

THE UNSINKABLE TITANIC

A Musical in One Act

Book and Lyrics by Richard Brenneman

Music by John Dusenberry

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ACT I**SCENE 1**

TIME: After dinner.

SETTING: Dining Salon on the H.M.S Titanic, at sea.

AT RISE: Players are gathered before DAL,
Director of Entertainment

DAL

Hello everyone! I'm already known to some of you—at least those of you who were here last nite. My name is Dal, short for Dalahoussie, and I try to direct the entertainment aboard this ship. Right now we're trying to arrange a production for the final nite at sea—which, hopefully, is tomorrow nite. My assistant in this endeavor, who is really more of a co-director, meet Rudolf (points). Now will some of you help Rudolf to move those tables out of the way so we have room to “swing the cat.”

We rehearsed a little number last nite called “Let's Flatten Those Wrinkles”. Here are the song sheets, and you who are new to it, just try to move along so we can put this one, as opener, in storage.

(GROUP sings and dances to “**Let's Flatten Those Wrinkles**”)

Women

LET'S FLATTEN THOSE WRINKLES,
THOSE WRINKLES, THOSE WRINKLES.
LET'S FLATTEN THOSE WRINKLES
BY HUGGIN' SO TIGHT.

Men

FORGET ABOUT WRINKLES,
FORGET ABOUT CRINKLES,
SWEET, SWEET MAMMA
WE'RE DANCIN' TONIGHT.

Women

YOU TIGHTEN YOUR GIRDLE,
YOUR GIRDLE, YOUR GIRDLE.
YOU TIGHTEN YOUR GIRDLE

Men

I'LL PULL IN MY BELT.
FORGET ABOUT GIRDLES

Women

FORGET ABOUT CURDLES

Men

SWEET, SWEET MAMMA
THOSE BULGES WILL MELT.

Women

JUST LOOSEN YOUR CHASSIS

Men

AND SWAY TO THE TUNE.

Women

IF WE'RE GONNA' BE CLASSY

Men

WE BETTER START SOON.

Women

JUST LOOSEN YOUR CHASSIS

Men

AND SWAY TO THE TUNE.

Women

IF WE'RE GONNA' BE CLASSY

Men and Women

WE BETTER START SOON, SOON, SOON.

Women

LET'S FLATTEN THOSE WRINKLES,
THOSE WRINKLES, THOSE WRINKLES.
LET'S FLATTEN THOSE WRINKLES
BY HUGGIN' SO TIGHT.

Men

FORGET ABOUT WRINKLES,
FORGET ABOUT CRINKLES,
SWEET, SWEET MAMMA
WE'RE DANCIN' TONIGHT.

Women

JUST LOOSEN YOUR CHASSIS

Men

AND SWAY TO THE TUNE.

Women

IF WE'RE GONNA' BE CLASSY

Men

WE BETTER START SOON.

Women

JUST LOOSEN YOUR CHASSIS

Men

AND SWAY TO THE TUNE.

Women

IF WE'RE GONNA' BE CLASSY

Men and Women

WE BETTER START SOON, SOON, SOON.

Women

THESE BONES WON'T GET BRITTLE,
GET BRITTLE,

Men and Women

GET BRITTLE.

Women

THESE BONES WON'T GET BRITTLE

Men and Women

IF WE USE THEM TO DANCE.

Women

FORGET ABOUT BRITTLE,

Men

IT'LL BE WORTH WHAT WE CHANCE

Women

FLAT WRINKLES SWEET MAMMA,

Men

FLAT WRINKLES SWEET MAMMA,

Men and Women

FLAT WRINKLES SWEET MAMMA MEANS ROMANCE.

Men and Women

RO – MANCE!

DAL

Now, we will only need those who are here for the first time or those who were here last nite but didn't get to audition.

(INKY, standing with MARYBELLE, waves his hand vigorously ... INKY is 60 plus while MARYBELLE is 20 plus)

Oh yes, (acknowledges wave—looks at clipboard) you are Inky and Marybelle. Are you going to perform as a couple? It's a talent nite, you see.

INKY

We read your poster. No, we're not a duet. Marybelle is the only performer. But she doesn't speak up for herself very well. So—

DAL

So, you're volunteering her.

INKY

Yes, and I'm going to excuse myself because the number that Marybelle has chosen to sing is a little embarrassing to me. It's about a generation mix, which is a very normal thing in our society, but some hold it up to ridicule, you understand.

RUDOLF

(looking up from chording the piano)

Ridicule aside, Inky, you know you're on the edge of becoming an old man... do you want to drag Marybelle into that? Things may be going all right now, but in a few years you'll need help just dressing yourself.

DAL

Rudolf, you're being very impertinent! These good people are volunteering as entertainers.

INKY

I'm an exception, Dal. I'm not an entertainer... and I'm not offended by what Rudolf suggests... there's a lot of truth in it. But when either of you get to be my age, I think you'll be won over to my position.

MARYBELLE

What about my position in all this? Inky is definitely my choice, and that's hardly a subject for polite conversation.

DAL

Well said, Marybelle. Now we can get to the matters at hand.

(INKY begins to exit)

Before you traipse out of here, sir; do you mind telling us how you got the name, Inky?

MARYBELLE

(volunteers)

I gave him that name—because he signs all the checks.

(INKY walks off in a resigned fashion)

DAL

Splendid! Marybelle, you undoubtedly have the music there, if you'll give it to Rudolf, we'll get on with your number.

(MARYBELLE sings **"It's Nice To Have Somebody"**)

IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEBODY
OH SO CRAZY 'BOUT YOU.
EVEN IF HE'S JUST AN OLD MAN.
HE TRIES THE VERY BEST THAT HE CAN.
AT LEAST YOU'VE GOT A PERMANENT FAN.

IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEBODY

OH SO CRAZY 'BOUT YOU.
EVEN IF HE'S SIXTY AND BALD.
PERHAPS YOU'RE NEVER VERY ENTHRALLED.
BUT, YOU NEVER HAVE TO JUMP WHEN YOU'RE CALLED.

IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEBODY
OH SO CRAZY 'BOUT YOU.

LET THOSE OTHER DAMES
MAKE THEIR FANCY CLAIMS.
YOU KEEP PLAYIN' IT COOL.
WHEN THE GAME IS UP
YOU CAN RAISE YOUR CUP,
'CAUSE YOU'VE BEEN NOBODY'S FOOL.

IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEBODY
OH SO CRAZY 'BOUT YOU.
EVEN IF HE'S JUST AN OLD PET.
THAT'S MORE THAN LOTS OF OTHER GIRLS GET.
AND WE AIN'T HEARD THE LAST OF YOU YET.

SO THOSE WHO SAY THE PATH YOU CHOOSE IS LAZY,
THAT'S UNTRUE OO-OO-OO.

IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEBODY
OH SO CRAZY,
ALTHOUGH HIS EYES ARE NEBULOUS AND GLAZY,
IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOMEBODY
OH SO CRAZY 'BOUT YOU.

DAL

Well done, Marybelle. I think everyone aboard will catch the humor in that song except, perhaps, Inky!

MARYBELLE

Au contraire, Mister Dal; when we're alone, Inky thinks it's hilarious! But he also thinks that song is kind of an invitation to young swains to "move in".

DAL

And have you found it so?

MARYBELLE

Oh yes!

DAL

Then why does Inky allow you to sing this particular song?

MARYBELLE

He likes having something other men would also like to have.

DAL

Well put! So, you're obviously a passenger, Marybelle. Do we have any other paying passengers trying out?

Those who are not working about the ship?

(AYESHA responds—holding up hand)

Oh yes; and you were here last nite also. What is your pretty name? No, that didn't come out right. What is your name, my pretty?

AYESHA

Ayesha.

DAL

An unusual name indeed. Any meaning?

AYESHA

It doesn't mean anything in particular. It simply means that when you call it, you probably want me!

DAL

Very good! Well, I'm not a paying passenger in the sense that you and Marybelle are. I've been aboard other White Star vessels doing this same thing. Sort of getting my experience at sea before I launch myself on the Great White Way.

So, Ayesha, what do you plan to do? To sing or to dance? Incidentally, weren't you here last nite and we didn't get around to you?

AYESHA

Yes, I mean no—but I'd like to do both, thank you.

DAL

You need to be in pretty good condition to dance and sing. Dancing gets you pretty winded.

AYESHA

I was exercising regularly before I came on this cruise.

DAL

So let's go. What's the song?

