

HAROLD

You mean this afternoon?

SHINN

I couldn't make myself any plainer if I see a Quaker on his day off.

22 - Third Seventy-Six Trombones Crossover (Orchestra)

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE NINE

SCENE TEN

(TIME: That evening.)

AT RISE: The PAROO'S porch. MRS. PAROO is sitting on the porch rocking. WINTHROP is hiding behind her chair. HAROLD has ENTERED at RISE)

HAROLD

Mrs. Paroo do you realize you have the facial characteristics of a Cornet virtuoso?

MRS. PAROO

I don't know if I understand you entirely, Professor.

HAROLD

If your boy has that same firm chin, and those splendid cheek muscles -- By George! Not that he could ever be really great, you understand, but --

MRS. PAROO

Oh, is that so. And in the name of St. Bridget, why not?

HAROLD

Well -- you see all the really great Cornet players were Irish -- O'Clark, O'Mendez, O'Klein --

MRS. PAROO

But Professor, we are Irish!

HAROLD

No! No! Really! That clinches it! Sign here, Mrs. Paroo. Your boy was born to play the Cornet!

(SHE signs in a daze. WINTHROP has followed her and is still hiding behind her)

(HAROLD)

Fine, fine. That will be seven dollars earnest money. Nothing more due until the first installment payable at opening of band practice.

(MRS. PAROO locates money from about her person)

Ah thank you. And of course, I'll need the boy's measurements for his band uniform.

MRS. PAROO

His uniform!

(WINTHROP falls off the porch in excitement. HAROLD and MRS. PAROO are somewhat surprised)

HAROLD

Hello, son.

(WINTHROP picks himself up and starts to run. HAROLD stops him)

Certainly, his uniform. And there won't be a penny due till delivery, which gives him four weeks to enjoy, to anticipate, to imagine, at no cost whatever. Never allow the demands of tomorrow to interfere with the pleasures and excitement of today.

WINTHROP

(Drawing an imaginary line down the outside of his leg)

Would it have... a... a...?

HAROLD

A stripe? Certainly, my boy, a wide red stripe on each side. What do you think of that?

(WINTHROP drops his eyes suddenly and runs off)

MRS. PAROO

You'll have to excuse Winthrop, Professor. We can't get him to say three words a day even to us. And if you get him to play in the band you'll have St. Michael's own way with you. But if anybody can do it I'll bet you can. Out of a crowd I'll pick you for hod-carrying, clay-pipe smokin', shamrock-wearin', harp-playin', Mavorneen-pinchin', Tara's hall minstrel-singin' Irishman! Be-gob and be-jabbers! Where are ye from, me bye?

HAROLD

Gary, Indiana.

MRS. PAROO

I knew it! Gary - Where did you say?

HAROLD

Gary, Indiana. In fact Gary Conservatory was my Alma Mater.

MRS. PAROO

Was she now?

HAROLD

(Aware of MARIAN'S approach)

Why yes — Gold Medal Class of '05. Hodado, Miss Paroo.

MARIAN

Hodado, Mr. Hill.

HAROLD

Of course! Paroo. I thought the name sounded familiar.

(Sotto)

I've tried to see you since the other night, but —

MRS. PAROO

He wants to put Winthrop in the band!

MARIAN

We're not interested, Mama.

MRS. PAROO

But Marian, the boy might have his father's musical gift. He does have my jaw, you know.

HAROLD

Oh — your husband musical? Well I'd like to have a talk with him. I'm sure we —

MARIAN

Do you burst in on everyone's home like this? Prying into personal affairs? We're not interested.

MRS. PAROO

Marian!

HAROLD

(Cheerfully)

Well, that's one for and one against. Now why not let the boy's father decide?

MARIAN

The boy's father is dead. Anything else?

HAROLD

Oh, I'm sorry. But that's all the more reason why your brother should have something like this -

MARIAN

My brother is a ten-year-old problem child who can't understand why his father was taken away. Would you care to explain it to him? He's been brooding about it for two years. As to your musical tricks, why don't you go into business with some nice carnival man who sells gold-painted watches and glass diamond rings?

