

SCENE ONE

WINGS OF ZANGLER'S BROADWAY THEATER, NYC. The FOLLIES GIRLS are heading out onto the stage for the curtain call. Backstage, TESS, the dance director, is giving them last minute directions.

No. 1

Opening

(Orchestra)

TESS. *(over the music)* Shoulders back! Heads high!

TESS calls to PATSY, a not-so-bright Follies Girl with a squeaky voice who is hanging out backstage.

Patsy! Where's Bobby?! He should have been here two hours ago!

PATSY. I know! I saw him yesterday, and he was all excited about the audition for Mr. Zangler.

TESS. Wait! There he is!

BOBBY CHILD, dressed as a banker, hurries on.

PATSY. Bobby!

BOBBY. Did I make it?! Is Zangler still here?

PATSY. Yeah, ya still got five minutes.

BOBBY. Great!

TESS. Bobby, what happened?!

BOBBY. They kept me late at the bank. This time Zangler's going to be dazzled.

At this point, BELA ZANGLER enters. He is a great impresario with a hat, glasses, and Hungarian accent. BOBBY sees him.

Mr. Zangler!

No. 2

Fanfare

(Orchestra)

TESS and PATSY prevent BOBBY from bothering ZANGLER and they join ZANGLER as he sweeps "onstage" to make his curtain speech. ZANGLER raises his arms, and the "applause" dies down.

ZANGLER. Ladies and gentlemen. Vell vell vell. My name is Bela Zangler. (*applause*) Thank you for coming to Zangler Follies—our final performance of the season, and I hope you vill all be here in just eight veeeks for vonderful new show!

No. 3

Fanfare (Playoff)

(Orchestra)

Wild applause as ZANGLER, TESS, PATSY and the FOLLIES GIRLS leave the "stage." As soon as ZANGLER gets to the wings, BOBBY tries again.

ZANGLER. Tessie!

BOBBY. Mr. Zangler, could I see you a min—

ZANGLER. I must talk now to dance director about very important professional matter!

BOBBY. Right.

BOBBY moves away to talk to some of the other FOLLIES GIRLS as ZANGLER pulls TESS aside.

ZANGLER. (*business-like*) Tessie.

TESS. Yes, Mr. Zangler?

ZANGLER makes sure they're not overheard; then says with passion:

ZANGLER. Tessie, I love you.

TESS. (*exasperated*) Bela—!

ZANGLER. Vhat do you say ve have intimate supper?

TESS. I'm not hungry.

ZANGLER. Tessie, please! You make me crazy!

TESS walks away and crosses to PATSY and the other GIRLS.

Tessie!

By this time, the FOLLIES GIRLS are leaving the stage in a line, past ZANGLER.

MITZI. Vacation!

MARGIE. At last! Goodnight, Mr. Zangler.

SUSIE. Goodnight, Mr. Zangler.

BETSY. Goodnight, Mr. Zangler.

VERA. Goodnight, Mr. Zangler.

And at the end of the line is BOBBY.

BOBBY. Hello, Mr. Zangler.

ZANGLER. Not you again.

BOBBY. I'm here to audition.

ZANGLER. Mr. Child. Why are you wasting my time?!

BOBBY. *(indicating the theater around him)* Because this is my life! It's all I care about!

BOBBY's conviction makes even ZANGLER pause.

Now look, you're going to love this. I promise. Just – just – okay. Okay?

ZANGLER. ... Okay.

BOBBY looks at PATSY and TESS, who both give him a big nod of encouragement. BOBBY takes a breath, then launches into his audition, dancing as he sings:

No. 4

K-ra-zy For You

(Bobby)

BOBBY. Let me give you the lowdown:
I'm k-ra-zy for you.
When it comes to a showdown,
I'm k-ra-zy for you.
And so, though love may not inspire my lingo,
Still, it's making my heart go "Bango! Bingo!"
Let me give you the lowdown:
I'm k-ra-zy for you.

BOBBY finishes with a slam, literally nose-to-nose with ZANGLER.

BOBBY. Now what do you say to that?!

ZANGLER. Foot—

BOBBY. Huh?

ZANGLER. Foot ... You are standing on my foot!

BOBBY. Oh, sorry ...

ZANGLER. You are a moron!

BOBBY. Mr. Zangler! ... Look, I-I-I realize I'm an unknown, here in New York. But I have potential!

ZANGLER. Ya. You could be unknown all over America!

ZANGLER strides off. TESS and PATSY cross to BOBBY.

TESS. Hey, Bobby. Just forget about him.

PATSY. Cheer up! He's not worth it.

BOBBY. Who knew he had big feet!

IRENE, a well-dressed socialite, enters.

IRENE. Hello, Bobby.

BOBBY. *(without turning, recognizing the steely voice:)* Irene. Hi ...

IRENE. Say goodnight to the ladies, Bobby.

BOBBY. Now wait a second—!

PATSY. We'll see ya later.

TESS. We've gotta go anyway. 'Night, Bobby.

And PATSY and TESS are gone.

IRENE. Bobby, it is time you gave up all this dancing nonsense and settled down!

BOBBY. Nonsense—?!

IRENE. We have been engaged for five years. Now when are we getting married?!

BOBBY. We're not.

IRENE. Don't be ridiculous. I have the wedding all planned. The guest list is up to nine hundred.

BOBBY. Great. Big crowd. They won't even miss me.

IRENE. Now I want you to promise me: from the day we're married, you will work in the bank.

MOTHER enters, unseen by BOBBY and IRENE.

BOBBY. But I don't want to work in the bank! That's my mother's idea! If my mother was here right now, you know what I'd say to her? Huh?! I'd say: "MOTHER!!!"

MOTHER. Yes, Bobby?

BOBBY turns to face MOTHER.

BOBBY. *(extra sweetly)* You look well. That coat is just—

MOTHER. I knew I'd find you here.

IRENE. Lottie, dear, I am talking to Bobby.

MOTHER. Well, so am I!

IRENE. Then get in line!

MOTHER. Bobby, in the ten years since you left Harvard, you have accomplished nothing.

IRENE. He got engaged to me.

MOTHER. *(to BOBBY)* You have accomplished less than nothing. Now the Board of Directors and I have decided to give you one last chance. This is a deed of property in ... *(handing him the document)* Deadrock, Nevada. I want you to go there immediately and get it signed.

BOBBY. Nevada?!

MOTHER. It will save the bank quite a sum in foreclosure costs.

BOBBY. But—

IRENE. He will go to Nevada over my dead body!

MOTHER. That sounds like an excellent route.

No. 5

I Can't Be Bothered Now

(Bobby & Follies Girls)

MOTHER and IRENE talk to BOBBY simultaneously.

MOTHER. I will cut off your allowance
if you do not go to Nevada,
first thing tomorrow morning!
Now I don't want to hear
any nonsense about it ...

IRENE. Darling, don't even listen
to her. I've got the
wedding all planned.
You'll wear a morning
coat and I'll go strapless ...

*BOBBY tunes the argument out and goes into a dream world. Music
intro starts and their voices fade away.*

BOBBY. Bad news, go 'way!