AYESHA

One that we used in high school. Your pianist has already been over it. He's got the sheet music.

DAL

We're off!

(AYESHA sings and dances to **"Let Me Dance"**)

LET ME DANCE, LET ME DANCE,
LET ME GREET THIS GREAT BIG MORNING AS I DANCE,
AS I DANCE, AS I DANCE,
LET THE MUSIC GILD THE SUN.

FOR ROMANCE, FOR ROMANCE

THERE IS NOTHING MORE ABORNING THAN TO DANCE,
THAN TO DANCE, THAN TO DANCE,
WITH EMOTIONS ON THE RUN.

(AYESHA dances to the music; then resumes singing as well)

LET ME WHIRL IN THE LIGHT
AS THE MUSIC FORMS A CYCLONE.
LET ME TWIRL WITH DELIGHT
AS ALL BOREDOM COMES UNDONE!

OH LET ME DANCE, LET ME DANCE
MAY THE MUSIC FORM A HALO, I'M IN TRANCE,
I'M IN TRANCE, I'M IN TRANCE,
ALL THE STARS GYRATE AS ONE.

(AYESHA again dances to the music; then resumes singing as well)

LET ME WHIRL IN THE LIGHT
AS THE MUSIC FORMS A CYCLONE.
LET ME TWIRL WITH DELIGHT
AS ALL BOREDOM COMES UNDONE!

YES LET ME DANCE, LET ME DANCE,
NOW THERE'S NONE ESCAPES THE SWAY OF JUBILANCE.
CHEER THE BEAT OF REELING FEET,
AND NOW LET ME DANCE.

AYESHA

So do I get to perform? What about the song?

DAL

The song I liked ...and your dancing is good! Needs a little polishing. You'll get to perform, yes! Tell me where have you done your dancing?

AYESHA

At Matanuska High School.

DAL

Sounds like Indian country—forgive me for not knowing where that is.

AYESHA

It's right in the middle of Pennsylvania.

DAL

Wait; don't tell me the town. You've said enough. I don't see what training you could possibly get there. But you've come through very well. And what about college? Surely someone who can afford this cruise can afford college?

AYESHA

I chose not to go to college!

DAL

That's inconsistent! It's every girl's dream—college!

AYESHA

This is my dream: to perform!

DAL

I think there is something you're not telling me.

AYESHA

First off, tell me whether I really get to perform.

DAL

Of course you do ...you're a fine dancer! Just in need of a little refinement—but there may not be time for that.

AYESHA

Well then, I'll tell you... I'm not a passenger! I said that because I thought it would help my chances.

DAL

I am impressed with you masquerading as a passenger, but we try to be democratic here and not let it make any difference. Where do you work aboard ship... as a chambermaid?

AYESHA

No, as a waitress. Sometimes I help out in the kitchen.

DAL

Meanwhile, Ayesha; I see you're keeping all of your weight on one leg... what did you hurt? Your knee? Tell me—injuries are common for dancers.

AYESHA

They're not common with me... but I think I hurt my ankle.

DAL

(leading AYESHA toward a chair)

Here, you've got to get the weight off it.

(sits by AYESHA and rubs hand over ankle)

Is this the area? If so, that's an advantage, because it heals quicker. Now we've got to get you an ice pack... Rudolf (calls to his assistant) please bring us an ice pack.

RUDOLF

Here's that ice pack... and we're not likely to run out of coolant, judging by the ice floating by this ship.

DAL

How did you learn that?

RUDOLF

I was just out on the deck. Yikes, it's cold out there. Wonder, Dal, if the severe cold is affecting the piano? Some of the keys are sounding very "tinny".

DAL

We can't do very much about that before we hit New York...unless you can find a piano tuner aboard.

RUDOLF

Hardly; the first and second class passengers wouldn't be caught dead tuning a piano. And the third class are largely peasants—for the most part they've never even seen a piano.

DAL

You paint a grim picture.

RUDOLF

Well, it's not a new piano, you know. I believe they took it off their sister ship, the Olympic. Gads, with all the money they spent on this vessel, why wouldn't they spring for a new piano?

DAL

Well, they had to borrow a lot of things in the interest of time—to meet their sailing date. They even borrowed coal from a number of ships, including the Olympic, to get under way. There's another mine strike going on... excuse me, Rudolf, while I give proper attention to Ayesha.

(places ice pack on AYESHA's ankle)

There!

(lifts ice pack and kisses ankle)

AYESHA

Oh you shouldn't do that! That's taking liberties!

(enter MAX, supervisor of kitchen help)

MAX

Where are you, Ayesha?

(looks about)

Is that you being fondled by this libertine? What the hell's going on here?

DAL

Who are you to make such accusatory remarks?

MAX

A man who's entitled to some respect; I'm Ayesha's boss!

DAL

Well, Ayesha's rehearsing for a performance in the salon tomorrow nite.

MAX

Yeah, well from what I saw she's rehearsing for some kind of burlesque act.

DAL

You didn't see anything uncommon for dancers.

MAX

Well, I can tell you this. I'm Ayesha's boss and I forbid her to be in any dancing act. She won't have time. And it looks right now like you've made a cripple out of her.

DAL

What exactly are Ayesha's hours? Or do you plan to chain her to her post?

MAX

She's to help out wherever and whenever I need her—early or late. And you'd better report early tomorrow, Ayesha. If you have a bad leg, I can use you in the kitchen to help the cook.

(exit MAX)

DAL

He seems to take a proprietary interest in you, Ayesha.

AYESHA

Oh, that Max! He thinks he owns me! He's just jealous, really. Gets all upset whenever anyone even speaks to me.

DAL

Yes... Ayesha, I'll be back soon.

(DAL exits, after which AYESHA sings **"This Could Have Been My Dream"**)

ALL OF THE PLANNING
ALL OF HE FANCIES
LIKE RIDING A BRIGHT MOONBEAM
WHO WOULD HAD THOUGHT THE MOON TURNS TO ASHES
THIS COULD HAVE BEEN MY DREAM.

I KEPT A WISH PAD
LEARNED FROM THE MASTERS
PUSHED EV'RYTHING TO EXTREME
BUT NOTHING OCCURRED WHEN I TURNED TO THOSE MASTERS
THIS COULD HAVE BEEN MY DREAM

IT'S LIKE ROLLING THE DICE
OR BETTING ON CARDS
IT MAY TURN OUT NICE
OR BRING YOU DOWN HARD

I WALK DOWN THE BY-WAYS
DRIVE WELL KNOWN HIGHWAYS
ALL IN AN INFINITE STREAM
SEEING IT ALL MAKES ME WISH FOR THAT RAINBOW
THIS COULD HAVE BEEN MY DREAM
THIS COULD HAVE BEEN MY DREAM.

DAL

(returning)

O. K. it's all arranged! I spoke with Mr. Ismay.

AYESHA

And whoever is he?

DAL

The biggest single owner of this ship... the one who gave me my job. He's also on the Board of Governors at Oxford. That's how I got to meet him... but the important thing is—Mr. Ismay agrees that you should be a full-time performer... how do you like that? No more waiting on tables.

AYESHA

Dal, there'll be trouble with Max.

DAL

No trouble that'll bother you... just tell him Mr. Ismay approves.

AYESHA

He absolutely won't believe it and he'll be furious.

DAL

Then I'll go with you. Can you walk alright now?

AYESHA

Walk? My ankle started to get better the minute I realized you wanted to keep me on the show. Let's do a celebration dance!

THIS IS THE TIME AND THIS IS THE FEELING
DANCE TO THE MUSIC AND SMILE AT THE DAY
FORGIVE ME IF I'M TOO ABRUPT IN APPEALING
I ASK YOU TO DANCE WHILE I'M FEELING THIS WAY.

(AYESHA and DAL dance together ... dancing pauses or slows)

DAL
HOLD OUT YOUR HEART TO THE GLORY OF BEING

AYESHA
VIBRANT AND LIVELY AND DARING AND FREE

DAL
THIS IS THE START THOUGH THERE'S NO GUARANTEEING

AYESHA
DANCE IS THE DRAMA LOVE'S YEARNING TO SEE...

(dancing resumes) ... (dancing pauses or slows)

DAL and AYESHA
HOLD OUT YOUR HEART TO THE GLORY OF BEING
VIBRANT AND LIVELY AND DARING AND FREE
THIS IS THE START THOUGH THERE'S NO GUARANTEEING

DAL
DANCE IS THE DRAMA,

AYESHA
DANCE IS THE DRAMA,

DAL and AYESHA
DANCE IS THE DRAMA LOVE'S YEARNING TO SEE.

