOPHIE TUCKER DIED IN HER PARK AVE APARTMENT AFTER SUFFERING MONTHS OF RADIATION AND CHEMOTHERAPY FOR ADVANCED LUNG CANCER. HER SON BERT AND HIS FAMILY BY HER SIDE"

"DURING HER LIFE SOPHIE TUCKER RAISED AND DONATED HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS TO MANY CHARITIES AS WELL AS ALMOST TWO MILLION DOLLARS RAISED AT A SINGLE DINNER EVENT AND DONATED TO THE HEBREW HOME FOR THE AGED."

"SOPHIE TUCKER WAS THE LAST OF THE RED HOT MAMA'S"