

## MARIAN

Good!

*(The porch now appears LEFT. MARIAN ENTERS house, slamming door in HAROLD'S face. LIGHTS FADE FORESTAGE and come up behind SCRIM where we see:)*

**END OF SCENE THREE****SCENE FOUR**

*(TIME: Immediately following)*

*SCRIM RISES: The interior of a small house. AMARYLLIS, a small-fry freckle-faced eight-year old girl, is playing the piano. MRS. PAROO, a cheerful-looking forty, continues her household chores, as AMARYLLIS plays, in halting tempo where she isn't sure and too fast where she is)*

## # 7 – Piano Lesson

*& If You Don't My Saying So**(Mrs. Paroo & Marian)*

## MRS. PAROO

*(Calling. Speaks in Irish brogue)*

That you, Daughter?

## MARIAN

*(OFFSTAGE)*

Yes, Mama. Keep on, Amaryllis. I'll be there in a minute.

*(On the down-beat of the fourth bar, AMARYLLIS plays the melody note a half tone too high, and turns around to appeal wordlessly to MRS. PAROO who, in the manner of one well accustomed to this occurrence, plays the correct note as automatically as she does her other tasks. AMARYLLIS happily starts over, apparently the usual step in this well-worn routine. Again the wrong note – again the correction. As AMARYLLIS settles herself for the third go-round, MARIAN ENTERS in a hurry)*

## MARIAN

Hello, Mama.

*(MARIAN starts to piano in time to correct AMARYLLIS' clinker)*

Fine, dear. Now your exercises.

AMARYLLIS

*(Replacing her piece in music roll)*

Yes, Mom.

MRS. PAROO

I don't remember the liberry bein' open last Fourth a' July.

MARIAN

It was, Mama, all evening. Mama, a man with a suitcase has been following me all over town.

MRS. PAROO

Oh - who?

MARIAN

I never saw him before.

MRS. PAROO

Did he say anything?

MARIAN

He tried.

MRS. PAROO

Did you say anything?

MARIAN

Mama, of course not.

*(AMARYLLIS begins her exercises)*

Now don't dawdle, Amaryllis.

SOL, DO, LA, RE, TI, MI, A LITTLE SLOWER,  
AND PLEASE KEEP THE FINGERS CURVED  
AS NICE AND HIGH AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN.

Don't get faster, dear.

*(MARIAN winds metronome)*

MRS. PAROO

If you don't mind my saying so, it wouldn't have hurt you to find out what the gentleman wanted.

MARIAN

I know what the gentleman wanted.

MRS. PAROO

What, dear?

MARIAN

You'll find it in Balzac.

PAROO

Excuse me fer livin' but I've never read it.

*(AMARYLLIS repeats in new key, as MARIAN beats out strict time along with metronome)*

MARIAN

NEITHER HAS ANYONE ELSE IN THIS TOWN.

MRS. PAROO

THERE YOU GO AGAIN  
WITH THAT SAME OLD COMMENT  
ABOUT THE LOW MENTALITY  
OF RIVER CITY PEOPLE  
AND TAKIN' IT ALL TOO MUCH TO HEART.

MARIAN

Now, Mama, as long as the...

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WAS ENTRUSTED TO ME  
FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING  
RIVER CITY'S CULTURAL LEVEL,  
I CAN'T HELP MY CONCERN  
THAT THE LADIES OF RIVER CITY  
KEEP IGNORING ALL MY COUNCIL AND ADVICE.

MRS. PAROO

BUT DARLING,  
WHEN A WOMAN'S GOT A HUSBAND  
AND YOU'VE GOT NONE,  
WHY SHOULD SHE TAKE ADVICE FROM YOU?  
EVEN IF YOU CAN QUOTE BALZAC AND SHAKESPEARE  
AND ALL THEM OTHER HIGH FALUTIN' GREEKS.

MARIAN

MAMA, IF YOU DON'T MIND MY SAYING SO,

HAROLD

You mean this afternoon?

SHINN

I couldn't make myself any plainer if I'se 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! Gar — . Where did you say?