DAL
Splendid; now let's go see Max.

AYESHA
You're going to get punched, Dal. This Max is really a mad man.

DAL

Will he be in the kitchen now?

AYESHA

No, not likely. But he could show up here before you can lace your shoes. Dal, maybe I should wait until you make a trip on one of the other vessels. And there's another reason... Max is very good at what he does. Brute though he is, he's probably one of the best employees aboard this ship. And if we cause him trouble, we'll be causing the ship a lot of trouble... do you know what I mean?

DAL

Show business runs on sentiment, Ayesha, but not the kind of sentiment you're evincing. If you stop to feel sorry for every employee aboard this ship... that's a cast of thousands! Do you realize there are a number of important producers and directors of Broadway Shows aboard? You must strike while the iron's hot!

AYESHA

All right, all right, Dal. I believe you. But also I don't want to get you hurt. Max is terribly strong; and hot tempered!

DAL

Don't worry! I was on the fencing team at Oxford.

AYESHA

But you won't have a sabre to protect you!

DAL

I should be able to jump aside easy enough. I don't think Max will land a punch.

AYESHA

If he does land a punch, you won't do any more thinking... oh that wasn't fair, Dal; you're doing this for me, but I'd be happier if you didn't.

DAL

Isn't that Max coming through the door?

AYESHA

Yes indeed it is; and he's got clenched fists!

(enter MAX... a scuffle ensues wherein DAL pulls off a table cloth and drapes it about MAX's head and shoulders)

END OF SCENE 1

ACT I

SCENE 2

TIME: A few minutes after the scuffle.

SETTING: Dining Salon on the H.M.S. Titanic, at sea.

AT RISE: DAL and AYESHA are alone.

AYESHA

Dal, you really did pretty good; except for that eye... and it was pretty clever of you to throw a table cloth over Max's head. You were able to hold him until the guards came.

DAL

Oh, instead of being clever, I wish that for one time I could really win a fight!

AYESHA

So what a way to go thru life... winning fights! You may as well be a pugilist. You know, we've got one on board. I waited on him the first nite out. Says he's coming to America to fight Jack Johnson.

DAL

Jack Johnson's the first black champion.

AYESHA

He could give you lessons... you might ask him.

DAL

Ayesha, you've had your little bantering—we've got to get down to business. It's no use to talk to Max about Mr. Ismay; I see that. And I can't bother Ismay again.

AYESHA

So we just have to put up with the fact that Max is going to bother us whenever and wherever we rehearse.

DAL

I have an idea; here, wear this!

(DAL gives AYESHA a ring from his own finger)

If the man is downright jealous, this legitimizes our relationship.

AYESHA

A fine idea.

(gives DAL a quick kiss on the cheek... examines ring closely)

But must it be such a splendid ring? This is worth a fortune!

DAL

Only one I have, Ayesha; and as they say in the Middle East, "wear it in good health." I'm pretty positive you won't jump off the ship with it.

AYESHA

Dal, is this (holds up ring) just to keep Max from bothering me? It seems such a poor excuse for such a lovely ring.

DAL

Well, it may turn out to save me a lot of bruises... but also, it's to tell you someone close at hand is very fond of you!

AYESHA

There! You said something, at least. Oh why are men so tergiversating when it comes to expressing their feelings?

DAL

Tergiversating? Sure you haven't been to college?

AYESHA

I'm quite sure I don't even want to go to college. I agree with my Irish father that education isn't very warmin' to the heart.

DAL

You impressed everyone at the late-nite party, Ayesha. Now when they see that ring, you're going to have to explain it to them.

AYESHA

I'm not going to say it's to keep Max away—rather I'll say it's to keep you around.

(AYESHA sings: **“In Case You Haven't Noticed We're In Love”**)

WE CLING SO VERY TIGHTLY WHEN WE'RE DANCING
THE MUSIC'S LOOSE BUT WE FIT HAND-IN-GLOVE
WE WALTZ ACROSS THE FLOOR,
LIKE WE'RE THE WORLD AND WHAT IT'S FOR
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, WE'RE IN LOVE.

WE STAY TOGETHER WHEN WE GO TO PARTIES
THE OTHERS DRIFT FROM THOSE THEY'RE TIRED OF
WE HOLD EACH OTHER'S EYES -
JUST LIKE A COMET IN THE SKIES
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, WE'RE IN LOVE.

WE SAY SUCH SILLY THINGS TO OTHER PEOPLE
WE BLUSH AS THOUGH THEY FOUND US IN EMBRACE
BUT THEN, WE'RE NOT THE SAME AS OTHER PEOPLE
OUR EYES KEEP DWELLING ON EACH OTHER'S FACE.

WE LINGER STILL LONG AFTER TIME OF LEAVING
TOMORROW IS THE LEAST WE'RE THINKING OF
JUST ONE EMPASSIONED KISS -
COULD MAKE A GIANT FEEL LIKE THIS

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED,
WE'RE IN LOVE, LOVE, LOVE
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED WE'RE IN LOVE.

So isn't this the cats' whiskers? I've got a beautiful man and a beautiful ring—to protect me.

DAL

You really don't need any protection by me, Ayesha; your protection is your beauty and your talent.

AYESHA

Oh now, you're making this ring sparkle.

DAL

Speaking matter-of-factly, Ayesha; we're not really engaged!

AYESHA

Don't you want to be?

DAL

I don't think I'm ready for it.

AYESHA

Is there... perhaps... someone else?

DAL

It's a complicated story, Ayesha.

AYESHA

It's going to get even more complicated if you don't tell it. Could it be that you're already married?

DAL

Do you suppose I'd be running around on these cruise ships if I had a wife on shore?

AYESHA

Most of the crewmen are married; they do exactly that. It falls under the necessity of making a living.

DAL

I'm spared that necessity, Ayesha. I inherited a bundle of money.

AYESHA

So maybe the other lady is a fortune hunter, as maybe I am too.

DAL

I'm sure you're not and the so-called "other lady" can never be—she's no longer alive.

AYESHA

That's very sad, Dal; and you're not over it—I understand. Oh, can I ask a question that might be painful to you?

DAL

If you must!

AYESHA

Did your lady...

DAL

Her name was Grace.

AYESHA

Sorry; did Grace ever wear this ring?

DAL

No, she wore an even nicer one, and she was buried with it.

(DAL sings: "**Green**")

GREEN, SHE WAS WEARING SOMETHING GREEN;
NOT BEFORE OR SINCE I'VE SEEN
ANYONE SO SIMPLY BEAUTIFUL.

PRAY, THERE SHE TAUGHT ME HOW TO PRAY
I RECALL THE THINGS SHE'D SAY -
HOW OUR LIVES COULD BE SO BEAUTIFUL.

THEN THE YEARS; SWIFT IN PASSING WERE THE YEARS
HOPES WENT DASHING IT APPEARS
SHE WAS GONE WHILE YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL.

GREEN, I STILL SEE HER WEARING GREEN
AND IN ALL THESE YEARS BETWEEN
THERE HAS BEEN NO ONE MORE BEAUTIFUL -
THAT I'VE SEEN; THAN IN ALL THESE YEARS I'VE SEEN
SHE MADE CLEAR WHAT LOVE CAN MEAN
I STILL SEE HERE WEARING... GREEN.

(SOWANEE and CARL enter. SOWANEE is an obese middle-aged lady in charge of cabin service and CARL is a kitchen worker)

CARL

Hi, you ought to sing something more peppy. I've got one for you.

DAL

I won't be performing, thank you. I'm directing.

CARL

We all came by because we heard you were sweet on Ayesha. We all work together on the boat.

DAL

Well, Ayesha won't be working with you any longer.

CARL

Is her ankle that bad?

(goes over to AYESHA, lifts her leg and examines her ankle)

AYESHA

(annoyed, not angry)

Stop it Carl!

DAL

What exactly are you two doing here?

CARL

We're volunteering to entertain. Isn't that what your poster calls for?

SOWANEE

I dance and I sing also!

DAL

You're somewhat late. We've already begun the rehearsals.

CARL

We don't need no rehearsals; we got our acts down pat.

DAL

Well, if Sowanee dances and sings, what is your act, Carl?