HAROLD

Musical tricks? Well Miss Paroo, I hardly -

(Without response, MARIAN EXITS into house. MRS. PAROO stands speechless. HAROLD stands approvingly, his finger alongside his nose)

I get the feeling she likes the idea. Oh, a little cautious perhaps but I admire that in a woman. Just keep me alive and I'll be back later in the week.

MRS. PAROO

One moment, Professor Hill. About the boy's measurements. I make all his clothes. Sleeve 21, Waist 18, Crutch 14, -

HAROLD

Fine, that's all I need. Now I must get back to the Hotel.

MRS. PAROO

Professor, I do hope you'll excuse Marian. She's not really -

HAROLD

Please. Don't worry about a thing. I'm sure that at heart she's as lovely as yourself. Good day to ya, Widda Paroo.

MARIAN

(Returning to porch with embroidery and slip of paper)

Has he gone?

MRS. PAROO

He has. And I hope not forever. Darlin' don't you ever think of your future? Gary Indiana Conservation Class of '05 - Now darlin' -

MARIAN

Now mama. Surely a girl's future doesn't depend on encouraging every fast-talking, self-centered, woman-chasing travelling man who comes to town. And the fact that he claims his commodity is music does not, in this particular case, impress me.

MRS. PAROO

All right, darlin', all right. Only it's a well-known principle that if you keep the flint in one drawer and the steel in another, you'll never strike much of a fire.

MARIAN

Mama!

(Calling)

Winthrop! Winthrop, I know you're there.

(WINTHROP comes slowly to porch)

Please go to the library and ask Miss Grubb to give you the book I set aside. It's the Indiana State Educational Journal 1890-1910. It's a large brown volume with black corners.

WINTHROP

Do I hafta?

MARIAN

You won't have to talk to anyone. I've written it all down.

(SHE gives him paper. HE goes)

Thank you dear.

MRS. PAROO

Now what are you up to? Why do you need books at this hour of the night?

MARIAN

I have a feeling the Indiana Journal may help me poke some large holes in the Professor's claims.

MRS. PAROO

Well, I give up. At your age if you don't mind my askin' what kinda white knight do you expect to come ridin' along?

MARIAN

Well I'm not waiting for Luther Greiner who backs me into the Ancient History shelf every time he comes into the Library.

MRS. PAROO

He does?

23 - *My White Knight*

(Marian)

MARIAN

Or Ed Gammidge and that buggy of his with the removable back seat. But I'm not waiting for a man in shining white armor either.

MY WHITE KNIGHT, NOT A LANCELOT,
NOR AN ANGEL WITH WINGS;
JUST SOMEONE TO LOVE ME,
WHO IS NOT ASHAMED OF A FEW NICE THINGS.

MY WHITE KNIGHT -
WHAT MY HEART WOULD SAY
IF IT ONLY KNEW HOW.
PLEASE, DEAR VENUS, SHOW ME NOW.

ALL I WANT IS A PLAIN MAN;
ALL I WANT IS A MODEST MAN;
A QUIET MAN, A GENTLE MAN,
A STRAIGHTFORWARD AND HONEST MAN
TO SIT WITH ME IN A COTTAGE
SOMEWHERE IN THE STATE OF IOWA.
AND I WOULD LIKE HIM TO BE
MORE INT'RESTED IN ME
THAN HE IS IN HIMSELF.
AND MORE INT'RESTED IN US
THAN IN ME.
AND IF OCCASION'LY HE'D PONDER
WHAT MAKES SHAKESPEARE AND BEETHOVEN GREAT,
HIM I COULD LOVE 'TIL I DIE.
HIM I COULD LOVE 'TIL I DIE.

MY WHITE KNIGHT, NOT A LANCELOT
NOR AN ANGEL WITH WINGS.
JUST SOMEONE TO LOVE ME,
WHO IS NOT ASHAMED OF A FEW NICE THINGS.
MY WHITE KNIGHT -
LET ME WALK WITH HIM WHERE THE OTHERS RIDE BY;
WALK, AND LOVE HIM
'TIL I DIE.
'TIL I DIE.