CARL

I'm a juggler. I can juggle anything... potatoes; I learned with potatoes—right in a ship's galley... oranges, eggs

(tries eggs, smashes one)

DAL

That'll go over big!

CARL

Now, be patient. Humpty-Dumpty you know!

AYESHA

Oh Carl, we don't need a juggler.

CARL

(resumes juggling using oranges)

Problem is—people don't realize how much they need jugglers. It's the most primitive form of entertainment. Cain was juggling stones before he slew Able; and David before he slew Goliath.

AYESHA

You're not planning to "slew" anyone; are you Carl?

CARL

You see, no one takes jugglers seriously! Yet this can be done with fiery torches or even small goats.

SOWANEE

How about with motor boats—that rhymes with goats?

DAL

Do you have a monologue to go with your juggling, Carl? Or do you depend on the girls here for repartee?

CARL

Dal; I'm just a kitchen worker. Don't use words like that one me. But I think I understand what you're asking me—can I tell a story while I'm juggling, right?

DAL

Exactly!

CARL

Well, I can tell an interesting tale about you and Ayesha. And here we thought we were going to have her to ourselves.

DAL

I think you've just come here to cause embarrassment.

SOWANEE

Wait a minute, wait a minute; when do I get my chance?

DAL

You're entitled to an audition, Sowanee. What's it going to be?

SOWANEE

Just like Ayesha did, I...

DAL

How do you know what Ayesha did?

SOWANEE

Carl and I were watching where you couldn't see us.

DAL

So tell us what you're going to do and get on with it.

SOWANEE

It's a song I wrote myself and it's gone over pretty well; especially when everyone gets liquored up!

(SOWANEE sings: **"I'm Fat But I'm Fantastic"**)

I'M FAT, BUT I'M FANTASTIC
I'M FAT, BUT NOT FORLORN
MY FORM IS QUITE ELASTIC
AND I DON'T RUE THE DAY THAT I WAS BORN
(I JUST IGNORE THE FACT)

I'M FAT, BUT NOT GIGANTIC,

I'M FAT—STILL QUITE A DAME
MEN SAY, I'M QUITE ROMANTIC
AND I CAN ROUSE THEIR PASSIONS JUST THE SAME
('CAUSE I JUST SMILE AND THEN PRETEND)

I'M TEE-NY, WEE-NY
AND FLING MY LEGS UP HIGH
DRESSED IN A BRIGHT BIKINI
THEN YOU'D SWEAR TO LOVE ME 'TIL I
DIE-DE-DIE—DE—DIE-DE-DIE

SOMETIMES, I'M VERY LONELY
AND TRY MY BEST TO HIDE
A DREAM THAT I SHARE ONLY
WITH THE THIN GIRL WHO IS STRUGGLING DEEP INSIDE...

I'M TEE-NY, WEE-NY
AND FLING MY LEGS UP HIGH
DRESSED IN A BRIGHT BIKINI
THEN YOU'D SWEAR TO LOVE ME 'TIL I
DIE-DE-DIE—DE—DIE-DE-DIE
I'M FAT!

DAL

I like your lyric, Sowanee. Can you do a little more gambling?

SOWANEE

Did you say gambling? Hell, I gamble every day aboard ship. Plus I play the Irish Sweepstakes.

DAL

I meant movement, Sowanee. Kick your legs—fling your arms!

SOWANEE

All at the same time?

DAL

Well, yes; sort of!

SOWANEE

Hey, you're trying to make a whirling dervish out of me. If I kick my legs and fling my arms at the same time, I'll end up as a pile of grease in the middle of the floor.

DAL

Ok, ok. I think we can put you in the program, Sowanee... Carl I don't think you're serious about being an entertainer.

CARL

But I have done a lot of juggling, Mr. Dal.

DAL

Perhaps you have; but your talents need to be focused... all is not lost, however. I get the impression you'd like to be part of the production, right? So we can make you stage manager. I'll show you exactly what you need to do.

(enter MAX)

MAX

Where is Ayesha?

DAL

Look, Max; Ayesha doesn't work for you anymore. Mr. Ismay assigned her to me.

MAX

So what are you... a professional pimp? Ayesha was doing honest work on the dining staff and then you come along to...

DAL

You're just showing your ignorance with that wild talk, Max; and you're starting to get me annoyed!

MAX

(talks directly to AYESHA)

Ayesha, you come with me. We've had several calls for you at the first class tables. One call was by the manager of the heavyweight fighter. You can't just walk out on me because of this dancing nonsense.

AYESHA

I want no part of that manager. He's got hands like a paper hanger.

MAX

You'll do as you're told, Ayesha. You don't own this ship, you know!

DAL

Well Mister Ismay does own it—practically. And he says Ayesha works for me!

MAX

The only thing working for you is your big mouth; and I plan to close that!

(walks toward DAL menacingly)

And don't be looking for any more table-cloths... you're not a bull fighter!

(MAX takes a round-house swing at DAL who deftly steps aside and trips MAX who falls on his face stunned. The LADIES scream while AYESHA goes to the door and hollers for the security guard as SOWANEE sits atop MAX to hold him DOWN—several OTHERS join SOWANEE on MAX)

GUARD

(lifting MAX to his feet)

What do we have here... some flamenco dancing that got out of hand? This is the second time that we've been called to control you, mister.

MAX

If this sissy here (points to DAL) would just stand and fight, we could get this over with.

GUARD

Stand and fight is it? One more violation and you'll not be able to stand or fight! We've got a "brig" aboard this vessel and you're close to becoming its first customer.

MAX

You can't lock me up... who'll see to the meals?

GUARD

You're not very important, sonny; compared to the chef. So don't press your luck. Now let's get you out of here.

(exit MAX & GUARD)

DAL

Attention everyone! Tomorrow nite's the last nite at sea and that's the last chance for our production—unless you want to perform in New York harbor. So we'll be working pretty late tonite. If any of you are having second thoughts, we can excuse you now, before we arrange an order of appearance.

And here is a song we'll sing as a chorus. Rudolf please play it thru one time quickly—then we'll vocalize.

(ALL sing: **"With My Arms About You"**)

WE SAIL ON THE GREAT TITANIC
SHE GLIDES TRANSOCEANIC
HER REGISTRY'S BRITANIC
WITH MY ARMS ABOUT YOU

HER DECK IS QUITE GIGANTIC
THE STARS BECOME GALVANIC

THE SCENE IS MOST ROMANTIC
WITH MY ARMS ABOUT YOU

FROM BOW TO STERN THE NUMBERS TURN
BEYOND EIGHT HUNDRED FEET.
THE LARGEST SHIP TO LEAVE A SLIP
THAT MAKES OUR TALE COMPLETE.

WE SAIL THE COLD ATLANTIC
OUR MOOD IS FAIRLY MANIC
WE BLESS THE GREAT TITANIC.

NOW HERE'S THE THING TO MAKE YOU STOP AND THINK
THAT THEY TRIED TO BUILD A SHIP THAT CANNOT SINK.
SO WE CAN ROAM THE OCEAN WILD AND BLUE -
WITH MY ARMS AROUND YOU.

SOWANEE

Dal, I don't think you're making the best use of Carl.

DAL

How's that?

SOWANEE

Well, Carl not only juggles, but he's a fine lyricist and should be given...

DAL

A stage manager, Sowanee, is a vital functionary in any performance.

(addresses CARL)

Carl, are you unhappy with your assignment?

CARL

Unhappiness is my handmaiden.

DAL

Well, if you write lyrics, who adds the music and the vocalization?

CARL

Sowanee knows my songs. We've been on a lot of cruises together. But of course, my favorite was written for a man to sing.

DAL

Here Sowanee, put on this derby (hands hat to SOWANEE) and have at it.

SOWANEE

No way! I know the song, but I'm not singing it! It's for you to do, Carl... it's your statement!

(CARL sings: "**Should I Be Shamed?**")

I LIKE SONGS SWEET AND TENDER -
SHOULD I BE SHAMED?
I LIKE FORMS SOFT AND SLENDER -
SHOULD I BE SHAMED?
I LIKE TO WEAR A ROSEBUD
ALL MORNING THROUGH
CAN'T BEAR TO SHED A DOE'S BLOOD
LIKE HUNTERS DO.

I LIKE THE FEEL OF SATIN -
SHOULD I BE SHAMED?
ADORE THE SOUNDS OF LATIN
AS STARS ARE NAMED
IN LOVING MAN, NOT MANHOOD
I STAND AS BLAMED
THAT'S HOW I AM... SHOULD I BE SHAMED?

NOT DRAWN TO THINGS ATHLETIC,
NOT EVEN CHESS

I FIND IN THINGS AESTHETIC
MORE HAPPINESS

I LIKE TO SEE GIRLS CURTSEY -
SHOULD I BE SHAMED?
MY SOUL ABOUNDS WITH MERCY
THAT LIES UNCLAIMED
WHY SHOULD A FLAIR FOR BEAUTY
LEAVE MY HEART MAIMED?
THAT'S HOW I AM... SHOULD I BE SHAMED?

DAL

Well, that's bearding the lion in his den. It's rather like a confession... something no one's ever lyricized before. Where're you from, Carl?

CARL

San Francisco.

DAL

I might have guessed. I like the song, and I like the message; but that's beside the point. It would cost me my job to stage it aboard this ship. Do you realize the Captain himself conducts the religious services here—he held one this morning right where I'm standing.

CARL

So... my song has nothing to do with religion.

DAL

It flies in the face of religious teaching; and you know it! We could never do it on the Titanic... it would sink the ship!

SOWANEE

Not hardly; this is an unsinkable ship—remember?

DAL

But we still need you as stage manager, Carl... agreed?

(CARL nods)

Fine!

SOWANEE

Before you scuttle Carl's creativity altogether, he wrote a special song that I think will help this show, but I have trouble singing it.

DAL

Too much range?

SOWANEE

No, too damned much emotion; it gives me chills everytime I sing it.

DAL

Well, let's just let it go; because God knows we have enough songs already.

SOWANEE

Wait 'til you hear it and then decide.

DAL

All this heavy emotion; are you going to be able to handle it?

SOWANEE

Yes, and perhaps I should tell you... I was a madam before I started this cruise business.

DAL

Don't tell me you were combining the two businesses.

SOWANEE

Hardly; I was just running away—sort of. It isn't just kids who run away, you know.

DAL

I expect we're going to hear this song whether we want to or...

SOWANEE

Yes, you should hear it; because you and Ayesha are the models for it.

(SOWANEE sings: **"I Just Saw Two People In Love"**)

DON'T ASK ME WHY
THERE'S A TEAR IN MY EYE
DON'T ASK ME WHAT I'M DREAMING OF
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT -
JUST A LITTLE UP-TIGHT
I JUST SAW TWO PEOPLE IN LOVE

IT'S ALMOST UNREAL
THE EMOTIONS I FEEL
THOSE MEM'RIES DRIFT DOWN FROM ABOVE
IT'S FUNNY YOU ASK
I'M RE-LIVIN' MY PAST
AND I JUST SAW TWO PEOPLE IN LOVE

ALL THAT GETTING' AND SPENDIN'
AND STRUGGLIN' WITH DEBT
LEAVES YOUR MIND SPINNIN' WITH DOUBT
AS THE YEARS TUMBLE BY, YOU'RE INCLINED TO FORGET
THAT LOVE'S WHAT THE WHOLE THING'S ABOUT

SO NOW I KNOW WHY
THERE'S A TEAR IN MY EYE
AND A PAST THAT I KEEP THINKIN' OF
THOSE MEM'RIES COME THRU
IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU
I JUST SAW TWO PEOPLE -
TWO BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE,

I JUST SAW TWO PEOPLE... IN LOVE.

DAL

I don't grab that sentiment; but then, as I said, I'm not forty five years old. I'd rather have Carl juggle than for you to go thru that song! A lot of overly sentimental pap!

(enter SECURITY GUARD handcuffed to prisoner, SERGIO. SERGIO is about forty, slim, handsome and docile-looking)

SECURITY GUARD

Say, you people are up late, aren't you? It's getting near mid-nite.

DAL

We have a performance in this salon tomorrow nite; so this is our first and last rehearsal. What brings you into these quarters?

SECURITY GUARD

Need to find some place for Sergio to exercise. Can't free him up during the day... people who have seen us in handcuffs get scared. But we never found this place occupied so late before.

DAL

Why don't you just take him out on deck?

SECURITY GUARD

Have you been out there? It's colder than a reindeer's nose.

DAL

Well, we'll be thru by mid-nite. These are all working people and they need their sleep.

SECURITY GUARD

All right if we can watch 'til you're thru?

DAL

Certainly! (smilingly) So long as you don't try to foist any songs on us. Tonite everybody's got a song in their pocket.

SECURITY GUARD

We don't have any songs; but Sergio here will probably end up in Sing-Sing... bad joke, yes?

DAL

Yes, it was a bad joke!

SECURITY GUARD

But to put your minds at ease; Sergio isn't given to violence—no murders, bombings—nothing like that! Sergio is being taken back to the U.S. to stand trial for a major jewel theft. And I've been hired by an insurance company to see that he arrives safely.

SOWANEE

Aren't you taking a chance to remove the handcuffs?

SECURITY GUARD

Where's he going to go?

SOWANEE

He could harm the other passengers!

SECURITY GUARD

I already said: he isn't given to violence. We're not even sure he is a jewel thief. He's being brought back to trial—that's all.

DAL

Well, we've probably had enough instruction in criminology. Let's have a "run thru" for the last time.

SECURITY GUARD

By the way, can you use some magic tricks? Sergio here has some whoppers!

SOWANEE

Like making diamonds disappear, right?

DAL

You sound more like a booking agent than a security guard.

SERGIO

But I need to go down to the cabin to get my props.

DAL

Wait a minute; I didn't agree to any magic on the program. Least of all by someone who is under arrest.

AYESHA

Why don't you wait until you see his tricks? He's shown some to me in the dining room.

DAL

No, we've got a full show; we don't need any...

SOWANEE

We don't need any of it, really. But if it's entertaining?

DAL

All right! Go get your tricks.

(SECURITY GUARD and SERGIO exit)

(RUDOLF looks startled—runs toward deck. Returns, asks:)

RUDOLF

Did any of you feel that?

GROUP response

Feel what?

RUDOLF

That scraping. I just saw an iceberg float by. I'll bet we hit it!

AYESHA

It sounded like cloth tearing.

DAL

I didn't hear anything! Rudolf, are you trying to create a rumpus?

CARL

I'll have to admit... I felt something... a grinding sensation!

AYESHA

There, the engines have stopped. Why would they do that unless we struck something?

DAL

Could be waiting for a channel to clear. You know, I read somewhere that there are over twenty thousand of those icebergs that form every year. They're not all huge! People on the crow's nest could have easily seen a huge one.

RUDOLF

The one I saw drifting by was H U G E!

SOWANEE

Twenty thousand of them, eh Dal? One is enough of a hazard!

CARL

Why were we going so fast in these ice-strewn waters? Over twenty one knots, I'm told.

RUDOLF

There goes the distress signal—hear it?

SOWANEE

Maybe that's just to tell the other ships to keep out of harms' way.

AYESHA

Why didn't someone tell us?

CARL

There have been several iceberg warnings—I learned that from the crew.

DAL

Wait now; let's put it together. Even if we did strike an iceberg, we are on an unsinkable ship.

SOWANEE

You wish!

CARL

That whistle sure is an eerie sound.

DAL

Rudolf; please go back out on deck and see what you can learn.

RUDOLF

Sure, I'll go; but I know we should be putting on our life-jackets.

(RUDOLF exits)

CARL

Well, we've got to go back to our rooms to get them.

DAL

Aren't we being a little pre-mature in this? Yes, the engines have stopped and distress signals are being sounded. But very few of us even had any sense of collision... so can that be a severe enough situation to warrant life-jackets?

AYESHA

Why have the engines stopped?

CARL

Possible a propeller blade flew off; and that would account for the vibration some felt. But if they don't stop the engines, the vibration keeps getting worse.

RUDOLF

(returning excitedly)

Everyone is running to their rooms to put on their life-jackets!

CARL

Say, is this ship listing toward the bow?

DAL

Look; let's all go back to our rooms and put on the life-jackets. Then meet here again, if you're so inclined. No one's going to do much else with all the excitement around, and it's just too damned cold to stand about on the deck.

AYESHA

It takes two people to put those jackets on, Dal. I've done it before. Do you want me to go with you?

DAL

Please do! But run and get your jacket first. Meet me in C-12, remember?

AYESHA

Did you think I'd forgotten already, Dal? I've got cabin C-12 singled out for a big event in my life. That's why I'm sure this ship won't go down.

END OF SCENE 2

ACT I

SCENE 3

TIME: A few minutes later.

SETTING: Dining Salon on sinking Titanic.

AT RISE: DAL and AYESHA and OTHERS have returned with their life-jackets.

DAL

Well, well; we haven't lost much of anybody. I did see them readying lifeboats; shouting women and children first. So, if either of you women...

AYESHA

You can't mean that, Dal! I wouldn't leave without you!

DAL

That is a lovely sentiment, Ayesha. But we're talking about your life now; not heroics!

CARL

Your sugary discussion is really unnecessary. This vessel is not going to sink! It may settle down a little—even to C deck; but it'll stay afloat. And you'll be so much better off here than out in that cold, dark briny... that sea water is twenty six degrees!

RUDOLF

How do you know that?

CARL

Any time you've got floating ice in sea water, it's twenty six degrees. I've measured it; not tonite, but I've measured it!

DAL

I just want to make sure the women understand that they're entitled to a place in a life boat.

SOWANEE

I understand perfectly well... and I believe I'll go get on one of those glorified dingys. Why? Because I'm not in love like Ayesha here; and furthermore, while the vessel may not go down, I don't want to tweak the devil's nose... also, I better line up early, because I take two spaces. (*exits*)

(CAPTAIN SMITH pokes head in salon door)

CAPTAIN SMITH

Have you heard the alarm? We are lowering women and children in the lifeboats on B deck... after which the crew will be excused from duty, so it becomes every man for himself.

DAL

Are we going down, Captain?

CAPTAIN SMITH

We've got to be prepared for the worst.

CARL

Are there enough hip boots for everyone?

AYESHA

You don't mean hip boots, Carl; you mean life boats.

CAPTAIN SMITH

The worst enemy on an occasion like this is panic. So I won't answer your question about life boats. But we are loading women and children first. However,

we've been busy with the wireless and with rockets and I fully expect a vessel to come to your rescue before we finish loading the life boats. After all, these are well-travelled waters.

CARL

If these waters are so well-travelled, how do the other ships avoid the icebergs?

CAPTAIN SMITH

I've no time for rhetorical questions. Be advised that life boats are being lowered straight-away. Good bye and God be with you!

(CAPTAIN SMITH exits)

(enter SECURITY GUARD and SERGIO. SECURITY GUARD has his arms full of whiskey bottles)

SECURITY GUARD

Hey; they threw the bar open! It's all you can carry—free!

(puts down three bottles and holds fourth to his lips)

Help yourself! Makes for a nice little belly warmer before you hit that cold water. Besides which (taking another swig) gives you courage.

CARL

I'm leaving!

(walks toward opposite exit)

SECURITY GUARD

But the bar is in that direction

(points)

CARL

I know where the bar is... I'm going for the life boats. Knowin' what I do about the management here, when they start handin' out free booze—you know the ship is goin' down. (*exits*)

SECURITY GUARD

Oh hey, c'mere, Sergio. I'll take off these handcuffs.

(continues to swig on the bottle)

A few more snorts and I'll be the best singer among you!

RUDOLF

Say, I hear music coming from out on deck.

(opens door)

Why it's the ship's band... and they're playing "Danny Boy". I'll bet the Captain ordered that to keep our courage up.

DAL

So what'll we do about our own courage? Close the door, Rudolf, so we don't have to compete.

(RUDOLF goes to close doors, looks out, then exits momentarily—returns, closes doors and exclaims)

RUDOLF

Yikes, you should have seen some poor beggar hit that icy water.

AYESHA

Did he dive off the ship?

RUDOLF

No, he fell off! He was trying to free some tangled lines from the davits and he plunged—from about seventy feet. When he came up to the surface, his eyes were bulging like a bull frogs'.

AYESHA

Did they save him?

RUDOLF

Yes, they pulled him into a life boat.

SECURITY GUARD

I don't know whether those kind of stories are doing much for our courage.

DAL

They're not!

DAL (beginning: "Life, Life, Life")

WHAT WE'RE WANTING IS COURAGE

AYESHA

WHAT WE'RE NEEDING IS SPUNK

RUDOLF (joining in with DAL and AYESHA)

WE'D LIKE TO GET IT TOGETHER

The SECURITY GUARD and SERGIO (joining in)

BEFORE THIS VESSEL IS SUNK

ALL

THE WEATHER'S NOW BELOW FREEZIN'
THE OCEAN'S CHOCK-FULL OF ICE
WE MUST DO SOMETHING HEROIC
FOR COWARDS HAVE TO DIE TWICE

AYESHA

SEE THOSE ROCKETS IN THE AIR

The Men

LIFE-BOATS DRIFTING IN THE GLARE

AYESHA

ICE-BERGS TOW'RING IN THE NITE

ALL

FULL MOON CASTING EERIE LITE

ALL

WHAT WE'RE DOIN' IS SINGIN'
PRAYIN' ALSO IS RIFE
WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO LIFE-BOATS
WHAT WE'RE SAVIN' IS LIFE, LIFE, LIFE
WHAT WE'RE SAVIN' IS LIFE...

DAL

When danger looms, dancing booms... let's do it!

(DAL leads, and the others join in a rhumba line)

CARL

(re-enters)

Damn! They don't allow any men in the boats—besides, I forgot my hat.

AYESHA

Your hat isn't going to do you much good. Try a dress!

CARL

They know me out there. I'm not going to go down in drag.

(SENIOR LADY puts head in thru double doors)

SENIOR LADY

You should be ashamed of yourselves. There is no dancing on White Star Lines on Sundays!

DAL (stopping the rhumba line)

It's no longer Sunday, Madame. It's been Monday morning for the past half hour.

(SENIOR LADY withdraws with a "Humph!")

CARL

The calendar doesn't much matter—this is Doomsday!

DAL

We'll never die from your encouragement, Carl; let's get back to dancing.

CARL

This is like putting your head in the sand.

DAL

Agreed! I'm going out on deck to see how things are going... whether this big scull is going to stay afloat.

(DAL exits)

RUDOLF

Why don't you go with him, Ayesha?

AYESHA

Because my mind is made up! No matter how the ship is doing, I'm staying with Dal.

SECURITY GUARD

You need some of this.

(offers bottle)

RUDOLF

Take a drink, Ayesha. You're playing out the Romeo and Juliet scenario in salt water... cold, salt water. Dal sure has got a hold on you!

AYESHA

I don't know about any "hold", but he's sure got my heart!

(AYESHA sings: **"He's Got My Heart"**)

THO FEARFUL THINGS MAY INTERFERE,

THEY CAN'T KEEP US APART -
HOWEVER FEARFUL, I DON'T CARE
FOR SURE, HE'S GOT MY HEART.

LOVE MAY NEED LONG YEARS TO GROW
OR TAKE A RUNNING START -
BUT I DON'T CARE IF FAST OR SLOW
FOR SURE, HE'S GOT MY HEART.

DON'T TELL ME I'M MUCH TOO YOUNG
TO KNOW WHAT SUITS MY MIND.
DON'T TELL ME THAT BEING YOUNG,
I PROVE THAT LOVE IS BLIND.

THO LOVE MAY HAVE JUST HOURS TO LIVE,
IT SERVES ITS SUITORS WELL
TRUE LOVE NEEDS JUST HOURS TO LIVE
IT BEAMS WHERE LOVERS DWELL.
SO WHETHER LOVE'S INEPT OR SMART
THIS MUCH IS SURE—HE'S GOT MY HEART!

DAL

(returning)

Ayesha, the last life boat is filling up on "B" deck. Please hurry!

AYESHA

I'm not going!

RUDOLF

She's staying with you Dal; can't you accept that?

DAL

What I can't accept is that this beautiful, young enchantress, with everything to live for, is refusing a life-saving opportunity and I'm being made to feel responsible. That's heavy; and I don't like it one bit!

AYESHA

Dal, don't you like me?

DAL

Certainly I like you... it's much more than "like" for heaven's sake. You don't have to ask that!

AYESHA

Then like me for my decisions as well as myself... it is, after all, my decision!

SECURITY GUARD

Things are getting a little too sober here—I say let's all have another drink.

DAL

Thanks, but I've got to keep my wits about me.

AYESHA

Yes, I'll have a swallow—maybe two swallows.

SECURITY GUARD

Any other takers?

RUDOLF

Try me... what about you Sergio?

SERGIO

I'm just getting used to my freedom. I don't want to be overwhelmed.

SECURITY GUARD

After that little "nip", Ayesha, what thoughts besides love and salvation are running through your pretty head?

AYESHA

Would you believe... I'm thinking of the sixteen quarts of coleslaw Max made me prepare this afternoon.

RUDOLF

Coleslaw! Who eats coleslaw?

AYESHA

Second class passengers—they love it!

RUDOLF

It won't go to waste... the fish'll get it. And you, Sergio, you got those cuffs off just in time to swim for it.

DAL

Rudolf, we could do with a little more "positive" thinking here.

CARL

Yes, I'm all for positive thinking! Let's hear more of those scientific reasons why this is an unsinkable boat... a while ago I was convinced of that!

RUDOLF

Then why were you headed for the life boats?

CARL

Why? Because Dal here has the only beautiful girl monopolized... and, let's face it; I'm not the outdoor type.

RUDOLF

Who's got the schnapps?

(SECURITY GUARD brings forth another bottle)

SECURITY GUARD

That's a German word, Rudolf. Ever sailed on a German ship?

RUDOLF

I had a very German music teacher. She undertook to teach me that the only genuine truth and beauty is in music.

SECURITY GUARD

You shared schnapps with her, he?

RUDOLF

Yes, sometimes. And she was quite a philosopher.

(takes another drink)

She claimed that music leap-frogged far ahead of the other elements of civilization and beckons us toward...

SECURITY GUARD

(interrupting)

Oh, you must have had some dandy sessions with that fine lady. Tell us; did you ever make love to her—even to music?

RUDOLF

Why should I deny it?

AYESHA

(draws DAL aside)

Dal; I've got to talk to you... there's something I must confess.

DAL

All right, Ayesha, I'm listening... though I'm pretty unsteady as a confessor.

AYESHA

Never mind about that... Dal, I'm a... I'm a... virgin!

DAL

So why is that of any importance in this predicament?

AYESHA

Don't you understand, Dal? I don't want to die a virgin! I think that would be horrible!

DAL

Well, I've been doing my best to keep you from dying, Ayesha.

AYESHA

But you're looking at it from a negative side. Can't we... that is... can't we quick go to your cabin?

DAL

Obviously with your lack of experience, you think these circumstances and this haste are no barrier to passion—well, believe me, they are! Besides, I think my cabin is half full of sea water by now.

AYESHA

We don't need to go to your cabin; surely there's a suitable place right...

DAL

Perhaps there is—but I'm too panicky and distracted. However, there are probably some suitable candidates if it must be...

AYESHA

Yes, and you're quite willing to make such an announcement; is that it?
(begins to weep)

DAL

There, there, Ayesha!

AYESHA

That's all you think of me!

DAL

Ayesha; I'm trying desperately to inject some humor into a failed situation. What I think of you is beyond description. Right now you're the whole world to me... or what's left of it!

AYESHA

I want it to be with you and not some...

DAL

I've got to get to the task of saving our lives, Ayesha. I'm quite certain the last of the life boats has been lowered by now. But I've got a rather sound idea—if you'll help me.

AYESHA

We're not through with my idea yet, Dal. Maybe I have no experience... but I'm drooling with instincts and I say you'll feel tons better... and you'll have so much more to live for. Remember, Dal; I'm a dancer and I can make you want me more than life.

(AYESHA begins a **Seductive Dance**—lifting her skirts well above the knees)

Don't I tempt you, Dal?

CARL

You're tempting me, Ayesha—or am I not allowed to say that?

(AYESHA stops dancing to address Carl)

AYESHA

You're allowed to say it, Carl; but you're not allowed to do anything about it!

CARL

For heaven's sake, go on with your dance.

(AYESHA resumes dancing and begins to shed some outer garments, a-la-strip tease)

DAL

Ayesha; this is embarrassing!

AYESHA

Maybe it's meant to be.

(chucks DAL under the chin and dances with even more fervor)

(while AYESHA is dancing, a muffled but shaking explosion occurs—Ayesha stops dancing; everyone looks startled)

CARL

That had to be the boilers... the sea water hit them.

(MAX enters hurriedly)

MAX

Ayesha; get your clothes on and come with me, quick!

AYESHA

What for?

MAX

We can get aboard the last life boat... I paid a crew man five hundred dollars to let us on together... that's all the money I got!

RUDOLF

Seats go to the highest bidder, eh? There's not much left to spend it on, Max.

MAX

(grabs AYESHA)

Five hundred dollars, you understand. More money than you'll make all year. It's to save our lives!

AYESHA

I'm not leaving Dal! And don't grab me!

RUDOLF

Why don't you bop him, Dal? Don't let him man-handle your girl like that.

DAL

I'm certainly not afraid of Max. I've handled him once before; but perhaps it's the best thing for Ayesha.

AYESHA

You'd turn me over to this gorilla?

(DAL frees AYESHA from MAX's grip—AYESHA smoothes her garments)

Let me tell you something, Dal. Every girl has to contend with guys like Max sometime in her life. Problem is—on a sinking ship, my options are limited. But I assure you, compared with life with Max, death would be sweet.

MAX

You speak so sharp and proud. Why do you want to stay with him? (points to DAL) So you can get to be a dancer, eh? Well, this ship will soon be so tilted, you won't be able to stand, yet alone dance. And see how long your proud love lasts underwater!

AYESHA

Max, say what you will; I'll not go with you!

(MAX exits, AYESHA resumes her dancing... several minutes elapse. Pistol shots are heard. RUDOLF runs through doors—another minute elapses. RUDOLF returns)

RUDOLF

Those gun sounds. They shot Max. He was trying to force his way aboard the last life boat, they tell me. He wouldn't get off so they shot him. Dumped his body overboard!

DAL

(to RUDOLF)

Why are you holding your jaw? Let me look!

(examines)

Why it's bleeding... and it's all discolored and swollen.

RUDOLF

One of those bullets bounced around a few times and then bounced off me.

DAL

Let me look more closely.

(puts hand on RUDOLF's face)

Why I believe your jaw is broken!

RUDOLF

I'm sure it is!

CARL

That's a tough break... if you can forgive the pun. But no one can do much for now. This sinking ship will diminish your problem.

RUDOLF

That's very comforting, Carl! Any more consoling thoughts out there?

DAL

The most consoling thought I can offer is a scheme to save our lives. You'll be wet, but you'll be lively wet.

CARL

I think we're going to be rescued... all those flares, that incessant whistle, the wireless... and these are heavily travelled waters. Why risk going over-board when soon they'll be coming on-board for us?

DAL

Are you a bridge player, Carl?

CARL

Yes, I play bridge.

DAL

Well the first lesson I learned in playing a hand was that even a poor plan is better than no plan at all! In the Navy they say: "now hear this!" Ayesha, please go out and bring in those boat covers. You'll find them strewn over the deck where they were loading the life boats. One at a time; and will someone please help her? They are bulky.

(SERGIO volunteers and exits with AYESHA; CARL, unconvinced, exits as well)

Now I've got to get a supply of deck chairs. Come on Rudolf; give me a hand!

(DAL and RUDOLF exit, and then SERGIO and AYESHA enter with a boat cover, which they begin to spread out)

(CARL returns, followed by RUDOLF and DAL with the deck chairs)

CARL

One of those big funnels crashed over the side. What a splash! I guess the explosion unloosed it. So you realize it was seventy feet from our deck to the ocean before and now it is only twenty?

DAL

That's good and bad news. We're closer to sinking, but it'll be easier to carry out my plan.

CARL

I have an idea what you're trying to do, but you'll need rope.

DAL

I've got rope. Inside each boat cover is a cinching line so the cover won't blow off. We'll use the cinching line. But I do need a good, sharp knife.

CARL

(hands DAL a knife)

Here; ever see a kitchen worker without a knife? Don't bother to return it in this life!

(DAL begins to lay out the deck chairs in double tiers to form a raft. Wraps boat cover over and under and ties)

DAL

Carl, follow my model here. We need at least three of these rafts.

(to RUDOLF)

No Rudolf, if it's too long, it will buckle. Don't make them any bigger than mine.

SERGIO

Dal; if you'll forgive my intrusion, I've had some experience with knots—yes, as a sailor. See, if you hitch it this way, it can't work loose. It's called a bowline on the bight.

(SERGIO assists DAL in tying the deck chairs together. AYESHA asks SERGIO to go with her to get another boat cover. AYESHA and SERGIO exit)

(several minutes elapse while work is done tying the deck chairs. AYESHA and SERGIO return. SERGIO is dripping wet and shivering)

AYESHA

We have a real live hero here!

DAL

Sergio; you're all wet and cold. I think the only dry clothes to be found right now will be in the Captain's cabin. Rudolf; will you go with him, please?

(SERGIO and RUDOLF exit)

Ayesha, whatever happened out there?

AYESHA

A boy fell off the deck into the ocean and Sergio jumped in to save him.

DAL

Where's the boy?

AYESHA

He pushed him into one of the life boats floating out there.

DAL

Why didn't Sergio get in the life boat too?

AYESHA

They're for women and children, he said.

DAL

He brings up morality in that freezing water?

CARL

Gads, he can steal my jewelry anytime.

(SERGIO and RUDOLF return; SERGIO changes into dry clothes in semi-privacy)

SECURITY GUARD

So what are these "cubits" to do?

DAL

They're to float; as rafts... and I'm going to leave some line dragging from all sides so you can pull yourself up on them.

CARL

Does this mean that we first have to dunk ourselves in that frigid water before we climb aboard?

DAL

Either that or get aboard now and wait 'til this deck comes awash. Then you'll have to get free of the ship in a hurry and hope the suction doesn't pull you down.

SECURITY GUARD

What lovely choices you offer!

SERGIO

The problem then is how to lower these rafts into the ocean with people on them?

RUDOLF

The ocean is perfectly flat—flatter than I've ever seen it.

DAL

We've no way to lower them except to cast them overboard.

SECURITY GUARD

Say I'm less anxious than any of you to get into that fra...eez...zin water, but, I have a suggestion. After all, we've nothing to lose but our lives, right?

CARL

Right!

SECURITY GUARD

O.K. There's all these oil cans I've seen about. The crew has stopped sending off rockets—probably ran out of them. So how are we going to be seen by any rescue ships? The ship's lights will fail shortly.

CARL

Are you suggesting we make a torch parade with those oil cans?

SECURITY GUARD

Better than that! We take that oil to the lowest deck not yet under water and set the damn ship on fire.

CARL

Christ; we'd be seen alright... we'd be seen frying! The whole ship would go ablaze.

SECURITY GUARD

No, the sinking would put out the fire.

DAL

There's nothing says you could control that fire. True, you'd be seen for many miles—but I'd rather take my chances with the cold water than burn to death.

AYESHA

I've heard nothing but morbid suggestions and morbid thoughts. We've done what best we could for rescue purposes... 'til the water gets within five feet of our deck, right Dal? But if I have just a few more moments to live, I want to spend them dancing and singing.

(AYESHA sings reprise of: "**Let Me Dance**")

LET ME DANCE, FOR ROMANCE
THERE IS NOTHING MORE ABORNING THAN TO DANCE,
THAN TO DANCE, THAN TO DANCE,
WITH EMOTIONS ON THE RUN.

LET ME WHIRL IN THE LIGHT
AS THE MUSIC FORMS A CYCLONE.
LET ME TWIRL WITH DELIGHT

*(her tone changes and the tempo slows to a halt as the reality of their situation hits when **CAPTAIN SMITH** pokes his head in)*

AS ALL BOREDOM COMES UNDONE

CAPTAIN SMITH

Sorry folks, but there are no more life boats.

AYESHA

We already knew about that, Captain. But wait; can you perform a marriage on a sinking ship?

DAL

Ayesha; this is hardly the time to bother the Captain.

CAPTAIN SMITH

The problem seems not so much the sinking ship as the sinking feelings.

CARL

Yeah; the problem is less with cold water than cold feet. Come one, be brave, Dal; you're bound to have an adventurous honeymoon.

CAPTAIN SMITH

I wish I could say something humorous, but I cannot. I will say you are the bravest group I've run into since the accident. However, I've done everything I could for you and now it's every man for himself.

CARL

Done everything he could for us, eh? Well, thank God for small favors!

SECURITY GUARD

(waving bottle about)

Say, isn't that the bastard who ordered full steam ahead and ran us into the iceberg? I should have taken my gun out and shot him.

(draws gun)

RUDOLF

Put that away! No use to shoot him and add dishonor to cupidity. He'll go down with the ship... guaranteed! It's a British tradition.

(INKY appears wearing formal clothes)

INKY

Well; Marybelle is safely ensconced aboard the last life boat.

CARL

And now you have to “tough it out” with us, eh? You know some of the women chose to stay with their men... like Ayesha here.

INKY

That is indeed admirable. Yes, that’s the word, admirable! But you have to understand Marybelle. She is made of sterner stuff.

RUDOLF

Sterner?

INKY

Yes; Marybelle has her entire universe diagramed out... and her place in it. And she isn’t going to let anything like a sinking ship interfere. Marybelle is destined to have a stage career.

RUDOLF

“Come hell or high water”, eh? I think we’re facing both of those tonite... but tell us, Inky; why are you wearing formal clothes?

INKY

I’ll admit to you that I fully expect to meet my maker tonite; and I don’t want Him to think I’m a slob! Furthermore, should someone find my body, they won’t need to dress it. That’s such a ghastly business.

AYESHA

Everything is so very hostile. The black, icy water; this cumbersome, sinking ship; the panicky passengers... everything but our love, Dal; and these tiny make-shift rafts... do you think we have a chance?

DAL

We have a chance, yes! But we've got to time it very carefully. When our deck is within five feet of the ocean, I'll put this raft over the side with a painter...

AYESHA

Painter?

DAL

That's a rope tied to the raft so it doesn't float away.

AYESHA

Can't we jump right in it?

DAL

You haven't been listening. If you do that you'll likely hurt yourself and damage the raft. These deck chairs are too fragile.

CARL

There's a big cluster of people out there on the deck praying to be saved.

DAL

Well, you're free to join them or try your luck with these rafts. You won't have time to do both. We're going over shortly!

AYESHA

Dal, while we're still both warm and dry, please tell me how you feel... what I mean to you... what do we mean to each other?

(AYESHA sings: "**Tender Love**")

BRILLIANT NIGHT, STARRY SKY,
MAMMOTH ICE-BERGS DRIFTING BY
DOES THE 'DEEP' ALLOW FOR TENDER LOVE?

BOUNDLESS SEA, FALLING STAR,
HOW REMOTE SWEET FEELINGS ARE
CAN OUR SOULS BE WARMED BY TENDER LOVE?

NOTHING QUITE SO COLD AS NIGHT AT SEA -
NOTHING QUITE SO BOLD AS TRAGEDY

SINKING SHIP, FATAL DIVE,
FORTUNE CHOOSES WHO'LL SURVIVE
WILL LOVE SOAR ABOVE THE DASHING WAVES?
WILL LUCK PIN HER MARK ON WHO IT SAVES?
TENDER AND OMNISCIENT THOUGH IT BE -
WILL LOVE RISE ABOVE THE BOUNDLESS SEA?

AYESHA

Dal, look; they're still sending off rockets... they seem so starkly real; they burn fiercely as they arch, then they sputter out and fall into the cold sea. They're like our own lives in a lot of ways... we have our time of greatest brilliance and greatest height—and then we plunge into nothingness, oblivion!

DAL

It's a good expression, Ayesha; but hardly suitable on a sinking ship.

AYESHA

Oh Dal, look quick; there's a falling star. Remember the first time you kissed me—it was right here on this deck and we watched a falling star.

DAL

I've never seen the sky so brilliant as it is tonite.

AYESHA

In spite of the danger we're in, I've never felt so brilliant about my life—about our lives... as I do right now.

DAL

Just over your shoulder, Ayesha... see that couple sitting on the deck chairs? That's Mister and Misses Strauss. She refused to get into a life boat without him. They're just awaiting their fate!

AYESHA

God bless them!

DAL

The ship's going down, Ayesha. We must get on with the business of saving our lives.

AYESHA

And Dal; thank you for putting me in your show!... maybe we'll get to do it in... in...

DAL

In another ship; on another ocean. You've been the star of my show, Ayesha, since I first met you. I do love you... and I'll wait for you... back to basics... let's hope no one goes unconscious from the shock of the cold water... believe me, I'll wait for you, Ayesha; I'll wait for you forever.

(DAL eases himself over the rail—a splash is heard)

AYESHA

Dal? Dal? Oh please, Dal! Why don't you come up? Dal, Dal; for God's sake, don't leave me, Dal!

(AYESHA's cries gradually succumb to the strains of "**Let Me Dance**")

END OF SCENE 3

END OF PLAY